

Transcript
from
The International Video Art Symposium

5 - 7 March 1979



ART METROPOLE
217 Richmond Street West
Toronto, Canada M5V 1W2
Telephone (416) 362-1685

Sherry Miller
Experimental Television Centre
180 Front Street
Owego, NY 13827
U.S.A.

December 17th, 1979

Dear Sherry Miller,

Enclosed is the transcript of the meetings at the Kingston Video Conference.

As you will see, it is mostly about distribution.

It would be nice to have more information about ETC's current activities.

Further copies of the transcripts can be got from the Agnes Etherington Gallery in Kingston, Ontario for \$2.50 a copy.

Regards,



Martha Fleming
Video Curator

TRANSCRIPT
FROM
THE INTERNATIONAL VIDEO ART SYMPOSIUM
5-7 MARCH 1979

THE AGNES ETHERINGTON ART CENTRE, QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY, KINGSTON, ONTARIO

INTERNATIONAL VIDEO ART SYMPOSIUM : 5-7 MARCH, 1979

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	Linda Milrod	i-ii
Video Artists and Television as a Medium	Wulf Herzogenrath	1-7
Support Structure for Artists working with Videotape: Notes	Ian Murray	8-10
Video Lunch	Susan Britton	11-14
Making Video: Cable Access, Artists Cooperative, Fees and Rights	Paul Wong	15-17
Reprinted from MONTREAL TAPES - VIDEO AS A COMMUNITY OR POLITICAL TOOL, Vancouver Art Gallery, 1-23 April 1978. Interview by Curator Jo-Anne Birnie Danzker with Pierre Falardeau and Julien Poulin	Excerpts	18-22
London Video Arts, Britain and the European Scene	David Hall	23-27
Video and its Distribution	Maria G. Bicocchi	28-31
Oulets for Video	Kate Craig	32-35
Free Television	Michael Goldberg	36-39
TV Art in the Home	Clive Robertson	40-41
Home Marketing of Video Art	Jaime Davidovich	42-43
Discussion/Confrontation of the final evening	Edited from tape	44-69

INTRODUCTION

The International Video Art Symposium was the fourth of a series of similar gatherings involving other areas of the visual arts which the Agnes Etherington Art Centre has hosted since 1975. The symposium format of addresses, presentations and panel discussions has proved a viable method of generating a dialogue amongst artists from different parts of the country and between artists and an interested although sometimes bewildered public.

The video project was unique with the addition of 'International' in its title. This was the first time that we attempted to assimilate views from different parts of the globe as well as from various areas of the nation. It was felt that the greatest benefit from the point of view of the artists and of the public would be gained by viewing the Canadian video activity within a larger global context. To that end, Dr. Wulf Herzogenrath, Director, Kölnischer Kunstverein, West Germany, was invited to participate as keynote speaker. David Hall from London Video Arts, London, England, was a panelist on distribution problems. Jaime Davidovitch came from New York's Artists' Television Network to contribute to the TV: Art in Your Home panel. Maria Gloria Bicocchi of Follonica, Italy, was asked to address the distribution question. You will find the papers prepared by these guests included in this publication. It should be noted here for the record, however, that at the last moment Maria Gloria Bicocchi and Dr. Herzogenrath were both prevented from attending due to illness and other extenuating circumstances.

All of the artists who made formal presentations to the symposium were asked to submit a paper to be printed as a permanent record of the event. This is the compilation of those papers. The last item in the Table of Contents is an edited transcript of the actual dialogue from the final evening's panel discussion on TV: Art in Your Home. Michael Goldberg's presence on the panel was a tape he made of himself. This will explain his silent rebuttal to the comments on his statement that evening.

The discussions at the International Video Art Symposium did not solve the pressing problems of ideology (TV or not TV), production and distribution facing the video artist. But that was not its intention. The aims of the conference were to confront the issues, propose alternative courses, exchange ideas and provide a meeting space for video artists. The art-forum is relatively young in Canada and its protagonists relatively few in number. Although the artists knew each other well through their work, few had made personal acquaintances. The intensity of the discussions on the three days, scheduled and impromptu, and the number of hours of viewing time spent, indicate the worthiness of the project.

There are several individuals and institutions without whose patient assistance, financial and otherwise, the project would not have reached its ultimate success. Very special thanks go first and foremost to Peggy Gale as the guest curator for the project. The Art Centre relied entirely on her expertise in the field to bring the symposium to fruition. The staff of the Agnes Etherington Art Centre, in all areas, were extremely patient and helpful during each stage of the project. I would also like to express gratitude to Kingston Cable TV for agreeing to broadcast without charge a five minute

introduction to the conference prior to its opening and to Queens' TV for their assistance in recording the final evening and lending extra equipment.

The financial support of the Video Division of the Canada Council for the core funding of the project is acknowledged with gratitude, together with the support of the Ontario Arts Council. The foreign guests were able to participate through the generosity of their individual consulates: we are grateful to Dr.R.Dencker of the Goethe Institute, Toronto, Mr.Hobbs of the British Council, and M.André Menard of the Department of External Affairs, Ottawa, for supporting the Art Centre in this regard.

Linda J.Milrod
September, 1979

VIDEO ARTISTS AND TELEVISION AS A MEDIUM by Wulf Herzogenrath

Video in Germany: some facts of the development up to the present.

In the attempt to formulate a few ideas on the relationship between the video artist, the public and the media, the first difficulty is with definition. What is a video artist, after all? How can the Museum, the home of week-long shows of static things, or else the Cinema, with its fixed seats and settled hours, deal with a fluid medium like Video? And what is the position of the other media, Television, which are content to report facts, but rarely reflect on their own capacities? We shall only form a public for video when the other three fields have been defined, i.e. when it is clear that video is an art on its own.

In spite of all the overlappings, we have learned to define what makes a painter, a film-maker, a photographer. The art world has developed a complicated apparatus: exhibitions, collections, presentations of all kinds. The media react to grades of popularity. If an exhibition counts 100,000 visitors, there are special reports in the press and on television. Perhaps the most astonishing statistic is that in the last ten years the visitors to the Museums, Kunsthallen and Kunstvereine in W.Germany, have been three times as many as those to the football stadia. Even at 11 p.m., a television broadcast reaches 4,000,000 observers, more than the total number of visitors to documenta 6 in Cassel.

Everybody talks of the electronic age. Television is almost universal, (although - astonishingly - its consumption did decline last year in West Germany). Then why should video, the electronic medium, experience such difficulty of acceptance in the field of art? There are three grounds.

I

This is a young medium for art. It is only fifteen years since Nam June Paik experimented first with the phenomena of the television screen. (Illus 1). The first 'Video Exhibitions' or productions took place less than ten years ago. This development is parallel to that in other reproductive techniques. Developed for other purposes, they were adopted, usually in the next generation, by the artists, and transformed from a purely reproductive to a more creative medium. This was the case in the past with the woodcut, the copper engraving and the lithograph and quite recently with the silkscreen print, which within fifteen years of its invention spread rapidly as an artistic medium.

II

Europeans are afraid of technics in art.

This explains a good deal of the difference of the development in Europe and the USA in the last fifteen years. In this time - to start with a simple piece of evidence - the large and even middle Art - museums of America have all added a photographic section to their collections. Since 1971 six of these museums have also founded video departments. These hold exhibitions, and aim to establish cable television stations with their own programmes. (Long Beach Museum, Los Angeles, has already done so.) In Germany, on the other

hand, even after the great photo-boom of 1978 with its important video exhibitions, only two museums have photographic sections at all. These are the Museum Ludwig in Cologne, which purchased and enlarged the collection of L. Fritz Gruber, and the Folkwang Museum in Essen, which has integrated the collection of the former Folkwang School, made by Otto Steinert. The Folkwang has also built up a video studio, which up to the present is not much used.

Ever since the market for prints was established, around 1500, what has counted has been the personal 'handwriting,' the individual gesture with the line. Dürer could not protect his intellectual property (the invention of pictures and their formulation.) Painting was public property. The products of his workshop were all he could copyright; and his lawsuits against the 'copyists' were concerned only with the business side. Surely we must reverse this position today. Pictorial conception and realisation should be rated above mere manual execution. With a work of art the spiritual father stands above the corporeal. This situation in art-history was clarified most recently by Marcel Duchamp. He took as his theme the contradiction of the artist-craftsman: on the one hand the inspired interpreter of his own time, on the other a man with a business contract which he is bound to fulfill. What moves the spectator is the idea, incorporated in the visual, objective work.

If we apply this to our present theme, it indicates that it is unimportant for the work of art whether the artist uses video, oil paint, marble or a camera. This explains a remark often quoted, but only in the manual tradition of Europe comprehensible: John Baldessari's "video is like a pencil." No-one disputes today that with this 'pencil' it is possible, either to "make new wine in old wine-skins" (Allan Kaorow) or to brew new liquor altogether. And yet the realities of the cultural scene have changed but little. The spectator thinks that with a glance of a few seconds he has 'seen' a work. An exhibition with 150 numbers can be absorbed in an hour or less. Video, on the other hand, whether video-sculptures, video tapes or video-installations, demands a specific time, with fixed hours for the commencement, just as in the cinema, the concert - or television itself. This basic difference results in certain demands on the presentation of video in exhibitions or museums.

1. To realise the possibility that image and reality are simultaneously visible. Only with video-electronics is this attainable. For this a closed-circuit installation is used. (Illus. 12) For the first time in the history of art the spectator does not contemplate the art-object from the outside. He takes part in it, becomes a part of its content. The camera photographs him as he enters the room and reproduces his image - so far as he can see - simultaneously. The work of Peter Campus (at the Everson Museum of Art in Syracuse, N.Y. and in single objects at 'Project 74' and documenta 6) shows the capacities of the medium in a visually and psychologically impressive form.

2. Video tapes must be shown by trained personnel in video-libraries, (Illus. 11) so that the spectator is properly informed. Time spent in such rooms must be as fully used as possible. Many artists, when they realise how precious the time is, do shorten and intensify their work. Whereas they used to take advantage of the full length of the tape, they try today to work as sparsely and precisely as is possible. Another technique is to produce tapes in sections. These can be seen as a whole or in their various parts.

3. Perhaps the best conditions are those offered by symposium-like performances, with a concentrated offering of several tapes, video-performances and the possibility of discussion. The multiple form and variety with which the medium is used, make clear the breadth of video-art - and also that the electronics, the monitor, the video-tape are nothing but the vehicle, without influence on style or value.

III

Leaflet, newspaper or book, however good the illustration or layout, use the language as their main instrument of information. The same applies to the radio, but here from the start music had an almost equal share of time. At first that meant the reproduction and broadcasting of existing music. But by 1951 the West German Radio in Cologne was broadcasting music made by electronic means. An Electronic Studio was set up, under the direction first of Herbert Eimert and later that of Karlheinz Stockhausen. Nor was this an isolated case. By 1961 there existed 22 similar experimental and production studios in a row of countries.

The history of television in Europe and America has been quite different. In 1968 the West German Radio produced the first electronically manipulated broadcast, 'Black Gate Cologne', by Otto Piene and Aldo Tambellini, which made use of many video devices. (Illus. 13) But this exhausted the Europeans' courage and nothing more was done. In the USA the first activities were those of Fred Barzyk from WGBH in Boston in 1969 (Illus. 15). There followed a series of experimental studios at various television stations (Illus. 16) and the setting up of smaller units (such as synthesizers) at Colleges and Universities. The first larger production was financed by the Boston Symphony Orchestra (Illus. 15) and this encouraged the video artists in the United States.

In Europe in 1978 there are no studios of this kind at all. Those responsible for television in Germany are not even conscious that there is a need for such a thing. The only synthesizer in Germany - one of limited capacity - stands in the musical department of WDR television in Cologne.

Electronic effects are used, now and then, as gags in shows or plays. But a comparison with the Electronic Studio and the significance of Karlheinz Stockhausen shows the incomprehensible ignorance and reserve of the television managers. Not even the symbols for a pause are products of video. Instead, painters are commissioned to make pictures - often of the wrong dimensions - and the text is spread out over them. Art for television has to be something one can film.

What is the reason for this bankruptcy? TV people think as journalists. They want something on which to report. 'Art' is outside the camera. Making a film of it is what they do and that is broadcast. No electronic language is developed here - what could it be but colour-effects made with the synthesizer? So artists working in this field are frustrated, or if allowed access at all are forced into a ready-made production. Video tapes, that is the finished product, are not broadcast. The only exceptions here have been the Wagner-visualisation of Ron Hays and in 1977 six evenings with works by 20 artists of documenta 6. (The latter included a satellite live-broadcast with discussion.) The same is true of performance-art. Live-actions, such as those on the Austrian radio with Peter Weibel, Douglas Davis and Richard Kriesche, are very rare exceptions. One reason is certainly fear, fear of the imagination of other people, not bound to a

bureaucratic apparatus. The other, as said before is the training of television personnel as journalists. They want to report on so-called reality and document it. They forget that this second reality has its own picture-speech. It is not just a question of the small screen of the monitor and the more rapid picture-frequency. They forget too the long-trained passivity of the television audience.

Artists would be in a better position to challenge this blind trust in the second reality of television. They would no longer buoy up the public with false hopes, but would create counter-stimuli, phantasies, and worlds of pictures. They should recognize the television as a Pandora's box, from which the evil has flown out and only hope remains.

I hope that these general observations will give something of the European, or at least the German point of view and serve as a basis for discussion. I will now give a few facts, supported by slides, concerning the history of video-art in the Federal Republic and will end up with a short tour of the video section of documenta 6 (1977) in Cassel.

Slide 1. It is seldom that one can fix a point in history so exactly as this the beginning of video-art in Western Germany. The start was made in Wuppertal in March of 1963 with Paik's exhibition: 'Exposition of Music - Electronic Television'. Ten television sets stood in a room and Paik manipulated them. It was a Fluxus-gesture, but at the same time an attempt to make new pictures by electronic means.

Slide 2. For the West German Radio Otto Piene and Aldo Tambellini produced the first 'free' video tape, 'Black Gate Cologne', which was telecast in January 1969.

Slide 3. Gerry Schum, an idealistic pioneer, founded a 'Television Gallery' in Düsseldorf. He produced works which had their permanent form only as visual documents. The film, or rather television, record is in itself the work of art. His first, 'Land Art', contains the work of eight artists. It too was shown for the first time in 1969.

Slide 4. The first video-studios to be set up in Europe were in the Folkwang Museum in Essen and in the Lijnbaan Centre in Rotterdam, (1977). In the first little original material has been produced. But the second was the site of the first inclusive video exhibition in Europe, in 1979. This was four years after the show 'Video as a creative Medium' at the Howard Wise gallery in New York, the catalogue of which you see here.

Slide 5. Gerry Schum produced a tape with Josef Beuys which is itself a comment on the medium. Beuys has covered-up the screen with felt and then bombards the set with boxing-gloves. It is the symbolic answer of the TV viewer to the betrayal of the ideals propagated for the medium at its start. Is this the task of the artist? In this four-minute tape Beuys sees it so.

Slide 6. Perhaps the most successful tape from the pure visual standpoint was the 'X-Projection' made by Schum with Knoebel, a young artist from Düsseldorf. A car carrying a light-projector and a camera is driven through the city streets at night. It flashes a cross of light over the houses, walls, trees and illuminated signs, all of which is recorded on the film.

Slide 7. The 'Telewissen' group (its title is a pun, meaning Tele-Information) operates in the field of cultural sociology. It works in partnership with the groups it is studying, here with schoolchildren. It is situated in Darmstadt and led by Herbert Schumacher (here in the picture.) The motto of the group is "make your own television" and it has brought out a book with this title to document its work.

Slide 8. The 'Video Audio- Medien' group in Berlin persuaded the German Television, for the first time, to do a telecast on half-inch tape. Chosen was the refreshing semi-documentary 'We must become the White Indians of Europe.' Here the group working on the production.

Slide 9. A view of the 'Project 74' exhibition in Cologne, an international survey of the avant-garde. It included a large video section, complete with installations and performances. Here is Nam June Paik with his video Buddha and too for the first time in meditation, as a video-Buddha himself.

Slide 10. In addition some 10 video-tapes were produced, in cooperation with the team from the Lijnbaan Centre. Here Vito Acconci at work.

Slide 11. Without false modesty I can say that the most important event in the development of Video was the section which I organized at documenta 6 in Cassel. Eleven Video-installations were situated in the Fridericianum, the main building of the exhibition; and some 80 tapes were shown. In addition the German television transmitted 30 video works on nine separate evening programmes. This gave, for the first time, something like a survey of the medium. The first group and probably the most attractive for the public was that of the 'closed circuit' installations. These were used by Peter Campus, Bill Viola and Richard Kriesch, in very different ways. Campus has two main interests. Since he studied psychology, he is concerned to draw the spectator into the spectacle ('how can I situate myself in space?'). At the same time he emphasizes the painterly qualities of the video projection, a sort of grisaille, a structure in graduated tones of gray.

Slide 11. Bill Viola makes a different use of this capacity of video to give and receive simultaneously. He brings in too a change of dimension. The viewer finds himself reflected, on a microscopic scale, in a little drop of water. The image of this drop is then thrown, by means of a slide-projector, on a huge scale on the wall. The visual distortion and the rhythm of the drops as they fall give the whole a certain hypnotic quality.

Slide 12. The third closed installation in Cassel was built by the Austrian Richard Kriesche. A girl sat in one room, read Walter Benjamin's book on 'Reproduction in the Age of Technics' and was filmed by one camera. On the screen of the monitor, one saw - apparently - the same girl, but not at the same moment. There was however no time-lag! The riddle was solved when one went round the room and found the girl's twin-sister, also reading, in an identical environment.... But even then it was not possible to verify the truth by visual means, because the two pictures never appeared together. Simple, banal reality had to be reconstructed intellectually.

Slide 13. Now I want to show you three multi-channel pieces. First one by Beryl Korot, a woman artist living in New York and married to the musician Steve Reich. This explains her interest in a score for four monitors, as precise as chamber-music. The four are synchronised and play for 23 minutes

tapes easily distinguishable from each other. The theme is a visit by Beryl Korot to the site of the Dachau concentration camp. Her method is to approach the subject cautiously, from the outside; and this corresponds to the rhythm of contrast and of similarity of the pictures which show on the screens.

Slide 14. Antonio Mundadas is a Spaniard who lives in Barcelona and New York. He too works with three installations, synchronized. His theme here is the last ten minutes of the television shows most popular in Washington D.C., Kassel and Moscow (reading from left to right). There follow ten more minutes shot on the main shopping streets of these cities, showing the populations for which the TV programmes were contrived. Different as the social systems are, the forms of the medium are surprisingly similar. Is there already a common international television speech?

Slide 15. In her 'Three Tales', Joan Jonas showed in Cassel three video-tapes simultaneously. But these were by intention never synchronized and related only by chance. All three were poetic films of New Mexico, shown in a dim, blue-lighted room and playing on the visitor's associative faculty.

Slide 16. Video-installations with a single tape can also be most various, both from the point of view of content and of style. For example, Shigeo Kubota's 'Nude descending the Staircase' is an intelligent, ironic paraphrase of Duchamp's painting, in the electronic medium. As the nude comes down the four real steps her figure dissolves and the gesture repeats itself continuously.

Slide 17. Friederike Pezold combined her video tape with drawings and sequences of photographs, all housed in a miniature temple somewhat Japanese in style. This was meant to induce a relaxed attitude in the observer towards the work, which she herself described as "the subcutaneous bodily language of a generation, made up of anatomy, geometry and kinetics."

Slide 18. Rebecca Horn presented her performance of the 'Paradise Widow', the 'dance' of a feather-object and a nude, on two monitors placed together, each showing it from another side. The poetic spoken texts support the subtle but impressive action. You will be able to see her new work, called 'Berlin - Exercise in nine Parts' following this lecture.

Slide 19. Ulrike Rosenbach belongs to the Women's Liberation Movement in the Federal Republic. But her work, which is among the best of the young generation, preserves a certain open-mindedness. Here she has combined a scenic model of the gigantic Hercules from the late Baroque gardens in Cassel with a video monitor at the base. On the screen her own face appears, alternately in and out of focus, repeating the word "Frau, Frau..." (woman, woman...).

Slide 20. The most impressive environment (for the intellectuals and the general public too) was the 'Video Jungle' of Nam June Paik. Paik laid 30 colour monitors under a carpet of climbing plants, palms and other exotic flora, thus illuminated from below. It was a collage of opposed elements, both of reality and style. Nature and artificiality in a seemingly impossible combination, typical for electronic arts.

Slide 21. The documenta 6 opened with three Actions, which were broadcast to the USA, to Venezuela and to the European countries, live, by satellite. This was the first time that such a thing was done for an art-show and not for a football match, a coronation or a funeral. Even the Russian television took the broadcast - but did not show it. Paik opened the exhibition, Beuys spoke for ten minutes about his ideas and Douglas Davis in 'The last nine Minutes' attempted a communication.

Slide 22. The most successful performance was that of Paik with Charlotte Moorman, his old comrade-in-arms from the Fluxus period. He played the piano with a video camera. The black and white keys appeared reversed and multiplied by four upon the monitors.

Slide 23. To end up with: Paik's anti-technology piece. Sitting alone among the apparatus, as though meditating, he makes a picture here by candle-light. The candles produce images, simplicity in a complex world. Quietness in the midst of chaos - this too is possible with Video, and once one has understood that it is not a question of a style, but of a medium able to be used in many different ways.

I thank you for your attention and I hope that I have been able to show you a little of the Video-scene in the Federal Republic of Germany.

Wulf Herzogenrath

Slide 21. The documenta 6 opened with three Actions, which were broadcast to the USA, to Venezuela and to the European countries, live, by satellite. This was the first time that such a thing was done for an art-show and not for a football match, a coronation or a funeral. Even the Russian television took the broadcast - but did not show it. Paik opened the exhibition, Beuys spoke for ten minutes about his ideas and Douglas Davis in 'The last nine Minutes' attempted a communication.

Slide 22. The most successful performance was that of Paik with Charlotte Moorman, his old comrade-in-arms from the Fluxus period. He played the piano with a video camera. The black and white keys appeared reversed and multiplied by four upon the monitors.

Slide 23. To end up with: Paik's anti-technology piece. Sitting alone among the apparatus, as though meditating, he makes a picture here by candle-light. The candles produce images, simplicity in a complex world. Quietness in the midst of chaos - this too is possible with Video, and once one has understood that it is not a question of a style, but of a medium able to be used in many different ways.

I thank you for your attention and I hope that I have been able to show you a little of the Video-scene in the Federal Republic of Germany.

Wulf Herzogenrath

SUPPORT STRUCTURE FOR ARTISTS WORKING WITH VIDEOTAPE by Ian Murray

In preparing my notes for this discussion, I assumed the topic to be the support structure for artists working with videotape.

As an artist, I use many media, or perhaps more accurately, my materials are many types of media objects. I know media are not neutral. For instance, I cannot see television and most especially the satellite systems as healthy developments for any other culture than that of the upper and middle classes of Europe and America. This is a quality of these media. Video installation, audio installation or television broadcast are more common manifestations of my work than multi-situation videotape playback.

There are a number of differences between media: the different "normal" distribution channels for instance. Video offers some particular problems. These are the specific problems (or qualities) of objects in post-industrial information economy. Some parallels could be drawn to the problem of prose literature as art object.

I should point out here that I am using the term video to refer to videotape playback on any monitor screen and not more specifically laminated or articulated events such as an "installation" or a "performance" which may involve video or a work for specific broadcast, all of which are very different kinds of objects. Many of these problems with video are the qualities of the object, especially the problem of fees and rights.

No other media offers so large an audience taking so passive a role as television. Video is from the same basis as that monster.

I was about to say that alternately, no other media has shown the ability to specifically affect small groups in internal discussion and change. On further reflection, however, I realize that more direct intervention - discussion, performance, sculpture, etc. as well as more wholistic means - music, dance, etc. all offer greater potential interaction and reaction. Much of the current fervor for broadcasting and satellite transmission as liberation of information access should be compared to the third world response to these imperialist technologies. Even if the systems are "interactive", the practices of running a T.V. studio or computer terminal are not found in many cultures as natural expressions as they are by now in ours.

The lack of specificity of context and situation is great. However, the specificity of other aspects is great - it always takes the same amount of time to see a 30 minute tape, there are the same light levels, frame, lines, etc. The brain wave pattern of viewers is predictable, to a great extent. A videotape can be seen by 90,000,000 people at once on television, by one person in an art gallery, by a union rally during a strike or by the R.C.M.P. security service in their offices. It can be bought as a disc or tape and played at any time. It can be rented. It can be seen in color or black and white from close or from more distant points, at varying audio levels with varying degrees of interference.

Each of these situations strike me as different. Different enough to me to warrant a different work and different enough to involve totally different systems of rights and economics.

As for artists' access to production facilities, I'm not convinced their needs are greater than some other community sectors. The best artist's video work I've seen uses the same equipment as any other non-industrial user. The artists' co-op is a situation I don't know much about outside of Inuit artists' co-ops. Media co-ops I have been involved with and they are more to the point, I think. While I feel the "mediumistic" approach is improper in the presentation or conception of art, I think it is the answer in production. I think marginal uses (and they are marginal only in their relation to the monopolies) of media should be supported. I suppose I support a kind of electronic/information welfare.

In terms of artists and other occasional or non-industrial users of production and presentation tools, we need common carriers. Community stations, community centres for video, film, photo and other projects are all attempts at common carrier media when they are at their best. Another example is a subsidized postal rate for non-profit publications. Similar in concept to the non-profit mailing rate system but more restrictive is the cable community channel.

The situation of "cable access", putting aside the use of facilities for non-community television production (a situation frowned upon at all stations), is similar to the situation of ham radio, in a sense. A kind of C.B. T.V.. And, indeed, when it works best it is most like citizen's band radio.

What artists are creating works for C.B.? I certainly don't oppose C.B. art - I have done one C.B. work myself - but the incentive is limited and it certainly won't become a major area of artist's use. Cable "community" stations are not the proper place for video artists as professionals anymore than they are for members of A.C.T.R.A., I.A.T.S.E., N.A.B.E.T. Actor's Equity, The Federation of Musicians or the Director's Guild. And this is for the same reasons.

I once produced a series of a weekly television program of artworks for three cable stations. The audience response was quite strong. The work was good- most of it being done specifically for the broadcasts. A major problem was that I and the other artists paid for the whole show. Our cost included labour, time, materials, equipment, rent and heat for our studios, etc. etc.

Every time non-industrial video producers get together to talk about cable, distribution or just survival the problem of fees comes up. No funding of any kind for fees on community channels will be paid. It is, in finality, a way artists assist large corporations in justifying their control of what would be a subscriber owned system.

At an "International Video Art Symposium", especially one considering fees and rights as a topic, one would expect an attempt to have a "state of the art" system of recompense for the artists involved. I am speaking for free, which I don't mind, as my expenses are paid. I am getting \$100.00 for the publication of these notes - which as you must know by now, is an embarrassment of riches. I was, however, asked to send some tapes to be shown before and during the symposium. There is no budget for fees or expenses for these showings. There is, I am assured, fees for the artists doing more formal presentations.

It seems somehow indicative of the situation of the video artist that I am paid for my writing. I am not paid for taking part in a discussion, but my expenses are paid. I am not paid for my work as an artist nor are my expenses as an artist paid. I am not surprised, but I think organizers

of symposiums on art - especially those dealing with problems of supporting art production and artists, should be interested in attempting to deal with these problems in the structure of the event.

Let us stop thinking that we assist or support better art production and presentation by not paying for it and by supporting ancillary functions over the presentation of art. I would rather be paid as an artist than as a writer. I would prefer you to be experiencing one of my works rather than listening to this.

Another concern of mine is the question of definition. I am concerned about the category of "video" art. I dislike the recent move to set up "video" departments in museums and art schools. In the same way as having a "painting", "print" or "sculpture" department, having a "video" department is an attempt to neutralize the artwork by mediumistic or technical containment. The "Museum of Modern Art Style" does not work well as a viewing space for video. Neither does the fake livingroom in a gallery. But these spaces respond just as poorly to truly contemporary art in any medium. This includes all multi-media, performance and other non-modernist work.

The approach I use is sculptural, I suppose.

One of our initial reasons for using video was to work with new considerations toward the object, not to accept another object - the television - as the correct one. The television was initially of interest to me as the embodiment of the opposite ideology of audience to the one I desire.

I feel the most interesting works of art on videotape have been done by artists who use various other media as well. Artists involved in producing tapes, when dealt with as "video artists", are paid less for the sale of their work, less for exhibitions of the work and as a matter of course, ask for and are given less control of the viewing situation.

I think the best artwork is outside of the production of those who consider themselves to be exclusively etchers, lithographers, painters, videographers, photographers or ceramicists.

I also think that the best curatorial and editorial work in all media is done by professionals interested in new cultural development and new art rather than any one specific medium.

Let us not create another "society of etchers and engravers."

Thank you.

Ian Murray

VIDEO LUNCH by Susan Britton

I rolled out of bed about noon. My luncheon engagement with D____. was scheduled for 20 past the hour. Special attention to the cardiovascular system, a quick facial, and finally a sparkling glass of Perrier water with just a swish of lemon. Spring was in the air. I hailed a cab at the corner. My entrance was timed perfectly. Gazing at the white linen and tall branches of quince in crystal, I decided to let D____. order. The result was the Coquilles St. Jacques and a fine bottle of Domaine Chandon. I immediately drank several large glasses and with that the conversation quickened.

"The phenomenon of the video symposium as a tolerated forum for maladroitness half-truths can be observed, once again, in these few days at Kingston. I wish to avoid the notorious stable of unresolvable video "issues" and choose to concentrate on the dubious conscience of the ruling class, i.e. art.

First let me point out what I don't want to talk about.

Video is dependent upon a relationship with the bureaucracies necessary for administration of hardware and facilities, and for the distribution of the products after the fact. Natch, this is a critical part of video but I think the relationship tends to be claustrophobic, in any case, I am irresponsible when it comes to keeping up with the burning issues on the administrative front, and particularly in light of the events of this symposium I think it's a waste of time for me to speculate on these problems without any resolutions to offer.

I would also like to take this opportunity to say that I don't like semiology."

"A sign of the times." remarked D____., refilling my glass.

"What I do want to talk about is the art part. The basic impetus. The impulse that is evident in using paper and pencil, paint, photographs, everything except of course contact improv., and the particular manifestation of this impulse in video. (Incidentally, contrary to the current contemptuous attitude held toward so-called "closet art" I am interested in the individual artist working alone in video or whatever, being eccentric, egocentric and elitist, cries of bourgeoisie self indulgence notwithstanding.) The exciting part of art is the connection with the world, at least if it incites some reaction, but, on the other hand, something has to happen before that point, which leads me to my own work in video and a basis for my remarks."

"...but first," interrupted D____., "more champagne?" He signaled to the waiter before I could reply.

"One of the works I have presented at this symposium is TUTTI QUANTI, a tape designed to be dense, manic and agitated. A nervous tape which continually reflects upon, gets neurotic about and doubts itself. Within it convictions rise up and fade quickly. All the scenarios have specific content but never leave the realm of formalism in the sense that it is a tape about art. An historical understanding is alluded to but impossible to grasp. It remains to the analysts, the lecturers, vague and incomprehensible. The illustrations provide no clues, they are just words on a wall. Commerce, violence and psychosis inspire belief, belief is for a reason, belief exists as a reaction, otherwise even life and death are a toss up, Lost Plays: Suicide Pact. The Speedo girls keep things moving along, they are the unconscious present, full

of catchy tunes and distractions. Meditation is rejected. The winged victory symbol looks vaguely Greek, vaguely Egyptian, vaguely 3rd Empire, vaguely Nazi Germany, actually a version of it is printed on my checks. It's a concrete representation of power and order. The camera work in the tape is deliberately about its own processes and revealing those processes, about looking as much as about showing the subject. The tape exists as a sculpture, the symmetry of three, the transmission on the side monitors are insistent in revealing, pulling out the rug, complicating the narrative, doubting the central images. I agree with the notion that an art piece is always about trying to define art. TUTTI QUANTI attempts this but does a double take in approaching the doubt and insecurity inherent in any project towards art. Doing art amplifies the problem of maintaining convictions. What could be more trivial and dismal than self contemplation and the struggle between form and content? It's a problem.

TUTTI QUANTI is the first section of a larger piece. The complete form denies both easy consumption and broadcast. LIGHTBULB GOES OUT, the second part, is minimalism, it's an hour of black and white stuff with a relentless audio. Doubt is left behind, except, that this is a tape about the end of the world, it's a document of the last three people on the planet dying of radiation."

I studied D____. carefully as he downed the last of our second bottle. Sweeping aside the quince and crystal, with an elegant and reckless gesture, he held forth at some length on the merits of this particular restaurant. In due course, our glasses were replenished and the conversation resumed.

"It's okay to be wrong, it's okay to be self-referential, it's okay to be a formalist, it's okay to be heavy handed, it's okay to be violently critical of everything, it's okay to be derivative, slanderous, sloppy, perverse, esoteric, ambiguous, self-indulgent, terrified, it's okay to have no solutions. It's not okay to be a self righteous dogmatist. It's not okay to be an arrogant technocrat. It's not okay to acquiesce to the totalitarian temper of the times. It's not okay to simply give up.

The time of art functioning as a private object of contemplation owned and negotiated by a member of the ruling class is gone. Painters, as well as video producers will agree. Cheap reproductions, cable casts, public galleries, alternative spaces, art magazines, etc. make art accessible to anyone who is interested. People can look at art if they want to. The conceptual artists of the '70's via the dematerialization of the art object did not close the doors to making art, in fact, I think they opened them up by getting rid of the object obsession, they got rid of lots of obsessions so that now artists can respond to the world with concentration and not get wrapped up in craft or formal aesthetics or show biz.

On the other hand, red alert, fascism is everywhere. (What I mean is, coming to, say political theory through art is really exciting and makes alot of sense as does getting a grip on your class contradictions. But blaming art and abandoning it because of its political failures is unreasonable. Anyways, self righteous politicians in the artworld are probably counter revolutionary since they inject false meaning into the lives of the liberal intelligentsia softening the antagonistic class lines in the process, blurring the borders.) Let's take our cue from the constructivists."

"Let's take our cue from the waiters," D____. suggested. Our delightful luncheon spot was empty, the now filthy white linen being whisked efficiently away. I noticed our last bottle was empty too. We drained our glasses and left.

The sun was blinding. I staggered slightly on the curb and gripped D_____'s arm for support. Oh-oh, only 3:30 and more than the class lines are blurred already.

"Making videotapes and watching videotapes develops certain insights into the relationship between the individual and technology at large, i.e. there is no place to hide. Specifically, video equipment is moody and emotional. It has to be coaxed, coerced and manipulated. The sensuality which may and does emerge is perverse and difficult. It's not naturally sensual, rather it's brittle and irritating and demanding of a continual simplification and reduction in terms of imagery. Video is about transmitting essentials and demands that there be something essential to transmit.

Anyone who has made videotapes understands these things and is also forced to understand alot about production in this society."

"We are lost." said D_____. suddenly.

"Not at all, " I replied, "This is an essential point, but there is no need for despondence..."

"No, no", he insisted, "I mean this is the wrong street." We managed to secure a taxi with ease.

"Art production does challenge the modern code of production proper. It challenges the sophisticated and intractable division of labour, the need for systematic and authoritative control, the detailed and irrevocable planning, the judgements based on use, i.e. cash generating potential. In working in video one constantly comes up against these attitudes toward production. Furthermore, the hardware itself (particularly as we sadly leave the era of the port-o-pac with a growing trend toward studios) has more in common with a corporation than an artist, expensive and exclusive and time is money etc. Beyond this, one is constantly having to debunk the technicians role in society, i.e. the modern alchemist, smug and reticent, the one who knows but won't tell. It is important that video artists work against these attitudes rather than neatly fitting in to the wretched oppression of production in this society."

D_____. was slumped in the backseat looking thoughtful and frankly, a bit dazed. Finally, we arrived and I regained his attention.

"The other videotape which I am screening, CASTING CALL, touches on these perils of production: via fear and loathing in the editing room and a refusal to knuckle under to the relentless demands of Production. The cast: the set, the props, the hardware, the script, the camera etc., are neurotic, sulky and uncooperative. Production races ahead but it is continually sabotaged and subverted.

CASTING CALL, was produced at the Western Front in Vancouver. Western Front Video provides excellent facilities for the visiting artist, as well as first class technical help, an almost unlimited access to the hardware and an indulgent and relaxed situation to work in. It's video paradise, unheard of in the east of Canada, but, working in that situation makes it very clear that high tech is seductive and that the important thing is to use it but not fall for it. High tech is a tool that we should manipulate rather than letting it manipulate us. Making video tapes involves tension, insecurity and general anxiety as does making any kind of art, and so art has a purpose, and doubt and skepticism are anti-totalitarian and furthermore, submerging ones ego is just giving in to general fascism."

D _____. turned to reply. We collided upon entering the piano bar, hit the broadloom briefly. So quiet and relaxed, one of our favorite spots to while away the après-midis. Where is that idiotic waiter? Doesn't anyone care about my thirst? I began to fidget. D _____. took control immediately. "Two double vodkas, soda on the side, no ice...toute de suite."

"During this symposium there has been alot of yakking about satellites and beaming stuff around and catching it in video dishes, beam it up, lock in, etc. etc. I'm totally suspicious about this McLuhanesque utopianism and equally suspicious about this undefined INFORMATION that for some reason should be globally hit up. I like to know my audience and hate the thought of bombarding the public, expecially with the kind of art that transcends borders, classes, and time. What kind of art could that be?"

"Ho hum." suggested D _____. The room lurched to the left without warning. I felt cool and refreshed as the soda soaked through my dress. I managed to collect my thoughts finally.

"To reiterate, we should not allow technology to manipulate us as artists using video. From the particular to the general, when society can't think fast enough to keep up with its tech, a war gets going...October...possibly September."

I looked at D _____. across a table full of empty glasses. The sun was fading fast and so was I. After a few quick chasers we decided to grab a cab to our regular evening hangout. Therewas a light rain, neon was reflecting from the pavement, making it extremely difficult to walk. I stumbled into the back seat. D _____. became argumentative with the driver. I lost interest and withdrew into a snowy, black and white dream. RF out to...video out to video in... checking the tracking level...AGC on... checking...checking...1...2..3.4 test test test

Susan Britton

MAKING VIDEO: CABLE ACCESS, ARTISTS COOPERATIVES, FEES & RIGHTS by Paul Wong

Video Art- Yes, It is an art form. No, it is not a passing whim.

Although the use of the medium by artist has been much heralded, exhibited and critically acclaimed a major portion of the art public and art mandrins still only acknowledge video, it's presence as something nouveau, not quite legitimate art and really only treat it as form in which serious artist will venture to, as an aside from their usual norm of working, video is something to "fool around and to experiment with". The fact is a great many artist do just that, they foolaround with video.

It's boring is still the usual norm of criticism, "boring" is such a nice & intelligent remark by such nice & intelligent people. Another generality - It's not marketable, it's not valuable and not worth collecting, but let's have a video exhibition, as almost every other major museum has done likewise, the board of directors will inquire into what it is, what is the good, what is the bad, what is the art, where is the art and will probably conclude what's happened to the state of art and lets get back to basics.

Video Art is no longer experimental although elements of it most certainly are, such as with those artists who are involved in the technical manipulation of imagery and most certainly areas of experimentation occur in the use of video as a communications device, such as "slow scan" and in "satellite transmissions". When an artist approaches a work with clarity, direction and has a sense of the final product and carries out this work with his/her skills in relationship to the capabilities of the medium in which they are working , that is and cannot be classified as "experimental art".

Unfortunately much of the media arts must gain acceptance from within the ranks of the existing stagnated art institutions, fortunately due to the very nature of video technology, the video artist can also extend the interest beyond and outside the realms of the established modes of presentation. Perhaps to the artist's advantage is the whole questioning, hesitation and ignorance within the ruling ranks. The video artist community has played an important role validating, defining and re-defining the nature of video and the multi-faceted use of the medium by artist. Does or does not the use of video by an artist immediately qualify as a work of art? The biggest disadvantage that faces the video artist is in the very use of the television form as the means of expression. The first time video art viewers cannot usually get beyond the boredom, the boredom being this is not television time, this is slow, this is not entertaining and concludes it as being bad television. Well, you can hardly blame your audiences, after all they have been subjected to and have consumed countless hours of television, their perceptions of what is and what should be expected is jaded. The artist's role is to broaden the perception, the audiences must be willing to accept that this is a different angle, that this is a further exploration of a medium which has been exploited and institutionilized by the "deliver you to the advertisers" television industry. The artist and independent video producers can create regardless of these precedents dictated from the industry.

Further to the new perception, the viewer must be educated to differentiate between the different uses and approaches to the medium. The whole area of "independent video production" at first glance is a confusing issue. One must get beyond the surfaces and to be selective about programming. In the

past, art video and "community television" were more or less lumped together, as they shared the same tools and more often than not used the same resources and often the same people in productions. This is not to knock "community television" which is valid and important to the continuing development of new culture and communications. Is it community television that's given video art a bad name or is it the other way around? Unfortunately much of Community Television Programming in the past has tended to parody established television formats, interviews, docu-dramas, news shows and because of limited budgets and basic hardware much of the programming appears as "amateur television productions" and again labelled as "bad television" by the audiences. Not all programming needs to be in that category; a well researched, a well executed and creative handling of the medium and content becomes a work of excellence. Let's get beyond the mediocrity.

Perhaps one of the major roles that the media artist can play in the society as we know it, is the demythification of television and in the components that make it, in the use of the hardware, in its content and decentralization of the power base. For a great many years and even now, the independent video producer was seen as a possible threat to those employees of the cable programming industry. The artist was more often than not intimidated and met with discouraging and condescending remarks when approaching these stations as possible outlets for broadcast and creation of their work. The remarks of "come now, you really expect us to air these"! The excuse most often used in refusal was not in the content of the work but rather in the lowest form of technology which we used in making the tape which did not meet trade standards. Because we were naive and not exactly strong in number, dollars or votes and most of us not being all that technically sophisticated, we were more often than not rejected by the myth makers of technology. If we would have taken their advice to heart, most of us would have enrolled into broadcasting school - a nice place to get the bum steer - fortunately we were aware enough to separate television from how we know it, from what our particular concerns were. I think that it is safe to assume that our particular concern is not in reaching the "prime-time mass audience" but that is not to say that we do not want to reach as wide an audience as possible. We are very much concerned with broadening the distribution market as well as broadening our audiences, but that is not to say we are willing to do that at a level of degraded prostitution of ourselves and at the detriment of our products. We will continue to present and create our work in climates that are complimentary and conducive to that work.

Broadening our audiences and broadening our markets are two fold, and opinions and rationales of this are more often than not contradicting. On the one hand we have the work and concerns of the social action videographers, the community television producers and the work of video artists, the markets and audiences for these specialized programs are distinctively different. Most certainly there is overlap amongst these fractions but also a certain amount of animosity, suspicion and hostility exist between the camps and geographic regions. Although we are all individual units, I think that it is important not to lose sight of our commonality as slight as it may often seem. The arts cannot afford to isolate themselves; we must be supportive and sensitive to the needs of others as hopefully they will be to ours.

As cultural workers we perhaps are working towards the same overall objectives, that is in the development and acceptance of new cultural identities, looking and using video as a form of literacy and as a specialized

form for programming and communicating. It is equally important that video art be properly integrated within existing art systems and be given the same serious treatment as other art forms.

Perhaps "access to hardware", the commonality of need created the inter-action between the different users of the medium and which has also been the cause of problems inherent with diversity, indifference, funding and collective decision making. The inter-action primarily occurred with producers getting together for the purposes of sharing resources and in establishing hardware pools in the forms of co-ops, collectives and spaces for the purposes of production and presentation. Funded primarily through federal cultural agencies, centers sprung up across the country, most of these centers were multi-faceted with loose and broad ideals, optimistic of the new decade and with a naive sense of "access". In more recent years, in getting ready for the 80's the new and still existing centers have undergone vast changes in structure, administration and in defining their specific terms of access. With no model the right model to follow, each center has adapted policies to meet the immediate concerns and needs of the community of people it purports to serve. Video Centers have become highly specialized in the areas of presentation, production and distribution.

The presentation, production and distribution of video art is evident in many institutions, galleries, museums, colleges and at the independent centers. There are varied degrees in which some of these facilities fulfill aspects of the communities' needs, but also major areas of insubordination in the treatment and inadequacies in the handling of video.

This paper was written as an oral presentation for the Kingston symposium and was meant to string together personal thoughts, opinions and generalizations and to serve as background information as a departure to stimulate further discussion. I presented an ad hoc list of questions and grey areas, which were photo-copied and handed out to the participants. Unfortunately, at this much later rewriting of the rough draft, I am unable to locate the original list, not that it really matters as very few of those issues did get discussed. Some of those possible topics included:

- Standardization of hardware. Whats next? Is 1/2" dead, if it is should we bury it here?
- The lack of knowledgeable curators in the public museum. Does video belong in the museums and how best could it be handled?
- The lack of competent and well informed and serious criticism.
- How to deal with Cable, why should we give them the programs for nothing.
- Audience development.
- The handling of installations and audio/visual constructs.
- So forth.....

it doesn't much matter what the exact list of issues were, rather it is important to identify and clarify areas of contention and as artists we must have a say in the direction, to re-evaluate and to assess to direct our immediate and future concerns. How far are we willing to compromise, is it to our detriment or is it to our advantage?

As expected the Symposium did not come to any conclusions about anything. That appears to be the norm of such gatherings; one attends, one speaks, one addresses certain issues, one listens, views countless hours of video-tapes, drinks too much, sleeps too little, makes a few contacts, exchanges of addresses and then goes back home to sort out what had occurred the past few days....perhaps certain ideas and attitudes will change, be adopted and surface within your framework....

"Reprinted from MONTREAL TAPES - VIDEO AS A COMMUNITY OR POLITICAL TOOL, Vancouver Art Gallery, 1-23 April 1978"

Pierre Falardeau and Julien Poulin are widely recognized as some of the leading video-producers in Québec; Robert Forget, currently at the National Film Board in Montreal, was one of the founding members of Vidéographe and initiator of the St. Jerome television station (see introduction); Penni Jaques was Film and Video Officer 1975-75 at the Canada Council; Robert Morin is one of the founding members of the recently formed "Cooperative de Production Vidéoscopique de Montreal."

Each provides particular, and valuable insights into the situation in Quebec with regard to video.

Their answers to the following questions are presented side by side, allowing broader representation of views with respect to a very difficult set of issues, as well as the possibility of comparison.

Where questions did not coincide, or where the specific set of issues relating to their individual participation in the video community needed developing, we have presented the material in its original interview format.

The interviewer is Jo-Anne Birnie Danzker. Her name and those of the participants have been abbreviated to their initials. Pierre Falardeau speaks also for Julien Poulin.

IS VIDEO IN QUEBEC IN A STATE OF CRISIS?

PF/JP I would say yes, I would say it is in a state of crisis - like everything else, like film, like paper, like economy. Yeah it's in a state of crisis. A few years ago it was a little bit easier because there was more money. Video came after 1970 and it was in a period - there was a lot of money, and people didn't know what to do with the money. Sometimes they created things like Vidéographe because there was a lot of money to let the children play a little bit. Only a rich society, who have surpluses can do things like that. And these things were the first to drop when the crisis start. Now things like that are closed. And also community television a little bit everywhere in Quebec. And there's only a few people who still do video. But also Julien tried to say that in another way it's not in crisis because it's - they are using it in the companies, in the school and in the congress to shoot all kind of stupid things. So they are using video as Sony like it, so in that way it is not in a state of crisis.

.....

IN QUEBEC THERE SEEMS TO BE A DISTINCTION MADE BETWEEN FILMMAKERS WHO WORK IN VIDEO, AND WHAT WE WOULD CALL VIDEO-ARTISTS OR VIDEO-WORKERS

PF/JP Julien is saying what is making video? I am not able to make this distinction between filmmakers who work in video and video-artists myself, and I think also Julien. We are just people who work with images and sound and if it's 16 mm or 35, cinemascope or super 8 or video - for us it's the same thing. Maybe we are wrong, but we never discovered the so called specificity of video - maybe we are wrong. There's certain differences

between these medium, but in general I think it's the same thing - it's images and sound, that you put together in a certain way - that's all.

THE CATALOGUE FOR QUEBEC '75 SEEMED TO PROPOSE A CONNECTION BETWEEN RECENT POLITICAL (SEPARATIST) HISTORY IN QUEBEC AND THE USE OF VIDEO: WOULD YOU AGREE WITH THAT PROPOSITION.

These things are very different because the story and the life of these two people are very different. People in Quebec made social or political things because they are a little nation that is trying to survive in North America. They are "au pied du mur" so that's why they try to fight with everything they have. It's just like the difference between what can be done in the United States and what is done by the Palestinians - I don't know if you understand what I tried to say. It's just that we have other interests and that's why we are doing these things.

IS IT NOT IRONIC THAT UNDER BOURASSA'S GOVERNMENT, UNDER LAPORTE'S RECOMMENDATIONS ON CULTURAL SOVEREIGNTY, THAT THE PROCESS OF CHANGE TOWARDS A PQ GOVERNMENT COULD BE ACCELERATED, AND FINANCIALLY SUPPORTED: AND YET NOW, UNDER A PQ GOVERNMENT, THERE SEEMS TO BE A MALAISE IN THE ART COMMUNITY WHICH IS FINANCIAL AS WELL AS INTELLECTUAL?

PF/JP First I want to say that Bourassa's and Laporte's ideas on sovereignty are just shit, because I think it's completely crazy to separate cultural sovereignty and political sovereignty. Cultural sovereignty is only possible if politically you are sovereign. Second, you were talking about a malaise as financial as intellectual right now. I don't think these are the right words. It's not a malaise. But maybe right now the people are talking much more. We feel everywhere discussions. The people, not only the artists, are talking a lot and learning a lot of what's happening now. What will happen? I don't know. We feel right now a very big "brassage d'idées." Julien is saying that the head of everybody is like a boiler. There's too much ideas trying to make their way. But there's a lot of people sitting on their big ass drinking beer and smoking dope... talking about art, or India or cars. History is going fast. There are some chances that a people can't miss. It's time to create if we want to survive.

WHAT DO YOU THINK THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE ARTIST AND HIS/HER SOCIETY SHOULD BE?

PF/JP Another time that's a very big question, maybe too big for our small heads. Julien is saying that the artist is a witness of his society ("témoin" in French) but not a witness in the bad, in the passive way, but in a more active way. He's the one who shows to the people his own image, the contradictions. I don't know, maybe it's a very bad explanation, but especially for that question it's pretty hard for us to talk in English. I don't know if you will find a word in English to translate "témoin" but what we are trying to explain is that the artist is showing the people to himself, he is a kind of reflection of the people, he is the result of his people, and maybe he shows the best or the worst part of the people. Julien is also insisting a lot on the relationship of equality that has to be settled - it's not because you are an artist that you have to talk two feet over the ground and people pray at you like you are a god. It's important to have a relation of equality. Again Julien is saying that society has to use the artist and to ask a lot from the artist. Julien is saying that the society has to use the artist as they use a plumber. When your pipes are out of order you need the best plumber, so you need the best artist as possible. The role

of the artist is very important. Julien dreams about the time when the people will come to his place, knock on the door and say you are good to talk or you are good to make film, we need you. That's a little bit what we felt when we worked last year with the people in Chad. They needed our work, like they needed to eat or like they needed guns. For them, our work was important - in a way essential. Society has to use its artists.

.....

INTERVIEW WITH PIERRE FALARDEAU AND JULIEN POULIN

JBD Your recent tapes (Le Magra, The Algerian Tapes, and Pea Soup) have direct political implications. Do you feel that an artist's activity should be, or is intrinsically, political?

PF/JP Julien is trying to understand what's the meaning of 'political' exactly because it's a big word. I don't think an artist's activity should be political; but I think all activity - even the activity of an artist - is political. Artistic tapes are as political as other tapes. Walt Disney is as political as Gilles Groulx's films. James Bond is political. 'Ironsides' is political. These activities have a role in the society and that's it, they play a political role. They serve some interest. That's why I think all activity is political. After that it just depends what kind of political idea you defend.

JBD Why have you made Le Magra available in English, and allowed distribution of your tapes through centres such as Art Metropole in Toronto - actions which have been rejected by other video-workers in Quebec?

PF/JP I don't know about the other video workers in Quebec but Julien is just saying that he is an open guy, open to the world and he don't want to live in a ghetto. I would say that I'm not a racist first, that I want to talk to everybody on the Earth. If we were able to put Le Magra in Spanish, or in Inuit, or in Swahili, or in Russian or Chinese we would do it. And also Le Magra is not what you call a 'separatist' tape, it's just a very human, and general idea about what repression is and it can help people everywhere in the world to understand how 'they' form 'cops' or how 'they' form soldiers. It can be helpful in Vancouver, or in Tokyo or in Johannesburg, or Amsterdam or Algiers - so that's why we did it in English. That's all. And sometimes, like the Algerian tape, people are talking a lot - that's the only reason it's just in French. It would be too hard to translate all that. For Pea Soup, we are ready to translate it into all the languages of the Earth, the problem is it will be impossible, but we were doing this tape for the world, even if it can look a bit pretentious. We have to talk about us, first for ourselves, and then to explain to others what's happening. It's important for the others, especially for the Canadian people to understand what it's all about, not to be manipulated by politicians defending economic interests.

JBD In the catalogue description for The Algerian Tapes (A force de Courage) at Videographe, you write that the peasants/farmers talk of 'the land, the misery, the exploitation, the struggle for national liberation, socialism and independence. The Algerians are talking about Quebec.' It seems that you are presenting models of the problem, rather than models of a solution.

PF/JP I think we don't want to present models of a solution we have to find our own solutions. We don't want to import models from anywhere in the world. At the same time we are nationalists, but at the same time we are internationalists, as Julien said before we want to open ourselves to the world. We wanted to talk about the people of Algeria was just one people that liberated themselves and was trying to do certain things. We wanted to do certain things. We wanted to show to the people of Quebec that it is possible to take your own land and take what belongs to you. That's all. It's not bigger than that. We don't want to present models of the solution imported from elsewhere. We wanted to show an example not a model.

JBD You have spent five years preparing Pea Soup. That period (1972-77) is surely one of profound change in Quebec. What were you attempting with Pea Soup, and how have these goals changed over the five year period?

PF/JP Julien is saying first that's a big question, a very big one, maybe too big...Julien is saying that 'cinq ans c'est une peanut' - that means five years it's nothing. It's not a very big change. It's not like studying history over 20 or 50 years. What we wanted to do with Pea Soup was to make a 'témoignage,' to certify to bear witness, about a certain period of time during the life of the Quebec people. We just wanted to make a kind of 'ethnographic' film. Maybe in the next hundred years we could see Pea Soup as a description of a people at a certain time. We wanted to show the life of these people and also to expose the mechanism of the exploitation of these people which can be applied to a lot of other people in the world and for us it was also a way of understanding these mechanisms of alienation, exploitation, colonization, etc. Also from an aesthetic point of view, it was very important for us to work on the style. We used a 'collage' style (editing is collage anyway). It was for us a way of getting out of the old forms done by Hollywood, 'occidental' cinema. We wanted to find a more original, our own, way of looking at life and telling about life. For us, this style of collage was a big - it was very hard to fix together maybe 50 or 70 different subjects - but at the same time it was full of enthusiasm. We had 45 hours of material. Right now we have an hour and a half tape. It was very interesting to play with all these subjects, to find a way to relate each of them. I don't know if it's a success but the experience was interesting. If it's good, I don't know, but we tried to do it. I don't know how the spectator will receive it, but for us it was a nice attempt. Also how it changed during these five years. I think when we started, this period was very 'sombre', it was a very bad period under Bourassa - a very depressing one. Everything was depressing, we were depressed ourselves, because of that. And I think there were a lot of people depressed. But even during these days we didn't want to talk about the life of the people here and let them in this depressing state. We were trying to find certain things that can give hope to the people and give them the force to fight more (hope and courage for ourselves first). But at this time it was pretty hard to do. But after the 15th of November everything was changed. It was kind of a liberation, it was like an ice breaking, it was the lights on a boat - it was a reason to hope. After that we were not depressed at all. We wanted to work more and more. We were thinking that things were starting and that we had to finish this work the soonest as possible to play our part in that ice breaking. That's what change the last year was - much more encouraging. Nothing is done. Nothing is finished. Now it's time to work more! It's starting.

.....

JBD Are you satisfied with the accessibility and distribution of centres such as Art Metropole and Vidéographe, or are you attempting to broaden your audience through broadcast?

PF/JP ...We think these places reach a certain category of persons but for us it is not enough. We want to talk to more people than that. I think video is essentially a social medium so we try to reach more people than just these. That's why since Le Magra, each time we make a tape, we transfer it to 16 mm - it's not very good, but it's another way you can distribute your things and that way we can send our work to Europe or Africa without problems of video. For broadcast we try but they don't seem to like us very much, first because we work in black and white and they prefer Liberace in colour to Le Magra in black and white. So each time we try to go to CBC or CFTM but they aren't very much interested. They refuse our work because of 'technical problems,' that's what they say, but behind that I think it's a way to tell us we don't want your work here, that's all. They refuse our work because it's politic and they use 'technics' as a mask to refuse. They prefer to let the people dream. Usually we distribute our things ourselves right now and if other people want to distribute it, that's OK with us. It would be great to work a little more on distribution. That's what we will do after Pea Soup will be done. It's crazy to work five years on a tape and let it on your table or let a few hundred people see it at Vidéographe or Art Metropole. We didn't do this work for the elite that is going to Art Metropole or Vidéographe. We are doing it for the people, and these places don't reach the people. So, that's why, in the next year, we will put a lot of energy into distribution.

JBD One of the arguments that has been used to limit accessibility to broadcast is that video is 'unprofessional, without quality and definition.' Do your budgets, and accessibility to proper editing facilities, mean that your tapes will be 'unprofessional'?

PF/JP We don't fight very much on these words 'professional' or 'unprofessional'. We just think that our work is the best we can do with what we have and that's important for us. If the people on the broadcast were not so stupid they would accept it, but I think it's a way to keep some people outside. Again, they use 'technics' and words like 'professional' to maintain censorship. What's 'professional'?

JBD Why is there such a profound division within the art community currently? Why is there so little communication between various groups who are working in video?

PF/JP First we don't feel that profound division within the art community because we don't play too much with the art community. We prefer the community itself. We prefer to live with the people than with the artists. I don't feel this division between various groups - we have very good relations with other people working. We don't work together, but that's all. We are interested in what they do and I think it's the same for them. The only difference can be between maybe the 'so-called' artists and the people who are using video in a different way. For us, our work has to be a tool. And it's art. For us art is a tool.

February 1978

LONDON VIDEO ARTS' BRITAIN AND THE EUROPEAN SCENE by David Hall

The discussion tonight is intended to hinge specifically around distribution, and I have been asked to comment upon the position of London Video Arts, but first I would like to make some brief observations on British art exposure in general since the situation in any country puts a perspective on the problems, triumphs and failures of each of its constituent activities. Also it will be useful to remember that I am first an artist, and as you will see it has largely been out of necessity that I have found myself, together with a number of others, in the position of promoter, distributor and even exhibition organiser as well.

In recent years it is quite clear that the economic climate in Britain is seriously affecting private and to a large extent public patronage. This is especially noticeable in a country where in any case public support for the theatre and music has always grossly outweighed interest in the visual arts. And a third factor should also be acknowledged (related to its exposure abroad), and one which I shall dwell on for a moment. That is geography and a surprising lack of communication. I am referring to the rather obvious fact that Britain is a set of islands, and whilst it is the case that we are part of Europe, that narrow strip of water between us and the rest presents a significant problem in personal communication, at least in the art world. On the other side of the Channel artists, promoters and exhibition organisers move overland around the European Continent with comparative ease. With the development of a network of autoroutes, bahns and stradas the cultural life is, despite language differences, becoming rapidly accessible. It is, for instance possible to be at an opening in Belgium, Holland or Northern Germany within two or three hours out of Paris and vice versa, and quite cheaply. Whether or not my colleagues from over there agree this is providing a context for a single European 'identity' in terms of artistic activity and interchange might be something they can answer. But it is fairly evident that Britain has too small a part in what might be termed the European artistic community (and it is certainly not for lack of quality or quantity of work, there is and always has been a very intelligent and productive art scene). Of course the physical element is not much of an argument for this state of affairs, it is I believe more that artists and their supporters feel somewhat psychologically distanced (in both directions) by that narrow strip of water. It is an historical barrier which is hard to shake off.

By comparison, the British connection with North America and vice versa has a real problem in physical distance, though this has proved only minimal in the west to east flow. Aside from greater financial back-up in terms of direct promotional aid, American artists (certainly in the States) have the added advantage of a substantial amount of indirect communication crossing the Atlantic. The production of a multitude of magazines, journals and other publications in North America (and also on the European Continent to a lesser degree) provides ready and regular reference to activities outside of Britain. Inside Britain such coverage is limited, especially since the virtual collapse of our only international product Studio International, to a small internally orientated circulation of one or two informative journals, which in any case show little interest in such 'alternative' media as video.

I am not intending to paint a dismal picture of art life in Britain, which as I have already said is extremely active, but to illuminate a comparatively difficult context in which video artists work. A context in which an artist choosing such a medium not only encounters the inevitable problems that others must elsewhere, but where all activity noticeably functions in a somewhat isolated situation coupled with considerable financial restriction.

However, there is a degree of optimism there which equals that observed anywhere else. In fact, as I have implied, the nature of the situation is one which demands possibly greater self-propulsion by the artists themselves than most other places, certainly in video. As there are not, and never have been, any private galleries or institutions to speak of that have shown more than a token interest in video, and as public galleries tend on the whole to wait for the qualitative speculation of the private sector to realise, the incentive so far has come almost entirely from the practitioners to promote as well as to execute the work.

Britain now has nearly a ten year history of artists' video production. Throughout that time there has been a number of significant shows held there. Almost without exception each one was either initiated, if not totally organised, by an artist. Tape distribution until recently was handled directly, with all the problems that entails for the artist concerned. Access to foreign works was impossible other than catching them briefly at a show.

There has been, over the years, various attempts in Europe to initiate systems for greater accessibility to tapes and also distribution. It is of course very necessary as, among other things, gallery exhibition is by no means a satisfactory method of exposure. Where it has always been possible to view paintings and other objects in an exhibition context because it is traditionally accepted as the right context and because the time devoted to each piece is entirely in the control of the viewer, video, certainly videotape, is out of context psychologically, due to the traditional expectations imposed on it by dominant TV - demanding comparatively intimate viewing, and practically, due to the difficulties of successfully exhibiting this time-based medium (especially in large group shows) where each piece necessarily demands a time control on the viewer.

Attempts in Belgium in early 76 by two assistant directors of a cultural centre to remedy the lack of international distribution in Europe by organising a Europeanlink failed through a sudden and mysterious change in their personal circumstances, though approaches to galleries, institutions and artists had been encouraging. Similarly discussions between artists and representatives of various organisations held at a symposium such as this one in Holland in early 77 proved equally positive but little developed beyond it. And this has been the pattern in Europe since the advent of artists' video. Pockets of group activity regularly appear and disappear. Numerous conferences and symposia have been held, informal meetings and discussions have taken place, and invariably the problems of international distribution have arisen. Yet little has been resolved.

At this point it is worth considering the model of the film co-operatives. They emerged earlier in a situation not unlike the one we now have in European video. Many galleries and other institutions were slow to recognise that independent film-making formed a significant part of the artistic endeavour. Equally film distributors, private and public, failed

to accept that the work was more than an amateurish and passing phase (one has heard similar murmurs in art circles about video, as though it were a 'movement' rather than a means). But due to a great deal of incentive from the film-makers themselves, co-ops in London, New York and elsewhere established not only an international network for distribution and shows, but inaugurated an international platform for critical and theoretical discourse. Since then their sceptics have (certainly in Britain) adjusted their views, discuss, even acclaim the work, and now provide substantial support and funding. The co-ops are still not without their problems of course, and I am not implying that everything about their procedural conduct should apply to video. However, the basic principle is not one to be ignored.

This has of course already been taken up by community-video people, though it would seem their needs are somewhat different. Their work is usually integrated into a cycle of events and recordings are not often considered as the ultimate goal. They are part of a 'process' of collective involvement where tapes may rarely have significance outside their place of origin and are comparatively self-sufficient from the need for separate viewing and distribution (this appears to be the case in Britain, though it may be a point of contention here).

Having set the scene in Britain, and hinted at the European situation as I see it, I must now say something specific about London Video Arts which grew in that context. Modelled loosely on the co-op format, it was born out of discussion between myself and six or seven other British video artists, who formed as a steering committee in late 1976. The purpose was to establish a non-profit organisation to promote, show and distribute independently made artists' video. More particularly, the idea was to set up a workshop to facilitate tape production and experimentation with installations and performances; to provide a regular venue for showing these works and works produced elsewhere, including abroad; to create a tape library and distribution system which would include international as well as home products; and, perhaps most important in the long term, to stimulate dialogue on current practical and theoretical issues.

Needless to say, lack of funding was and still is our stumbling block. The history of our attempts is already, after less than three years, extremely lengthy and too tedious to relate in detail. Suffice it to say that public funding bodies have been the only recourse, and they have been slow (or arguably cautious in what is often considered as the classic British manner). Despite the example of the success of the film co-operatives, it seems video has to go through the same struggle for an equivalent length of time to attain sufficient credibility. This is surprising when evidence of the status of much of the work has been established for some time (unlike the co-ops when they first began); when models for promotion and distribution have been established elsewhere, as they have over here; and when most of our approaches are made to the very same bodies who now amply support independent film. Maybe one of the reasons for this is just that their interest is still primarily with film.

However, London Video Arts persisted in the recognition that the initial all-out plan had to be phased over a much longer period than anticipated. Applications to finance the whole project were rejected and so we concentrated our efforts first on establishing an international tape library and on producing a catalogue. Following this we were offered a space in a public funded gallery to commence promotional shows one evening a week starting last year. Having by this time received just enough finance for catalogue

printing and the allocation of one playback system from the Arts Council we were, after two years, in business. In the last three months we have set up an administrative office, and distribution has begun in earnest. Through all this time administration, collation of catalogue material and layout, organisation of shows, and so on, has been performed by the artists.

Whilst this situation could continue indefinitely, the signs are that it will most likely improve. Through the realisation of our efforts so far; response to the invitation to have works included in the library by artists; response by prospective tape hirers; and response by a large audience attending the promotional shows, the Arts Council of Great Britain is currently holding, for the first time, serious discussions on substantial budgets before them for administrative aid, equipment and etc.

Artist-run organisations have their obvious pitfalls. An overtly partisan attitude can often go against the diplomatic strategies necessary in developing the empathy of their patrons and peers alike. Artists, by nature of their vocation, are often well equipped to illuminate on their personal objectives and needs, but for them to sustain a common collective endeavour with the minimum compromise can be quite an internal battle. It would be misleading to suggest London Video Arts does not encounter these difficulties, which from time to time it does and they are as real as those it finds outside.

Through all this LVA has, I would maintain, sown the seed of a unique procedure for art video exposure in Europe. It has begun to develop a library of works which is, by and large, purposely non-selective. To quote our first catalogue: 'This catalogue represents a large cross section of artists' work in videotape, video performance and video installations from the UK and abroad. As such it is the first of its kind in Europe. Anyone working experimentally and anyone documenting artworks in the medium is eligible for inclusion in the library.' However, communications being what they are, there are bound to be limitations, and we go on to state: 'The catalogue does not pretend to fully represent the diverse range of artists' video. The artists in it are those who were known to be working with video by the members of the present committee at the time of compilation and inevitably there have been omissions'. I would add to that there were omissions by people who we approached but felt they could not take part for personal reasons, or most often because they were limited by specific contracts with other organisations or galleries. This last point is perhaps in itself a subject for discussion. LVA was not set up as another competitive dealer in the art market. It is non-profit and is prepared to act as direct agent for artists, or mediator for other organisations alike. It is simply out to create a better means of accessibility. Selection is made at the hiring or purchasing stage by the customer. The protective, isolated, and often elitist attitude adopted by many distributors at present precludes any true appraisal of the state of the art as an international activity. Whilst, for obvious reasons, it will be virtually impossible to make much change in the private sector, I believe that public and publicly funded interests could do much to improve and extend accessibility and interchange. A network based on such a liason is something we should certainly discuss here.

Finally, and briefly, LVA's catalogue is offered to anyone interested in hiring or purchasing tapes, showing installations or staging performances. On tapes our main source of feedback is coming from colleges and universities,

where not only lecturers use them in class, but where more and more playback facilities are appearing in libraries. The market for home systems is also taking a firm hold in Britain, and one can conceive of that as a possible outlet in the not too distant future. Exhibition organisers are using the catalogues as a useful textbook to the activity as well as a listing since it includes lengthy statements by each artist. Copyright remains with the artist and is monitored by us. Broadcast outlets are minimal in Britain. We have only three air channels and about the same on cable. The BBC control two of the first. The competitive element between them and the third which is commercial is staked on fighting for the highest audience ratings, this, coupled with the belief that technical excellence is at a premium (above all else) and dominated by over-cautious and powerful unions, leaves little room for the risky business of entering into 'experimental' broadcasts. Occasionally a renegade producer has shown video art, but it is soon forgotten as a freakish phenomenon. And the cable stations, which are based in country towns, are very much local community projects struggling to survive on heavy subsidies. The concept of TV as art has not occurred to them, despite numerous efforts. But we are working on it.....

David Hall

VIDEO AND ITS DISTRIBUTION by Maria Gloria Biccocchi

I will focus on the apparently most congenial channel of distribution for the art tapes, which seems to be the broadcasting television. The language of video is a language by subtraction reductive rather than synthetic ("less is more" - Mies Van Der Rohe). It does not have the urgency or emergence of an enlarged communication, it is something said among few - the cut here is a clipping. So far, within a majority system as television (and the intention is similar both for the official or independent channel, as the medium is perceived as the message), the videoart (and which one? how can we put everything together, just only because the medium used is the video?), the videoart showed in TV, I was saying, is lost and misunderstood, a message from minority to minority, and nothing in effect would change. The truth of television is all commercials: the hidden persuasion of the name, of the image shown, the emulation. But emulation means fashion, and becomes common sense, standardization, homogenation, mediocrity, collective mimesis, fear of the self.

And how could an art tape be emulated, if its own territory is inside the expanded insight of the artists? If it is implosion with respect to the explosion of the TV product, which is, I stress, pre-cooked, pre-judged by the opinion polls?

This is a reflection on this possibility, concerning the video distribution problem, but how can we really answer this, as the cartesian logic is not part of our problem, the ideology is missing on a community level, and the articulation of the language of each single video is related to the artist's feeling?

In TV the art video would be shown as a work of art, object, and instead it is a subject (produced and not reproduced). And as an object (like painting or other) should be copiable, possessed, stealable. But a painting is together idea, project and object. Instead nobody could even steal a tape, as it is a message, idea and project: if somebody would copy the idea, the subjectivity of the counterfeiter will always appear, and the work would be "other". Instead in television everything is imitable, as idea, project and result, from advertising, violence, TV games, the commonplace. Television is made to be imitated, and this makes it a means of assumption. Just as the food goes through the mouth, television through people's eyes and ears pervades us with social models, with reality's own recorded image, which is already us. Television steals our reality to repropose it again to us and make us comfortable with the same, that, before being processed through the electronic circuit, was not manifest to us.

The art tapes, let's talk about video art only, not to enlarge the problem, is a point of departure, without circularity, it is horizontal, unique, and, so far, useless to the community of TV spectators. (A-useful, as a-moral).

On this matter, if we take some TV program, we have a case in point (see channel 13th, New York). Here the art tapes are edited according to criteria which reflect the broadcaster's needs, not the artist's, and, as a result, become television.

The editing in this use, also amounts to giving importance to the technical aspects rather than to the message, which is again TV, and not vt, from public to private, instead of from private to public.

There have been projects to create a cable TV system, linking museums to private homes, it would be a great idea to enlarge the museum's influence, but this would not be television.

Television (what TV means in social influence) is a trap, a way of misunderstanding the free possibilities of the medium we are talking about.

When an artist uses the medium as a language (that is electronic language) the uninformed will see this as "magic", the technicians as "professional"...and also as art, perhaps. This aspect will seldom be predominant, under the circumstances. Video, here, can only "mime" TV, becoming no longer a message, but merely a coded, easily readable medium-language (medium-middle-mediocre).

Television also needs "STAR", but in respect to cinema, TV, as it tends towards the homogenization of the message, gives us, instead of the "star system" phenomenon, a reduced image. As Levy Strauss says, following interpretations of myths diminish, the near we become to the present. TV acts in present: it is unable to give us myths in all their glory. So it is a reducing medium. In mythology the myth is reduced to human, in television the myth is related to mediocrity, to medium. This is not the case for videotape. The artist is an idol for few people, and video art is the artist's work, it is a subject made by objects, not just the apparition of the star on the screen. So this medium does not belong to the "star system".

Video must be presented, argued about, and, as it stands not by itself, it is not yet a myth. People want only myths, the one that they get from television. If videoart will not soon stand on its own right, as all other forms of art, if it remains experimental as it is now, in spite of artists' effort, risks to become a movement, a language of the medium. As every "movement" in art, it will be already historicized. To avoid this, channels to show tapes must be found, invented if necessary.

Video should become something we talk less about, but we see more. And in an ordinary way, not only in exceptional ones.

The situation I just described remains as it is, in my opinion, until TV viewers are not given a chance to change their inducted needs.

I would like here to stress the difference between the video used as a language (a technical language), and video as a medium. The artists who live in a country where technology is highly developed (ugly developed) can have a synthetic relationship with the machine, as with their own car, while others who do not have access to the same technology, only use the medium as a way, among many, to produce their own work of art.

In USA for example, all the Universities, Museums and private operators have the opportunity to use very sophisticated video equipment. As a result, in many instances, the technical component of the medium's language (the hardware) becomes an end in itself. In other words, THEY ARE THE LANGUAGE.

In Europe, and specially Italy, this close relationship between the artist and technology usually does not exist, nor do independent video producers with very few exceptions like art/tapes/22. The fact that art/tapes/22 had to close down in 1975, is no coincidence. The Archive of the Biennale in Venice distributes and produces tapes only occasionally, its role is precisely much more that of an archive than a promotional one. In such a situation technology, i.e. video, can only be a means among others of the artist's creativity. This is why color is not regarded as very significant by European artists. Elsewhere, instead, color itself becomes the message. The video synthetizerepitomizes the importance of color, and while in Nam June Paik its use was significant in so far as it served the artist's pur-

pose of disassembling reality, in many of Paik's followers it became a rather gratuitous gimmick.

It is no accident that most sophisticated color video is produced in a studio of 2" tape. And so is television!

However, the problem is not just technology. Cultural and sociological factors also account for the difference between American and European video. I believe that these differences are not likely to disappear. The electronic age is not yet the one able to amalgamate cultures.

Another channel to show video is the art gallery. It is obvious that this kind of space is not the convenient one, as video is not to make profit. In the sixties the gallery was the only place where took refuge many different art manifestations, from music, theatre, dance etc, escaping from the specific spaces. Video also had its season in avant-garde galleries. But its space is the electronic one. All these ways to present video art, like in galleries or through broadcast TV, can be "special", and also very useful, but never become "THE CHANNELS".

In Universities, in Italy, video is not used at all, and if the equipment is existing, it is locked in a room not for the use of students but for those employed in this role, who don't exist.

Video seems so new, experimental and unknown that even if enough years are passed after its admission in the world of art and communication, for most of the cultural operators no economical reality seems related to it, and no effort in this sense is ever made. Public institutions never set apart a budget, even small, to increase the use of the medium in the various areas.

The broadcast TV, until now, never used anything except the 2" tape, which politically means not to open any possibility to different programs.

Private institutions are very rare and mostly concern only historical matters. No risk at all.

I'm conscious that all I said seems very pessimistic but, as it is now four years I'm out of the production, I have more critical insight toward the whole situation. During three years of art tapes 22 (while 200 master tapes have been produced with artists from 11 parts of the world, and many hours spent in discussing the medium with them) all my engagement was related to work, produce, going into the deep meaning of each artist's work. I also was very hopeful that things would change in a short time, difficulties overcome, as I knew and know exactly how video is important. Then no more money, many debts, no help, no possible interest from museums (which in Italy are mausoleums), universities and a too rare marginal interest from official statements. After much research, the Venice Biennale Archive and I made an agreement, and all the works done by the artists with art/tapes/22 pass to the archive. It was the only way not to split this production, and to represent and defend the important work of the artists. For one year I have been responsible for the video and film section of the Biennale. I left this work because I realized that, at least in Italy, public institutions such as the Biennale, are literally suffocated by bureaucracy and any effort to participate as single person, with my knowledge, my experience was vain or, better, immediately homogenized with the system: everything done inside these structures becomes similar to the image of the same bureaucracy as like in television, each project is prudently

reviewed, prepared in order to be "easy"; not more and not less, just able to remain in the "middle" - medium-middle-mediocre - No freedom, no danger.

To finish, I think that in Italy, after what I have said to you, video art has not much possibility of surviving as a specific, and how could it be different if no video equipment for this use is available?

In next May, in Rome, there will be a big video show, organized by the Cultural Department of the City of Rome. I am, with Alessandro Sily, curating this exhibition (and Peggy Gale, David Hall and other "video people" will collaborate for their countries). The show will take care of all branches of the use of this medium.

It will be one of those important "special" occasions to see video tapes. Its name is "Video '79: videotape the first decade".

My wish is that, for the second decade of video (Video 89?), Italy will participate (after a miracle) with many important works of art, and other works related to different uses of the medium, didactic, sociological, political, amusing, etc., etc.

It would mean, that the whole situation would be finally open to the future.

Maria Gloria Bicocchi

OUTLETS FOR VIDEO by Kate Craig

As a video artist and producer I am concerned with the problems of distribution. There are three obvious outlets for the distribution of video tapes by artists; broadcasting, cablecasting and closed circuit, in which I would include galleries, libraries, schools, pay T.V., bars and private homes. I will discuss these three outlets, in turn, with an emphasis on closed circuit.

The content of the video work has a direct relationship to the viability of its distribution as does the artists' concept of who the audience is and under what circumstances the work can be best presented. Many video artists are reluctant to allow their work to be broadcast or cablecast and the reverse is also true - much of the video work in existence is considered not suitable for these means of distribution because of the content. In fact, for some artists, the very thought of their work becoming a consumer item is distasteful.

Broadcasting, as a market for artists' video tapes in North America has not been, and in the future is unlikely to be, an outlet of much consequence. The nature of broadcasting by artists on this scale has a tendency to be free lance, using the documentary format in most instances. There is tremendous value in the opportunity for the sensibility of the artist to be presented on a large public scale - but these aren't in the strict sense of the word presentations of video art works. What the networks and their subsidiaries are offering to the public, and the tremendous power the advertisers exert over content, make this means of distribution ideologically incompatible with the process of video art.

The use of cable as an outlet for artists' video tapes is more tangible. The success of public educational T.V., supported to a large extent by subscription, has demonstrated that there is a substantial audience interested in an alternate to commercial television. The opportunity for artists to plug into this network is proven and will no doubt continue on a small scale, but it is very questionable if this market can sustain video artists.

In Canada the CRTC (the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission), the government regulatory body responsible for licensing T.V. and radio stations, requires that cable companies spend a percentage of their profits to provide community access cable stations. These are local stations. I personally know many artists who have cablecast their video work. The problem here is not access to the medium but access to money for the production of tapes. It is a frustrating and infuriating situation, given that the cable companies are extremely rich and the video artists poor. Basically there is no money forthcoming from cable.

In Vancouver, Byron Black produced a series called "Images from Infinity" which ran for a full year, a half hour a week. It was an exciting show and in my opinion the only one worth watching at that time on the community cable channel. Byron worked to a large extent with other artists and it was a truly collaborative venture, introducing many artists for the first time to cablecasting. "Images from Infinity" was produced, for the most part, in the studios of the cable company with no remuneration. The show was eventually discontinued by the cable station because too much studio time was being taken for production; that being three hours for a

half hour show. It was a memorable time for us all in Vancouver and a great loss when taken off the air. In spite of the fact the show had been cancelled many of the "Images from Infinity" shows were sent by the cable station to other cities in Canada for cablecast. The cable station maintained possession of all one inch master copies and Byron had to provide the raw video stock for his own copies.

Since the fall of 1978 John Anderson of Pumps Gallery, Vancouver has been producing "the Gina Show". It too is a forum for local and visiting artists to present work. But this time round the politics are a tiny bit cleaner. Because of the availability of production equipment throughout the city, it is possible to produce the show fairly independently of the cable company and use their cablecasting facility as one outlet for distribution of the information. The show is produced on 3/4" cassette and although John Anderson isn't being paid for his services, he retains the master tape, thus allowing him, in principle, to find other outlets for the information. A definite improvement to the situation in 1974 but it still doesn't pay the rent. In both these instances there was and is no possibility of the individual artists being paid for their contributions.

Given the attitude of the cable stations it is obvious why individual artists are reluctant to use this channel of distribution. Furthermore, the institutions in this country that do put public money toward the support of video art, can in no way justify aid to artists with this outlet in mind because the tremendous profits being made by the private companies are in no way being used to support those who are producing ongoing programming. Distribution via cable should be looked on only as free advertising.

It would appear that because of the nature of video art works, the closed circuit systems are, generally speaking, the only acceptable means for the artist of accessing the information to a predictably limited and specifically interested audience. Viewing through closed circuit channels obviously exists only where the hardware is located - this being in many artists' run centres and some public art galleries, although given the state of the fast advancing technology, closed circuit is already available through bars, hotels, schools, libraries, home video systems in the private sector and pay T.V.. The potential of the public for viewing video art through closed circuit systems is vast and hypothetically very exciting. It is certainly not beyond my limit of fantasy to believe in the distribution of video art in these areas, but it requires a distributor, with the imagination, commitment to the work and the money to start making inroads in these areas. It is this audience, an audience that will be better educated than the commercial T.V. audience, who will view the demanding information put forth by video artists. They will already be prepared for the lack of commercials and to a certain extent the less 'hyper' presentations that go hand in hand with network broadcasting. But perhaps I am being rather unrealistic in pursuing this line of thought. Which puts us back into the supposedly closed and specialized world of the art institutions and alternate gallery consciousness. The audience is growing in the same way that the quantity and quality of video art work, being produced, is growing. The public art galleries certainly have a large audience to draw from. The alternate galleries less so, given their publicity budgetary restrictions. But I wonder if

the very nature of the medium, being a child of commercial television, can continue to exist in such specialized and more often than not, stifling and impersonal environments. My tendency more and more, is to believe that unless video art and its artists come out of the closet and into public, that the art form has less and less chance of surviving. Unless of course, our funding agencies, contrary to public belief, continue to support the medium. The cost of production equipment is rising, contrary to what is believed, because many more artists are demanding access to more and more sophisticated equipment. Give a video artist colour and for the most part there is no turning back - and it goes on from there. Two colour cameras, a special effects generator, time base corrector and maybe even their own T.V. station. But I was talking about closed circuit.

When we use the term distribution I think of two separate meanings. Distribution in the sense of moving the information on the video tapes around the world and accessing video art works to as many people as are currently or potentially interested. If this is what we are talking about then the job so far, has not been badly done. The existence of organizations like the Video Inn in Vancouver, for example, which contains the largest library of non commercially produced video tapes in the world and has published the International Video Exchange Directory for seven years, or the Western Front Society, which harbours over two hundred hours of in-house produced tapes, by not only video artists, but artists of other disciplines (also available for public viewing and exchange) attests to the availability of video art tapes.

The video network is growing rapidly and access to the hardware for playback, although often difficult to find, is more often than not, available without cost. So, a relatively free situation already exists, free not only in that the information travels but also very much to the point, free in the sense that with a few exceptions, the work being presented is not being paid for in the real dollars that buy video artists first food, second lodging and third, the materials and equipment necessary for production.

So, by distribution do we mean money, do we mean the exchange of dollars for video art tapes being sold to the public? It is not a question of whether or not video will survive without funding - of course it will survive - but of getting the art into the public domain. Distribution to closed circuit markets is an exciting and very open avenue in this regard.

The future of television as we know it will be in total turmoil during the eighties. The outcome unknown. The threat to network T.V. is very real, as the communications revolution raises its potentially expansive head away from the commercial medium as we know it.

The individuals' control of the information coming over their television sets started with educational subscription T.V. and is now being particularized by the availability of VHS and Betamax equipment, allowing the owner three options. One; to record programming off the air with possibilities such as editing out the commercials and presetting controls for recording while not in the home. This naturally leads to the second option; your own video library. Apart from selections made off the air there are scores of programs now available; including movies, how-to demos, music concerts and other cultural events. The third option; with the purchase of a video camera, is to make your own home video tapes. Which, I might add, is where video artists started in the sixties.

The second option is the most relevant to the video artist in terms of distribution. The type of programming available on the commercial market on 1/2" cassette ranges in price from \$35.00 to \$50.00 - a tremendous reduction in price from just a year ago. And the prices will be further reduced if the video disc system is commercially successful. Video disc, on the market for the first time in December of 1978, a system not unlike the long playing record, is advertising programs ranging in price from \$5.95 to \$20.00, with up to two hours of information per show. A thorough look at magazines such as Videography and Video, publications aimed at the home video market, indicate that the distributors of cassette and videodisc programming, to a certain extent believe in a fairly sophisticated audience.

As earlier stated, these developments in the commercial industry can only help to break down the conditioning of the T.V. watcher. The problem with video art, vis-a-vis the public, is not in the art, but, in the conditioning of the public by commercial television. One can hardly expect an individual raised on an average of two or three hours a day of commercial, minimal content, entertainment oriented, fast clipped, over hyped television to embrace the demanding qualities of image and sound being presented by video artists in our culture. The logging of ten, fifteen, twenty hours of home made T.V. could very well make a more receptive audience.

The private video art collectors of the future could well be the people with home format video equipment and not the traditional art collectors of the past and present, especially if a distributor with the insight can collect the marketable video art tapes together and promote them at a competitive price and in a manner similar to the existing programming. These new systems are in their infancy and already thousands of private individuals own the equipment. A few thousand might buy. The distribution of artists' video tapes could be a whole new ball game.

Kate Craig

FREE TELEVISION by Michael Goldberg

When was the last time you paid to watch television? I don't mean Japanese or European viewers, who pay a yearly royalty, like a road tax on gas. I mean, are you buying the products that advertisers are pushing? Are you part of a marketable mass; would they wish to sponsor the videotapes you enjoy? Since when has Canadian cable paid for renting out American stations that slip invisibly across the border? When was the last time you paid to attend a viewing of video art or a documentary work of social import? Who sponsors the news?

In Europe, video producers are obliged to charge for showings. Television is state run; and there is little government support for video art, let alone activist video. And the viewers do help subsidize production by paying.

In Canada, TV is free. That is, it relies by and large on indirect taxation (A.K.A. successful advertising) and on some direct government money. Video activity is supported almost exclusively by the Canada Council, with some funding by the Government of Québec and the Ontario Arts Council. Canadian foundations, few and far between, are still leery after being ripped off by instant L.I.P. groups (in the days job creation grants were given liberally to community media access activity).

Fortunately, video is alive and well, thanks to a base of volunteer energy (otherwise known as poverty). Some artists of skill and repute may survive off the Canada Council, and operating funds are provided to a number of access, production, and presentation centres. But by and large, there is not enough money in this cultural production community (to use a film analogy) for it to thrive.

There is nevertheless a growing volume of work in Canada, of increasing sophistication and quality, using bottom-of-the-line technology. Some artists would make the cream of this crop a marketable commodity, which indeed it maybe. Major art galleries showing video selectively to general audiences have found that there is public curiosity and interest in such work. But let's face it, few artist/producers will live well from such earnings.

This is not to suggest that artists' fees are an unimportant issue - quite the contrary. It is crucial that the professionalism of the independent video producer gain recognition. It is also advisable for artists to try to live as much as possible from the work they most enjoy. Some tapes may best be withheld from free circulation and copying - but not all work, and not for all time!

Even from a marketing perspective, it is helpful to an artist's career to release work for free distribution. Moreover, were we to wait for revenue before showing any tapes, we would amass an interesting archive to be sure; but little work of quality would be seen in public.

I would argue that the open circulation of video productions fundamentally changes the centralized, hierarchical nature of television. I assume that this is an objective of many people working with small-format video: to foster alternatives to mass-consumption TV and sensitize viewers to

creativity in their personal and political lives. There may be video artists and producers whose primary aim is to "graduate" to mass-audience, prime-time, quad. TV; and I wish them the best of luck. But there are many pressures come to bear in the big-dollar milieu of commercial media, and freedom is limited in that context.

If this is true, then one important direction for us to move is toward building artist/producer controlled, small-scale television broadcasting. I am hopeful that we may achieve such a model in Vancouver. There are many aspects of such a project needy of attention; for this article, I feel it is timely to look into the question of financing.

The best things in life may be free, but this applies more to dancers than to video artists. We work with a more expensive medium of expression. Initial investment in production or broadcasting hardware is relatively high, though costs taper off due to the reusability of tape and to live programming. Let us not delude ourselves; Fundraising is a key prerogative for a broadcasting project to get off the ground. I doubt that we can expect the few sympathetic funding agencies to subsidize media art from beginning to end - workshops, productions, free experimentation, showings, installations, distribution, purchases, viewing centres, the cable industry, and broadcasters (even though the publishing industry does benefit from this range of subsidisation in our country). Where will this support come from?

As an aside, I would dwell for a moment on the effect that funding sources and arrangements can have on an outlet of expression as important as television. In spite of its achievements, American P.B.S. is being called the "Petroleum Broadcasting System" for good reason. Freedom of expression is held to be a basic tenet of our democratic society. Yet funding programmes all have their priorities and criteria, none of which are destined to fully meet or respond to the needs and desires, growth and new initiatives of funded bodies. Artists who live for a number of years on grants may feel they are free to create as they wish; but when this same funding "with no strings attached" is suddenly cut off, as it inevitably is, few remain unscarred by their quest for other security or sustenance. Short-lived grants, on the other hand, prevent long-range vision and this insecurity works to the detriment of continuity and quality.

While there is no guarantee that the Canada Council will maintain its independence from the Government that provides a majority of its revenue, we must continue to depend on it as an ongoing source of funds for video production activity. Grants to individual artists and production groups will continue to be adjudicated by its own assessors. This means that it will be nigh impossible for a station to constitute a permanent production group, but at the same time it assures that quality will be judged independently. It maybe possible for the Council to one day set up an artist-in-residence program for such stations.

The Canada Council will need encouragement to provide start-up funds for a broadcast facility. Even though an entire station should cost less than one studio at the CBC, it will be difficult to raise the funds required. Ultimately we must look to a mix of grants and donations to cover capital costs. The CRTC must also be assured that ongoing operating costs will be covered, before it approves a license application. It is essential that the Commission be convinced the licensee will not be controlled by a non-licensed provider of funding, especially if the major source of station income is government. Without going into details of arguments regarding

the effects of grant funding, it seems clear that for media outlets above all, models must be developed that safeguard freedom of speech within legal limits. I would suggest that a diversified revenue base can do this best in the long run.

Part of station income must be derived from government grants, sponsorships, and contracts. With such a direct outlet for creative, independent media expression, and notwithstanding the Canada Council's difficulty with the Community-Radio Pilot Project, it will hopefully provide such TV stations with some direct operating revenue. The fact that the license is controlled by artist/producers lends weight to this hope. Still, this should not adequately cover the financial needs of a station.

When applying for video production grants, artists are required to demonstrate how their work will reach the public. Producers would be wise to set aside an agreed upon percentage of their budgets, to go to the airing of their work...or else the station will not be able to afford to continue operations. Such an arrangement would act to ensure that a video broadcasting outlet depends on active involvement from the artistic community. However, the station should never be obliged to air all or any material that has been funded or otherwise has a government stamp of approval. Also, this is not to suggest that community groups and creators will always be obliged to pay for air time. One of the principle aims of an alternative TV channel should be to act as a voice for those whose interests are not served by consumer-oriented media, for economic or other reasons. Further, the station should strive to pay artists' fees when it can, and the above "broadcasting fee" obviously applies to a tape only once.

It is very likely that a broadcast-video service will not be able to pay playback fees at all times. Obviously an artist-run facility will strive to do so on principle. Established art galleries usually pay high rates to exhibit well-known artists, often from outside Canada, while local artists receive negligible remuneration. At the same time, there exist alternative outlets, operating on a shoestring budget and voluntary base, which do in fact provide access to artists who are struggling as well. Such organizations require the support of the professional arts community, and should not be pushed to find ways of increasing their revenues so that performers may capitalize on them. There is a fundamental difference, for example between pay television and a broadcast outlet for small-format video. In spite of such principles, decisions will have to be made by the station(s) as to which work shall be shown, which shall not, whose tape will be paid for, and whose cannot. The process will not be an easy one. Again, a key to the success of such a venture will be for people to contribute financially on their own, by having Council set aside a percentage of production grants, allowing work to be shown for free, volunteering labour, and when possible, donating cash.

Make the viewers pay, you say? Membership fees and donations should indeed be solicited from viewers. Unfortunately, experience shows that audience interest and contributions drop in inverse proportion to the on-air harassment known as fundraising drives. Still, this must be looked into. Charitable status is an obvious prerequisite for contributions to be had by on-air marathons, solicitation by mail, and personal contacts. It remains to be seen how much the private sector will be sympathetic to the cause of alternative television.

As non-profit charities, parallel artists' centres across Canada have the opportunity to engage in other forms of fundraising as well: raffles, bingo, benefit concerts, auctions, sale of work, etc. As a service common to many artists' groups a television station has a responsibility to derive revenue from such sources.

The station should reserve the right, in its application to the CRTC, to develop a partial commercial base, or wing, within limits clearly defined by the station itself. It has been suggested, for example, that commercials be placed within one time-block, as in some European countries. The possibility of experimenting with such a model should be requested, but not committed to as a unique format. It is clear that exploitative advertising would not be acceptable to most video artist/producers. Strict guidelines should be drawn up by the station before entering into even limited advertising.

These are some of the concerns raised to date in discussions regarding the financing of a station initiated and controlled by video artists and producers. There are many questions surrounding such a project, and much energy is required to set up and administer a broadcast facility. Some artists will prefer to continue to work independently and quietly, and an important segment of video art is not designed for broadcasting. There is also much valid documentation and production activity which would benefit from exposure in the forum of television freely received in the comfort of one's home. Artists concerned with the impact of television in our society should seriously consider any possibility to free television from its present limitations.

Michael Goldberg

TV ART IN THE HOME by Clive Robertson

To comment on art and TV or TV art in the home at this time is not quite as subjectively pleasing as I would have found the subject a mere twelve months ago. At that time in Los Angeles I was raising the flag for the future of video publications.

As you may or may not know I have been involved in potential video publishing both as an artist and as a latent publisher. Arton's in Toronto did produce two prototype video cassette publications, one on Robert Filliou, the other the work of Steve MacCaffery.

Now depending upon your objectives as a video artist, getting video art on TV or Cable networks can be seen as a worthwhile struggle. And when it in fact does happen it can be said to be a step forward for the video art community at large.

I personally agree to such broad/cable casting with two reservations which I suggest should be considered, at least within the Canadian context.

The first reservation is economic. While individual funding is still available for artists working with video, the broader aspects of video activity including equipment updating and access can no longer be guaranteed by the various cultural funding agencies. I realise that there are a number of video artists who are active outside of such funding, but for now I am addressing those producers whose equipment is derived from state funding sources - which includes most of us. Given this somewhat obvious if not abrupt economic and therefore political change there is, I suggest, no longer the casual opportunity for artists to merely get their products onto some form of television. There will be a need for artists to be paid for airing tapes on television; non-payment for airtime - free-access as it is called, will in fact become an objective failure. As both Cable and TV Networks profits soar and inversely as artists become poorer, such free-aid to television by artists has to stop.

The second reservation is a definition of exactly what type of information artists want to pipe into the home via TV. Is it solely an aesthetic information? Is it socially-aesthetic? Is it for political posturing? Is it for education? I don't believe that the relationship of artists to television should be casual, I don't believe that anything a video artist does either necessarily works or fits into television. The argument that video art can succeed on television by merely being a reactive force to television, is a thesis that no longer is intelligent. Likewise I don't think that whatever artists choose to place on television is necessarily deserving of the label "information". That is why I ask the question: "What type of Information?" It's not rhetorical, I would like to focus my participation on this panel to exactly that question: "What do video artists consider is information for television?"

In reverse do we want to indulge in fantasies of non-information for television?

I recently did a comparison study of TV News for Centerfold magazine, comparing TV News coverage of The Body Politic Trail with what actually was said in court. The Attorney General of this Province last night granted an appeal in an attempt to overthrow the acquittal of The Body

Politic, Canada's leading gay newspaper. I believe that the media, including television agitated their readers and viewers to vicariously encourage the Attorney General to feel secure in making such a move. I think it is more than just a technical legal matter.

I watched an artist space in Toronto recently try to sell itself through a long item on TV News - they looked puerile and ridiculous. It wasn't entirely their own fault. Art doesn't fit as easily on television as paintings do on walls. Television is not an adequate museum. These reservations should be taken into consideration, the rush of television is sometimes an alluring mirage.

But we all know that stuff? Or do we?

Are we still suggesting for example that Susan Britton's tapes, or Lisa Steele's tapes or Rodney Werden's tapes be betamaxed and piped into the Holiday Inn?

What artists have called High Profile is often incomprehensible to the home entertainment industry or the television networks.

I would like to take a closer look at what we mean by video publishing for the home entertainment or educational industry.

Arton's has just completely axed such video publishing intentions as the investment capital is just not there, at least within public sector.

So in discussing TV Art in the home I would like, if you are willing, to focus on what do we mean by video art in the home, what information are we thinking of selling and who is going to make it readily available?

Clive Robertson

HOME MARKETING OF VIDEO ART by Jaime Davidovich

For the past ten years we have been seeing video art in galleries and in museums. In the context of an exhibition space the TV set is viewed as an art object. The gallery space itself has been the subject of many articles and studies. In one such article Brian O'Doherty perceptively notes that "the history of modernism is intimately framed by the gallery space...an image comes to mind of a white ideal space that, more than any single picture may be the archetypal image of 20th century art."

In an art gallery the TV set is framed by a white wall and thus appears to be a sculpture. Its importance is both exaggerated and denied by the very space it occupies. In a gallery we walk around the perimeter and stop for a few second to look at each object. In fact, according to a recent survey we spend 20 seconds in front of each painting or sculpture. But how do we react in front of a television screen? How do we view it and for how long?

Just as we have been conditioned to view art so have we been conditioned to watch television. Indeed, we have spent hours sitting in a comfortable chair or lying in bed watching television at home. So then when we show video in an art gallery we are requiring the viewer to reorient to the space and to the media. Specifically, the viewer must:

- 1) Adopt an uncomfortable position sitting in a room among strangers
- 2) Look at this art object for a much longer length of time than other art objects and often watch for an undetermined or indefinite length of time
- 3) Not expect the technical quality of television and concentrate more on content.

This is a lot to ask and we must now begin to question the suitability of showing single channel video pieces in an art gallery.

John Hanhardt says that "while video art is strongly influenced by and is an integral part of the contemporary visual arts, it does not enjoy extensive economical and critical support". This fact can be attributed in part to the way we have been marketing video art in the gallery system and to the fact that we define video as another "style" of art rather than as another medium. So that after the first ten years of development it is time to examine the nature of the media and to carefully reassess the exhibition and distribution system.

We are facing 1980 with a whole new context. Instead of the art gallery, we are going into the home and instead of marketing video as a print or painting we must market it as television art. To do this we have to establish a home viewing audience using cable or broadcast television.

The technological achievements to date and the ones being developed now allow us to reach more and more homes. Two important technological developments will affect the future of television--satellite and videodisc.

Right now in the United States there are 105 satellite-earth stations and in 1981 there will be 1,000; making satellite-video communication available to a substantial number of people. Satellite communication is insensitive to distance; it costs the same to send a signal from New York to Chicago as it does to send a signal from New York to Los Angeles. With satellite you pay only for time, not for time and distance as you do with telephone lines. This means that it will be economically feasible to

produce programs for smaller audiences. Les Brown of the New York times suggested that with the new technology broadcast TV will be comparable to major newspapers and magazines such as The New York Times, Time magazine or Newsweek and cable TV, in reaching smaller audiences, will be comparable to the art magazine or trade journals.

Cable television is reaching 16.9% of American homes with 12 million subscribers. By 1981 the percentage will be 30% with 26 million subscribers. In the near future cable will be the natural conduit for art television. It has the advantage of making available extensive periods of time on one channel and it can reach a specialized sector of the population. Also, cable TV is free of the regulations of commercial and educational TV.

As an art television audience builds up there will be a demand to buy programs for home viewing. Videodiscs are the most distinct new technological advance. Projected sales of videodisc players is 1,500,000 sets by 1981. Viewers will be able to buy videodiscs on a variety of subjects and people will be able to watch art videodiscs of their choice in the comfort of their home.

It is apparent that in the next decade we must market video art through cable television and create a demand for videodiscs. In this way we can expand beyond the narrow market of the gallery system and we will create a larger and more receptive audience that will financially support the work of the video artist.

Jaime Davidovich

INTERNATIONAL VIDEO ART SYMPOSIUM

Thursday, March 7, 1979, 7:30 p.m.

SPEAKERS: Michael Goldberg (via video tape), from Vancouver
 Jaime Davidovich, Artists' Television Network, New York
 Clive Robertson, Artons, Toronto

Michael
 Goldberg: Hi there. Thank you for inviting me from Vancouver, to speak to you about the important topic of the artistic use of television. In Vancouver, we have a lot of young artists who are experimenting with simple technologies that have made this important medium newly accessible to the public at large.

Hi there. Thank you for tuning into our program tonight. Make yourselves comfortable, while we talk to you about the growing use of this medium of television by artists across Canada. (It doesn't work either, just a sec.)

You see, when video is used to document stage presentations, say a poetry reading or a theatre presentation, the performers generally are projecting outward in view of an audience in a room. When it's recorded onto video, it just doesn't come across on a small screen. On the other hand, we have the reverse situation here, where I'm on a tiny screen way up at the front of the room, and all of you are out there, and I've got to figure out a way to make it work so that you're not too bored with this and so I'll have a good time too. I'm not quite sure how to do it. The medium of television and the recording systems that we use that are newly accessible, are easier to use than the older, bulkier, more expensive, more sophisticated, complicated recording systems. They can be used in a lot of ways and the context can determine whether it works or not. For example, an installation in an art gallery and a tape made for that installation is very different from putting something on a cable system or a broadcast outlet that reaches an audience at home. The way that one puts across what one wants to, varies according to each situation.

I will assume, if you don't mind, that some video art, some video tapes or closed circuit installations are made for that purpose or concept, and that there are also a lot of tapes that can work and will work in the context of the broadcast station. The problems that are associated with that are many. One problem is unions. It's very difficult to get into the broadcast field with work that has been produced independently or outside by non-union people. They're trying to protect job security and so forth. Another problem is that the technical sophistication of the bottom of line equipment that we use doesn't match up with the synchronizing signals that exist in two inch quad or the tape systems that

broadcasters have been using for many years. But, there's a lot of new developments that have happened in cameras or electronic news gatherings, and even in studio and mobile set-ups, for what is now called electronic field production where the broadcasters are taken down a notch in their "technical quality." Also, there's intermediate technology, things like time base correctors, that can take the equipment that we use (and what I used to record this tape) and can broadcast that over the air.

So, it's technically possible to do but we have a number of problems. One is that because there's so much access to small format equipment, there's a lot of variety and a lot of low quality work being done by people who have tried the medium just once, or who aren't especially adept at this particular mode of expression. There has grown a prejudice against tapes that have been produced using this small format stuff. But what I call the 'quantity of quality' of productions using small format equipment is definitely increasing and is being used in a small and growing way in the broadcast context.

So, we can envisage developing what I call a free lance relationship with broadcast licencees that now exist. Though the work that we do sometimes appeals to a very specialized or particular audience, and can't necessarily compete, nor would we want it to, with a mass audience. The productions that we do, or that we can do in special arrangements with broadcasters, including art tapes that have been produced and documentary work that exists, can be used in the context of mass audience television at times. There are some artists who might, in fact, be able to develop part of their income out of such a relationship with the broadcast industry as it now stands.

But, on the other hand, the industry is very closed and it is by law liable. That is, the licensee is liable for everything that goes over the air. And so, the kind of experimentation and first hand personal view that one has in independent video couldn't very easily or liberally be presented over the air, even assuming that it could work in a mass audience context.

Also, right now across Canada, there are a number of mostly UHF channels (that's the higher dial; not channels 2-12, but 17-63 or whatever) that are available and are going to be gobbled up one way or another by CB people or Americans if it's close to the border, if we don't licence more Canadian's outlets that do, in fact, reach an audience. What's happened with cable is that it has pushed the American border, culturally speaking, as far north as the North Pole using satellites. So we have audiences that used to watch Canadian content because there was no other choice suddenly being drawn into the mass marketing American entertainment field. Cable is encroaching on Canadian viewership of Canadian programming. The government has a right to be worried

about this, although much of the population would rather watch that slop; there's no question about it. So, it is important now that we start to think about developing new audiences and developing the broadcast spectrum in such a way as to widen the audience looking at local and Canadian and sensitive programming.

As a natural extension of that, I think it's very important where we can, in Toronto, Vancouver and possibly some areas in Quebec, to start to envisage a channel that is devoted to that 'quantity of quality' that I was talking about, where videotapes that are made for home viewing, or can be used in that context, start to be shown on the air. This is so we don't always show them in a closed circuit context, and we don't always ask the audience to come to our library, or our video center, to our parallel gallery (although we shouldn't stop doing that by any means).

The important thing for me is that programming control remains vested in the artist not in a bureaucratic superstructure, a hierarchical organization or a centralized network. A promise of CTV to develop local programming across Canada fell through very quickly and even the major commercial local stations are not programming very heavily. They can't afford to lose their audiences and their ratings and their advertising dollars by not showing American fare in prime time and that's quite a fight. So, if we are to widen that and do it in a way that is going to widen the range of expression and the type of vision that we see in the quality level of independent artistic video and documentary production in the community, nothing much is going to change. I mean, more of the same isn't anything new at all.

Also, all across Canada, we have seen the development of the parallel gallery. This is the artist-run and, in most cases, artist-operated non-commercial gallery. And so, there has grown a lot of expertise in what is now called the area of the 'artist administrator.' It is no longer tenable to say that we must hire administrative people to tell us how to run our affairs. It's not even necessary to have a community representative board. Why can't the artist do it? We can; we do it all the time now. In television we can do it too. Where we have a sufficient programming base, and where we have sufficient interest on the part of the artistic community to put out that kind of programming, and to administer it, I'm convinced we can do it. But there are lots of problems associated with that. So if you don't mind, for the next part of this talk, I'd like to delve into some of the problems that we've already come up with in thinking about starting our own television channel here in Vancouver.

One of the decisions we've pretty well taken by consensus is that we are going to keep production facilities decentralized. Here

in Vancouver, there are a number of group centres and facilities that already exist that use video equipment in a really strong way: The Western Front, Metro-Media, Video-Inn, Vancouver Art Gallery, Women in Focus, the Cable company lends a lot of equipment and does production, the art school, colleges and universities, as well as a number of individuals. So, we've more or less decided that although the television station will perhaps have sophisticated editing facilities, and certainly a broadcast facility, it won't start to monopolize the funding that's available to upgrade the quality of equipment that is available now. Hopefully, this will protect against any clique or group taking over the programming of the television station should the financing become very difficult. Another thing that is very important to us and in fact forms the basis for how we are proceeding now, is that they are going to be very selective. We do not want to be another community channel of the air taking in each and every tape, each and every programme that's proposed to us just about. We want to be quite stringent and set up a system whereby a selection will be made. At first we'll be on the air only a few hours a week; perhaps, at best, a few hours a night. Now, this means that we are going to have to say no to quite a few tapes and quite a few people. That is a very delicate situation in which to place yourself. I've had a bit of experience with juries and have found that the best way to deal with it is to tell people honestly, why their work was not selected. When the decision comes from fellow artists, and fellow producers, with recommendations made as to how the work could have been improved technically, or how the artist or producer could have better succeeded in the intent as the jury perceived it, this kind of criticism is quite well received. I was rather surprised to discover the Canada Council now has a similar system. It's delicate. It's very important to phrase the criticism in a constructive way. So, we started a series of critique sessions at the Vancouver Art Gallery with people from the video community, where we've been looking at tapes from the Video Inn library and critiquing them.

It looks as if we will be setting up some sort of jury system rather than a point system or bureaucratic selection process. It's been a really interesting process. The test will come in the next session which will be happening on March 22, 1979. We're asking people, myself included, to bring out our own work for critique by members of our community. I'm hoping that that process will help us understand one another better, improve the quality of our work to a certain extent, as well as help to prepare the method of selection for the television channel.

Now, that leads to the art/politics split. I don't want to get into it very heavily here; it's fodder for a lot of discussion. But I'm happy to say that in Canada in general, and in Vancouver in particular, we have a comfortable relationship between video

art people and people who are doing documentary work, who are interested or involved in social change (and I'm not talking about parties and politics, or political activist groups; I'm talking about documentary work, or work that has a very clear perspective, that is not neutral, but is trying to represent a situation that the artist and the people involved are trying to correct or change). In Europe, the schism is very wide. The "artistic community" working with video and the "political groups" don't see eye to eye. They are very critical of one another.

Certainly the kind of differing views that sometimes surface with this split can make a T.V. outlet of the kind I propose very delicate. I think anyone who wants to get involved in such a channel will have to face this problem square on.

The other thing is, there is no way we can afford to be a union shop. We won't be able to pay most of the people involved. We won't be able to pay the technicians the kind of money they could make in a commercial outlet. So we run into the problem of artists fees. Now, I've dealt with the whole question of financing in the paper that I presented to this Kingston colloquium. I ask you to read it, to see my position. Actually, what's in there and what I've been talking about tonight are not personal opinions but are ideas that have been tossed forward at various times over the last few years; sometimes in formal discussions of large groups, but very often smaller groups and sometimes personal situations. There is no master plan at this point for us to run to the CRTC crying, "We've got our money together, we've got our technology together, we've got our equipment and so forth." We don't; not yet. But we're moving that way and I think people are very interested in going that way. The interesting thing is, that those ideas that have come forward at various times, when written down on paper, or when presented in the kind of context, I hope you will find, constitute a workable model. I said a bit earlier that we are going to be on the air only a few hours a week, or a few hours a night. Well, what's going to be on the air when we're off the air? (silence)

CLIVE

ROBERTSON: My name is Clive Robertson. Before I begin, I'd like to disagree with a few of the things that Michael said. Whilst we all know Michael to have very good intentions, he often speaks out for Canadian video, almost as if they were policy statements, even though he states they are not his own personal opinions. Specifically, in that tape, he suggested that we were very fortunate in Canada that there wasn't as he called it, a schism, like there is in Europe, between the producers of political and artistic tapes. And he said, just prior to that, that in Canada there really aren't any political tapes. That's basically what he was saying. So there's no wonder there isn't a schism. As far as

his attitudes towards the Vancouver proposed T.V. station not paying artists, I think that type of thinking is more in tune with the beginning of this decade rather than the end of it.

To comment on Art and T.V. or T.V. Art in the Home at this time, is not quite as subjectively pleasing as I would have found the subject a mere twelve months ago. At that time in Los Angeles, I was raising the flag for future video publications. As you may or may not know, I have been involved in potential video publishing, both as an artist and a latent publisher. Artons in Toronto did produce two prototype video cassettes, one on Robert Fillion, the other work was a tape on Stephen McCaffrey. Now, depending upon your objectives as a video artist, getting video art on T.V. or cable networks, can be seen, as a worthwhile struggle. And when it in fact does happen, it can be said to be a step forward for the video art community at large.

I personally agree to such broad or cable casting with two reservations, which I suggest should be considered, at least within the Canadian context. The first reservation is economic. While individual funding is still available for artists working with video, the broader aspects of video activity including equipment updating and access, can no longer be guaranteed by the various cultural funding agencies. I realize that there are a number of video artists who are active outside of such funding, but for now, I am addressing those producers whose equipment is derived from state funding sources which includes most of us. Given this somewhat obvious, if not abrupt economic, and therefore political change, there is, I suggest, no longer the casual opportunity for artists to merely get their product on to some form of television. There will be a need for artists to be paid for airing tapes on television. Non-payment for air time, free access, as it is called, will in fact become an objective failure. As both cable and T.V. networks soar, and as inversely artists become poorer, such free aid to television by artists has to stop.

The second reservation, is a definition of exactly what type of information artists want to pipe into the home via T.V. Is it solely anaesthetic information? Is it socially aesthetic? Is it for political posturing? Is it for education? I don't believe that the relationship of artist to television should be casual. I don't believe that anything a video artist does either necessarily works or fits into television. The argument that video art can succeed in television by merely being a reactive force to television, is a thesis that no longer is intelligent. Likewise, I don't think that whatever artists chose to place on television is necessarily deserving of the label 'information'. That is why I ask the question, what type of information? It's not rhetorical; I would like to focus my participation on this panel to exactly that question: What do video artists consider is

information for television? In reverse, do we want to indulge in fantasies of non-information for non-information television?

I recently did a comparison study of T.V. news for Centerfold magazine, comparing T.V. news coverage of the Body Politic trial with what was actually said in court. The Attorney General of this province last night granted an appeal in an attempt to overthrow the equital of the Body Politic, Canada's leading gay newspaper. I believe that the media, including television and television news, agitated their readers and viewers to vicariously encourage the Attorney General to feel secure in making such a move. I think that it is more than just a technical legal matter. I also recently watched an artist space in Toronto, try to sell himself through a long item on T.V. news. They looked puerile and ridiculous. It wasn't entirely their own fault. Art doesn't fit as easily on television as paintings do on walls. Television is not an adequate museum. These reservations should be taken into consideration. The rush of television is sometimes an alluring mirage.

But we all know that stuff, or do we? Are we still suggesting, for example, that Susan Britton's tapes or Lisa Steele's tapes or Rodney Werden's tapes be immediately Betamax'd and plugged into the Holiday Inn? What artists have called high profile is often incomprehensible to the home entertainment industry, or the television networks.

I would like to take a closer look at what we mean by video publishing for the home entertainment of educational industry. Arton's has just completely axed such video publishing intentions as the investment capital is just not there, at least within the public sector. By this, I mean, that whilst I agree with Micheal that the artists are good administrators, I don't know of any artist organization which has the type of business experience that would be able to carry out the type of distribution analysis, and to raise the sort of capital that would be needed to compete with the commercial Betamax market. So, in discussing T.V. Art in the Home, I would like, if you will, to focus on what do we mean by T.V. Art in the Home? What information are we thinking of selling, and who is going to make it readily available?

JAIME

DAVIDOVICH: I think that Michael and Clive made some very interesting remarks. I wish that Michael were here so that we can follow up on the discussion. But, since he's not here, hopefully this commentary will be taped, and we can have a transcript. I think we are focusing on some basic issues and I'm very pleased that this is happening on this, the last evening of the Symposium. What I'm going to do, is read very briefly what I have here. Some of these things we focused on before. Then, I will concentrate on the experience at the Artists' Television Network in New York, which I represent.

My comments relate to the United States which I know better, and where I live, and develop my work, even though I was born in Argentina.

Home Marketing of Video Art - For the past ten years, we have seen video art in galleries and museums. In the context of an exhibition space, the T.V. set is viewed as an art object. The gallery space itself has been the subject of many articles, discussion and seminars, in all the leading American art magazines. In one of such article, Brian Doherty notes that the history of modernism is intimately framed by the gallery space. An image comes to mind of a wide, ideal space that more than any single picture, may paint an image of twentieth century art. In an art gallery, the T.V. set may be framed by a white wall, and thus appears to be a sculpture. It's importance is both exaggerated and denied by the very space it occupies. In a gallery, you walk around the perimeter of the room, and then stop for a few seconds and look at each painting, sculpture or drawing. In fact, according to a recent survey, we spend around twenty seconds in front of each painting or sculpture. But how do we react in front of the television screen? How do we view it and for how long? Just as we have been conditioned to view art, so we have been conditioned to watch television. Indeed, we have spent hours sitting in a comfortable chair, or even lying in bed, watching television at home. So then, when we show video in an art gallery, we are requiring the viewer to reorient to the space and to the medium. Specifically the viewer must, adopt an uncomfortable position sitting in a room among strangers look at this art object for a much longer period of time than other art objects, and often watch for an undetermined or an indefinite length of time, and not expect the technical quality of television but concentrate more on content. This is a lot to ask and we must now begin to question the suitability of showing single channel video thesis in an art gallery.

John says that when video art is as strongly influenced by, and is an integral part of the contemporary visual arts, it does not enjoy extensive economical and political support. This fact can be attributed in part, to the way we have been marketing video art in a gallery system, and to the fact that we define video as another "style" of art rather than as another "medium". So that after the first ten years of developing, it is time to examine the nature of the medium, and then carefully reassess the exhibition and distribution system.

We're facing 1980 with a whole new context. Instead of the art gallery, we are going into the home and instead of marketing video as a print or painting, we must market it as a television art. To do this, we have to establish a home viewing audience

using cable or broadcast television. The technological achievements today and the ones being developed now, allow us to reach more and more homes. Two important technological developments will affect the future of television: satellites, and video-disc. Right now in the United States, there are 105 satellite-earth stations, and in 1981, there will be 1000, making satellite videocommunication available to a substantial number of people. Satellite communication is insensitive to distance. It costs the same to send a signal from New York to Chicago, as it does to send a signal from New York to Los Angeles. With satellite, you pay only for time, not for time and distance as you do with telephone lines. This means that it will be economically feasible to produce programs for a smaller audience. Les Browne of the New York Times suggested that with the new technology, broadcast T.V. will be comparable to such major newspapers as the New York Times and Time magazine, and cable T.V. in reaching smaller audiences will be comparable to the art magazines and trade journals. Cable television, the other part, is reaching 16.9% of American homes with 12 million subscribers. By 1981, the percentage will be 30% with 26 million subscribers. In the near future, cable will be the natural conduit for art television. It has the advantage of making available extensive periods of time on one channel and it can reach a specialized sector of the population. Also, cable T.V. is free of the regulations of commercial and educational T.V. As an art television audience builds up, there will be a demand to buy programs for home viewing. Video discs are the more distinct and new technological advance. Projected sales of video displays is 1½ million sets by 1981, even though it is in the promotional stage only in Atlanta, Georgia. Viewers will be able to buy video tapes on a variety of subjects and people will be able to watch art video tapes of their choice in the comfort of their home. It is apparent that in the next decade we must market video art through cable television and create the demand for video discs. In this way, we can expand beyond the narrow market of the gallery system, and we will create a larger and more receptive audience that will financially support the work of the video artist.

Now, I want to describe the organization of Cable Soho and then we will grow into the Artists' Television Network. In December 1976, Cable Soho produced the first live transmission from Manhattan-Cable television, and then in January 1977, did two other pilots. In August 1977, the organization was dissolved. Everybody resigned and we formed a new organization that was called the Artists' Television Network. The reasons for that were several. The name Cable Soho, is too limited to a neighbourhood of New York City and the word 'cable' is misleading. Very few people know that television is transmitted by cable. 'Cable Soho' sounds more like an electrical company or a sewer pipe company. So we

agreed that the organization was to expand its code, and really establish an actual network of different arts organizations and artists around the world so we can exchange programs and communicate.

Also, instead of a consortium which is very difficult to implement, we decided to form a regular non-profit organization, a regular corporation. The name of the series, the name of the programs produced or shown by the Artists Television Network were called Soho Television Presents. The Soho Television Presents started on a regular basis in April 1978, showing every Monday night at 8:00 on channel 10 in Manhattan, and also channel 10 in What we are going to see now are some excerpts of the first season of the Soho Television Series.

- tapes shown -

As I said before, we started the first week of April, in 1978 and we ran continuously until today, and each week we have a different program.

I want to go back to certain things that Michael Goldberg said, and then I want to go back to some things that Clive said. I think after that, we should start a dialogue.

Now, let me say a few things about the cable system in the United States. Cable in the United States is franchised by the city. In the franchise agreement with the cable company, which is a profit, private corporation, there are certain stipulations. The city decides about the charges that the subscribers should pay to receive the cable station. In New York City, the franchise agreement specifies that cable should have two access channels for community use which should be served on a first come, first serve basis. Also, they have a lease channel that is leased to any community or any group of individuals for a fee, and in return, this group or these individuals can take advertising commercials from anybody. They have their own channel too, which they can advertise, or do whatever they want. This channel, which is channel 10 in New York, is owned by Manhattan Cable, which is part of the ATC. It is organized as is a regular profit-making organization: the more subscribers they have, the more money they make. So they are interested in acquiring programs that will build up their audience for them so that in turn, they will have more subscribers.

The Soho Television project of the Artists's Television Network is a non-profit organization funded by the federal agencies, state agencies, and city agencies. (But, we can go commercial if we want to, through the cable company, and also through the funding organizations.) The first objective that we had when

we started the Soho Television Network, was to build up an audience. That's the first thing that we are trying to do. We try to show the programs on a regular basis and to work within the basic rules of broadcast television. The programs are 28 minutes and 58 minutes. We make sure the program is shown on a continuity basis, i.e. the program will be at the same time, on the same day, each week. There is free publicity, there are press kits and press conferences. Photographs are sent to all the newspapers and also the programs are listed in the New York T.V. Guide so people will know what programs to expect.

The programs are selected through a Programming Committee, which is composed of members of the organization and members representing the different parts of the field: that is, media people, video artists, curators and people in music and performance. The selection of programs is based on the quality of the work and also on theme. For example, we may decide to do a 2 month series dealing with narrative video or dealing with performance, etc. And, also, they're selected for technical qualities. There are many programs that were produced by artists that cannot go on Cable because they are not time base corrected or the sound is not good, or the edits are not acceptable to a cable company. So, we are working within some basic broadcast standards.

QUESTION: Is it totally a question of whether or not you can get the same government picture, or is it a question of the audio doesn't sound good, or the video doesn't look good?

JAIME

DAVIDOVICH: We don't take into consideration that the video doesn't look good. Sometimes the video doesn't look good because the artist's decision is to make the video not to look good. For some artists, the bad edits in their work is part of their work. We leave it like that. Even if the cable complains. But there are certain things that are technically wrong. For instance, if you take a Sony 2600, and you put it through a CN4, which is an adapter to the 3400 camera, it's not a delicate scan, so it cannot go through a time base corrector. The time base corrector cannot take the signal. Those programs, no matter how good they are, we have to reject. Now, if there is a program done in $\frac{1}{2}$ inch, and the tracking of the half inch is so unstable that the time base corrector will not take it, I think we have no other option that to reject it because the viewer won't see anything. But, if there is an audio that the artist specifically did in a very unrecognizable way, we have to leave it like that. That's an aesthetic decision. We don't censor any aesthetic situation. But, we still have to go within the framework of the 28 minutes, and the 58 minutes. So, if an artist has a work that is 40 minutes, we will either edit into 28 minutes, or show it

in two sections, in two parts. The first part would be 28 minutes and the second part would be the other part. The remaining 10-15 minutes of the film would be another work by another artist.

Now, the programming committee also has the responsibility to suggest productions. Some of the programs that you saw in this sample were productions by the Artists' Television Network. Now, with regard to the productions, the artist owns 100% of the copyright, and also owns 100% of all close circuit distribution. But, the Artists's Television Network controls the television distribution. The artist can go to a television station and sell a program, but we have the first option to distribute the program to the regular television channels.

Now, after the selection committee has approved the program, a contract is signed by the president of the organization and the individual producer, artists organization or the artist. Then we schedule and show the program. As it stands right now, the program, when it's shown in Manhattan alone, the artist or the producer, receives \$50.00 for each showing for a 30 minute tape, even if the tape is produced by the Artists' Television Network. If the program is more than 30 minutes, the artist receives \$75.00 per showing. We usually show a program 4 times in one season, and this is New York alone. As our audience increases, and we have other cable stations participating in this network, the \$50.00 would be multiplied by the number of cable stations that would be part of the network.

One important factor in building up the audience was demonstrated in the survey conducted by an independent firm, hired by Manhattan Cable Television. In the first season of the Soho Television, this survey demonstrated some very interesting facts about audience, or about what you call ratings. Twenty-five percent of the total subscribers to the Manhattan Cable System and Teleprompter, which is the other system in Manhattan, knew about the Soho Television Series. The most striking part of this survey was that 9.2 percent of the total subscribers of these two systems watched the programs regularly. This means that right now the Soho Television Series has an audience of about 20,000 people in Manhattan alone. This rating of 9.2% makes the Soho Television Series of artist's programs the most watched television series of cable, on channel 10, right now. Therefore, we are, in a way, demonstrating to the audience in New York City, that our people are interested in watching this type of avant garde arts program.

Two months ago, the rest of the City was franchised for cable, Queen's Brooklyn and the Bronx, while at the same time, a company called ATC, which is the second largest cable operator in this country, with 150 cable stations, was completed. Next year,

New York City is going to be the largest cable system in the world, with half a million subscribers. Therefore, we are hopeful that the Soho Television Series will automatically go on these different stations around the country.

Now, the other aspect that is important, is where and how we produce these programs. The Artists' Television Network owns no equipment; we only have a monitor and a cassette player. We work with an organization called the Center for Non-Broadcast Television, which is a new organization. It's only two years old, as old as the Artists' Television Network. As the name indicates, they are primarily offering production facilities to artists and non-profit organization to produce programs for cable distribution. The Center for Non-Broadcast Television in New York is the only facility in New York City that has the live injection point, an actual place where you can go to transmit programs live to the rest of the City. Furthermore, the Center for Non-Broadcast Television has a direct link to the Gulf and Western Building in New York City that goes directly to the RCA Satellite and West Star Satellite, so that we can cable cast to any place in Continental United States or Europe. In other words, we are now equipped to send the programs out to as many different cable stations, Television stations, or Broadcast stations that wish to take them.

Now, the financial structure of the organization, like I mentioned before, is funded by regular non-profit foundations. But we don't like to depend on the politics of the National Endowment for the Arts or the New York State Council for the Arts, or the New York Department of Cultural Affairs. Therefore, for the next year, we are going to go commercial. This means either to raise money through television programs by subscriptions, or to actually sell and produce commercials. Commercials for different kinds of products and utilities. That will make the organization self-sufficient. When you go to a commercial enterprise, in the United States, you talk about numbers. You talk about numbers of viewers. If I go to a utility company and can say that we have 20,000 viewers right now in Manhattan, and we have 10,000 viewers in San Francisco, we have 20,000 viewers in Los Angeles, and we have a total viewing audience of 200,000 in the United States, it is profitable for the company to run commercials in our programs. The commercials will be around 3 minutes for each program, no more than that, and will be added at the end of the program. In other words, if the program is going to be 28 minutes, there would be 25 minutes of the actual program and 3 minutes of commercial. I think this system has been used in Italy and other countries in Europe.

AUDIENCE: PBS is like that.

JAIME: But PBS cannot have commercials. They have sponsors. They cannot sell a product. We can actually sell a product because cable is not a non-profit organization.

Now, another facet that is very important to the development of the programs is that we do a very strong promotion with the media. We have press kits, photographs, and press conferences, so the media is very well aware of what is happening. We also put up posters all over the city so people know that these things are happening. People know that every Monday night at 8 o'clock they can turn on Channel 10 and watch arts programs. We are now in the process of publishing a journal that is going to be support material to the television programs. It's called the Television Arts Journal, and it's going to be published hopefully in April or May of this year. The Television Arts Journals will have commentaries, interviews with the different artists and producers of the programs, and also a T.V. guide with a complete listing of the season of programs that will be available for a home viewing audience.

So, this is basically the structure of the Artists' Television Network, and I think we can now begin a dialogue.

CLIVE

ROBERTSON: O.K. I've been patiently waiting for you to finish. I'd like to start off with the first obvious question, and that is what has the Artists' Television Network got to do with "art in the home". Before you answer that, let me just continue. The television program you did with John Cage, for example, could have been run very easily by PBS. The program of bureaucrats with the introduction by Gregory Battcock could have very easily been done by PBS. The other arts programs that you have, from the examples that you have given, are no more than PBS would do as they have done in the past, with video artists and specific video artists where they are really creaming a crop of artists who are very successful and very recognized in their own right. I didn't really see any example, and I don't really see from what you've said, that you're actually developing first of all, anything that PBS hasn't already done, and secondly that you're really developing any video art in the home.

JAIME: Well, the sample that I prepared showed a wide range of different programs. Let me first answer the question about PBS. Any one of these programs would never be shown by PBS. There is no way that PBS would ever show the Gregory Battcock show or the John Cage show, or any of the artists shows.

CLIVE: Well, they're showing programs by June Paik which have been far more esoteric than the dialogue between Freeman and Cage. That's not true, PBS has shown video art which is far more, so called

'unwatchable' for a television audience than programs that you show.

JAIME: But, if PBS does show Paik, they will show it maybe at midnight, and, secondly, they will only show it on one or two PBS stations around the country.

CLIVE: They're being fed into Canada. . .

JAIME: In Canada, maybe, but in the United States, the PBS stations that would show or would even attempt to show some of these programs, are very, very few. There are maybe one or two on the west coast, maybe Seattle and San Francisco, and Los Angeles, but none in the mid-east, or the south.

Another thing is that the programs that were chosen for the sample, is a variety. Yesterday we showed a program called "FRANKIE Teardrop" that would never be shown on PBS, under most circumstances. The Richard Freeman Show, which was done specifically for television, would never be shown on PBS. Sure, they did a John Cage Show on PBS, which was very much more entertaining and a much faster pace, but our program has John Cage actually starting a composition in front of the camera. So, maybe some of the programs selected in this particular sample have some reminiscence of the PBS programs, but this is not all of the program. You would have to see the whole program. I don't think you could judge from two minutes of the program whether it would or would not be shown on PBS.

Another thing is that PBS is subject to the FCC regulations, which we are not. PBS would never show nudity in their programs. They would never be allowed to use so called four letter words. On Cable, we have no censorship whatsoever. We are showing complete nudity at 8:00 on Monday night and we even show some kinds of pornography. We have no censorships whatsoever.

Also, there are artists that work in the television shows that we produce, who, for \$2,000 can produce a broadcast quality program. On PBS, you may need \$50,000, we can do maybe 25 programs for that amount.

PBS doesn't have a regular interest in promoting arts programs. If they do it, they show one once in a while out of pressure from the National Endowment for the Arts, and out of pressure from the independent producer. More than 50% of PBS programs are imports from England. This gets us into a completely different subject: the problem of public television in the United States, which is not public. The public has no input there. The only people that have input are the big corporations which sponsor the programs that are safe, and the programs that certain minority groups on the east coast would be interested in watching.

CLIVE: I accept what you say, but it's also arguable that just as the public has no involvement in PBS, the artists have no direct involvement in your station. Given the amount of air time that you have, given the amount of artists that you have to serve, it sounds, in fact, as if you're angling towards becoming an alternative network. As you develop, in actual fact, you will become a big production house that has a very low overhead on these. . . .

JAIME: You're right; we have a production place where we have access to equipment. We have personnel that can help the artist produce the work, at a low budget. We have a conduit so that the artist can show his work and make some money. Also cable has a lot of time. Right now we show half an hour every week but as more money is raised we will be able to show one hour or we will be able to show two hours.

And not only is the artist able to get exposure, but to get actual money. You know, the artist was never able to get any money, even from PBS. The fact of the matter is, and this is quite important to know, that very few artists show through PBS. The PBS art is shown by an organization called the PB Lab. They have a very specific taste which focuses on one kind of work. A local PBS station pays \$200 to rent the PBS program on art. We are paying \$50 just to show it in New York City. The PBS can only reach maybe, four or five markets in the United States. So, we're also talking about distribution. Maybe some of the programs can be shown on PBS, like you mentioned. The only person you mention is Nam June Paik. Do you ever see Richard Foreman on PBS? Do you ever see Robert Fillion on PBS? Just to name a couple? We have those programs.

CLIVE: Well, one of the arguments is that in terms of literature, there aren't different book stores for buying different types of literature necessarily, and that one of the real problems politically is actually facing, where there is public control, forcing television to uplift its standards rather than actually attempting to compete with television, in another way. There really doesn't seem to be any solution to the problem that video artists actually get access to television. I don't really think that you've proved that a substantial number of people would necessarily be able to get paid for that type of distribution any more than any artist in Canada right now can virtually go in and get a program on cable. I mean, it is possible: many of us have done it.

JAIME: Yes, but if you don't have an audience, if you don't have continuity, how can you expect to succeed?

CLIVE: Succeed in what? Succeed in developing a company or. . .

JAIME: Succeed in developing an audience that will support your program. We're talking about allowing the artist to be self-supporting, to have the means to create new interests and, as a result, sell their tapes or have money to produce more work. I don't say that we've proved that this is the only way. But what we're doing now is opening up the area of television so we can show the programs and also we're making the production facilities accessible to artists; as opposed to showing television in an art gallery context.

CLIVE: So you don't think that the market is coming to a selectivity of programming by actually purchasing software itself. You don't think that the home entertainment industry is going to succeed in the fact of either buying discs or cassettes in which people will eventually buy their own selected programming. You think it's still going to

JAIME: First of all, I would like to make a comparison with records. Radio came first. People got used to the music and the sounds and everything else, on the radio and then they went out and bought the records. I think people have to get interested at the specialist end. I'm talking about the very narrow audience, the art oriented audience, that will have the opportunity to see these programs. If this audience is interested after they see the programs, they can go and buy the video disc, or the video cassette. But, if the people don't know the program, then it would be very difficult to sell them a Betamax copy of it. I think the first thing to do, is to create a demand for this particular product. If there is no demand, you can have ten thousand copies and they will be sitting in your loft, and nobody will buy it and I think the approach of the distribution system in the United States now is not working very well. I don't know of one artist that really succeeded in that distribution system. Some of the museums are starting to develop a video cassette collection but there is no opportunity to actually see the work. With cable; or on broadcast television, people will be able to see even more work and when I say Cable, I'm talking about right now. Maybe next year, the whole structure of public television is going to change. Maybe it is going to open up to more artists, to more independent producers and to more radical programming. Then, maybe, the direction will be Cable for one type of audience and public television or commercial television for another audience.

I will take a city that I just came from, Iowa City. Iowa City has just franchised a cable system. The cable system in Iowa City is going to start operation in October of this year. The

Gallery of Iowa State University, is going to be the local sponsor of the programs and the Gallery will pay the Artists' Television Network, which, in turn, will pay to the individual artists, a fee for each program. Now, what the Gallery is going to do, is probably show 60% Soho Television programs, and 40% originated in Iowa City. Now, next month I will go to Long Beach Museum of Art, in Long Beach, California. There, they have a program already started on Channel 3, which is the feeder cable. We will send our programs directly to Channel 3 in Los Angeles and they can either take all the programs or they can take part and they can put on their local programs as well. What we're going to do with the Live Injection Point, is put the program on the satellite, then either a Cable station can take it or. . .

AUDIENCE: How would they get the lines from New York?

JAIME: How? They do it from the same satellite. If we have a program originated in the morning, the cable station will send a signal. . .

IAN MURRAY: The value of the satellite system, as I understand it, is decentralization, so I assume that the Soho Television would restructure it so that, you know, it could be one beep in the mornings. . .

JAIME: I think you're saying Soho Television instead of Cable Soho. Soho Television is a project of the Artists' Television Network. If you are going to have a series of artists from Des Moines, it would be a Des Moines project originated in Des Moines but seen maybe, in New York and San Francisco and Los Angeles. You know that's what makes the satellite.

AUDIENCE: Is the decision making process decentralized as well? How does it work? Is there a hierarchical structure? Do your different franchises in the Network have equal votes?

JAIME: This will be done on an individual basis, with each arts organization. We are not going to deal directly with the cable company. We have an arts organization that will have that power, that decision. It will be up to the local organization to decide. In Iowa City, they will make the decisions about the programs that they want to show. We will say, this is the selection. You can take them all or you can take one or you can take more or you can just send the programs and we will receive. It will be our decision to receive the programs. Now, there. . .

IAN: It's your decision to receive the programs and to show them in Manhattan. It's your decision to show the programs from Des Moines and Chicago.

JAIME: That would be between Des Moines and Chicago.

AUDIENCE: But, without going through the Network? Would it function as a clearing house or. . .

JAIME: I don't know, we don't know yet, because we haven't reached that point. There's something else too. Iowa City, for example, for the first couple of years will be able to receive programs via satellite, but they will not be able to send programs. So, I don't know. Maybe it will be like a clearing house like you mentioned. Also, there is an organization in Washington, that is called the Transponder Allocation Committee. What they are is a clearing house, for different groups that want to have access to satellite. So, maybe there is a way that the Artists' Television Network would be part of the Transponder Allocation and we will make sure that the satellite will be available to these different arts groups. In other areas there is no cable system. In Europe, we're going to start sending the programs as a regular closed circuit program until they are able to develop a cable system. I understand that in Amsterdam there is now being built the first cable system in Europe, with a hundred thousand subscribers. It's going to be in operation in October of this year.

DAVID HALL: What do you mean "the first in Europe"?

JAIME: That's what they told me.

DAVID: It's not the first in Europe.

JAIME: But, it's working through subscribers in the same way as the American cable system.

DAVID: Oh, you mean a subscription cable.

JAIME: Yes, I know there is a cable system in Germany and England, I think has cable, but I'm talking about a structure similar to the American system.

AUDIENCE: It seems that we've got two very distinct point of view here. One is yours, which is very concrete and optimistic. I think there are obvious questions to be raised about it and the content itself. And then Clive seemed to imply a thesis but most of it it seems to me, did not make sense, since he didn't seem to draw any conclusions.

CLIVE: There are two or three questions there that I was hoping that the people in this room would be willing to discuss. The major one being, what type of information do artists want to put onto television.

LISA STEELE: I think that's the question. I don't think there is a consensus among producers of video art, that the logical extension of video art is television in the home. Everybody admits that there is an inadequate system of distribution. Tapes go to art galleries

and educational institutions which is most of our market right now. There's a tantalizing feel to what you're saying, Jaime. It sounds so great, in a way. And, yet, it could be reinforcing the sort of system of communication that's already set up, rather than undermining or challenging it. I could simply be feeding directly into the already existing form. As a person that produces video and takes it out and shows it to people, it's very hard when people ask you what the difference is between my tapes and television? "Why isn't this television?" I think there are different concerns in information. I don't know if that's the right word, or communications. I'm not trying to take an anarchist stance but I'm not sure that this is not a kind of network of artists' publications that isn't going to fit very directly into an already existing corporate system of information dispersal. Maybe nothing else exists; maybe it's all mythology. But, there was and has been a sort of development within artists and people using other media like video that rejected certain kinds of gallery structures and it said that those gallery structures were not adequate for communicating and presenting and said, "What is an alternative?" I'm not sure, but I have a feeling about a cable system, about a satellite broadcast system, about PBS, about all kinds of already existing hardware systems. But, feeding artist information into that is, in fact, no more than a lubricant in a way. The artist is lubricating the existing form of communication, rather than doing anything else.

CLIVE: Obviously, we do not suggest that performance art is in actual fact, Broadway, that it doesn't automatically mean that the only problem is one of mass distribution, and with that solved, everything will flow freely. And, I'm not suggesting that that is such a direct comparison with video art. But, there are certain reasons why artists would gravitate to publications about their work; it's a more clear form, it's a clearer means of communicating with an audience, than in actual fact. . .

JAIME: We're talking about video; it's something that has time. It has movement. You can communicate paint and sculpture through a magazine, but with video, it's very difficult. One thing it. . .

IAN MURRAY: As an artist, I think that communicating with a reproduction of a sculpture is more difficult than with a reproduction of part of a video tape.

JAIME: But, with sculpture, at least you have an idea. With video tape you see one frame; it's very difficult to understand it in magazine reproductions.

IAN MURRAY: That's not true, because you don't get fooled into thinking that

that's what the work is actually like, and you are when you are photographing sculptures. There's a full body of knowledge that led artists to start dealing with video in the first place and I think that to a very, very great extent, the fact we have video symposiums and video distributorships and the belief that we can take a channel where there is television and just put the art into it, totally forgets all of those basic interests to do with the quality of the object.

JAIME: I think there is room in the gallery or the museum for video installation, especially for certain kinds of single channel pieces but, it's no way to develop an audience. The audience that will come to the museum, to watch them on television is very, very small. One of the problems, is with the museum curators. I have talked to many curators about video art and they tell me the same thing. They don't know what to do with this video art.

IAN MURRAY: Well, I think we should point a finger. Now, what do we do with slide art?

JAIME: Slide? Well, they give a lecture, so they go to the library, they take a slide and they show it.

IAN: No, I mean that some artists use slides in their work as the artform. What do they do?

JAIME: What do they do?

IAN: Some artists make books. Some artists use material that go moldy. What I'm saying is that video has the potential to be used in a disembodied, non-objective way of translating information from culture to culture, from situation to situation that doesn't show it's own structural basis. I don't think that you are aware of the impact of it going to another place.

JAIME: Well, I think that television art, or video art has a very small audience. It's experimental. I think it's going to stay that way and I think it's very important. Not everything that is shown in a gallery is the most interesting work. In Europe, the best work is not the work shown in the commercial; it's the work that the artists show in their own lofts.

IAN: The problem in the question of transmitting chunks of culture from city to city and situation to situation, with no consideration of the situations. That's what I'm talking about. I'm talking about a practice a few years ago, of artists going into a place and creating an exhibition there; a tendency that artists have to develop work for a specific situation, and I think that is a point of interest for artists who use video. I think what you're talking about is a wholesale dissolution of a lot of these concepts.

JAIME: It's just another alternative.

AUDIENCE: An alternative where you're thinking of a specific situation, where you're putting information into it.

JAIME: It's another form, you know. There are many different ways. I don't think that everything produced in video should be shown in television. There are different ways. I think what you're saying, is completely legitimate. I myself, in my own work, do what you're saying. But, I think the Network is opening the avenues and opening up to the possibility for other work, and also opens the possibility to develop an audience that will appreciate more, the work that you do.

IAN: The problem with your system, is that it assumes a community of interest that is not geographic or not economic or political. It's rather a community of outputs, basically. That you're programming for a very mass situation.

PEGGY GALE: Are you saying that that shouldn't be done? I mean, you are saying it shouldn't be done, but why shouldn't it?

IAN: I'm not saying it shouldn't be done, but that seems to be the basic element of it.

PEGGY: I mean, every time we ship something out into a network, we're letting a random audience and the randomness gives it the potential to say 'I don't want to watch this - 'click' or 'I do', depending.

IAN: But, that's destroying the idea that we should be concerned about American stations coming across the border.

PEGGY: We're still talking about cable here.

IAN: We're talking about 200 Cable systems that are held together by satellite.

PEGGY: So, you're saying they should be destroyed.

IAN: It seems to me, that this discussion involves a lot of different aspects. What we have here (A.T.N.) is a very optimistic, developing thing that is obviously going to become bigger and do a lot of people good. But, there are some assumptions that this particular example involves that perhaps we can discuss.

For example, the Museum of Modern Art could send their whole collection around the world, from community to community - what's that mean? I'm not sure whether that's necessarily a bad thing but it's certainly pretty peculiar. . .

JAIME: . . . It's an imperialistic type of dissemination of information. It's the same kind of thing that you were talking about the other day: taking abstract expressionism and establishing it as a major form of art.

AUDIENCE: - inaudible -

JAIME: There is one thing that we do at the Artists' Television Network, which is one reason we have to sell our projects, which is let people from all over the world have input into our programs. For example, this season, we had programs from Canada, we had programs from France, we had programs from South America and next season we are going to have programs from Japan, from all over; but we are going to show it in New York. We are not going to show them in Japan because they don't have the system but we can show it in New York. And also, we would like to make the artists cable project accessible to other artists because I agree with you, to have the same attitude as the Rockefeller Collection, would be awful. But, one of the great things about video, is that we can get information from many different places. The value in this kind of symposium, is that we can sit down together and watch a lot of work done in Japan, watch a lot of work done in England, and watch a lot of work done in Vancouver, etc. This is essential. This will be, I think, the decision of the artist. This is what is called the Artists' Television Network. It is with artists, by artists, and for artists. We are not involved in administrators of anything like that, so the Rockefeller Foundation was the Museum of Art, was an institution. We were offered to be part of the institutions and we refused, but we want to form. . .

AUDIENCE: But, your Network is obviously going to become a major institution.

JAIME: Not necessarily.

AUDIENCE: Well, if you plan to go on, as you have been doing, you're going to be as major an institution as any in New York.

JAIME: No, the problem is that we have no access.

CLIVE: That's not a problem as far as I can see. My question is, if video art is going to influence through television, I still don't see it as being a very useful education link, somehow.

DAVID HALL: It depends on the objectives of any individual artist, unless you're generalizing about what you're saying.

CLIVE: I'm just saying and you probably agree, that art can't be taught through books, You know, video art cannot be taught coherently

through watching video art coming through. . .

IAN: Maybe video art is most easily contained like television, which means that television can somehow be the image of video art. I know that when I was doing some artist work for television, I ended up using as much film or slide work or audio work as video.

PEGGY: But, surely, the question is not whether you can maintain the purity and prestige of some mythical video art. It is not so singular a thing that has to be kept safe from the rest of the world so that it can maintain its integrity, is. . .

CLIVE: We're talking about a cultural force through television which is not just incredibly powerful but which has a habit of digesting, not only artist culture, but street culture at an incredibly powerful rate. And which has the effect of immodernizing culture very, very quickly.

LISA STEELE: I want to point out and it may seem crazy, that television encourages a particular type of behaviour that everybody complains about. So to put different content within a specific broadcast television or cable television within the home, may, in fact, continue to encourage that behaviour. In terms of work it's a particular socializing tool. Irregardless of whether it's video art, or 'Mork and Mindy', it's a socializing tool. I don't know the alternative.

JAIME: But what about magazines. The thing is you publish a magazine, in much the same way. . . We're talking about distribution. We're not talking about content, we're talking about plain distribution. Time magazine publish a magazine; they send it to the news stand; they send it to subscribers; you pay, you get the magazine. Right? They get subscriptions, they send the thing, whatever. They have a different mailing list. So here the question is the distribution of the system of television. The magazine I get at home, too, I read it at home, I read in the subway, or any place I choose to read it. Television, maybe one day we will have a different kind of television where you can put it in your pocket and you can watch a show on the subway, too. So as far as distribution is concerned, I don't think there's anything wrong in going home, lying in bed or staying home and watching video art on television, in my home. I don't see anything wrong with that. It could be like reading a magazine. And if you say to the people, no, the only way that you can watch video art is to go to a room, or to go to the artist's loft, it would be like saying that the only way I could read a certain magazine would be to go to the publisher's house.

DAVID HALL: You know, I think the worry is that there are bad associations

with television. You can't make video art assume whether you show it on television through your system, or in a pristine gallery, but it's really never done it to that work. It's the responsibility of the artist anyway to recognize that. Whether you're at home watching it or whether you're watching it in a gallery, it's still going to have the same effect. Unless you take into some kind of account, the inherent problem in taking on meaning. So many people do that, and say, well it's got nothing to do with television, this is video. And I can't accept this, I think that. . .

IAN MURRAY: It seems to me that most of what we see in television is film. I think the problem is you're offering the artists a sort of static way of getting the things around. It's a set situation. The object has so many inherent qualities. . .

INTERVIEWER: I have a question, how do you define video art?

IAN: I would say video art is probably as interesting a genre as etchings. I think it's interesting for different kinds of situations.

INTERVIEWER: Why don't you give me a definition?

IAN: Well, video is not television in the same way as audio tape is not radio or writing is not a magazine. I don't know how else I can explain it to you.

DAVID HALL: I think your analysis may be true in a number of years, but I don't think that it's true now.

- discussion inaudible _

IAN: O.K. what I'm saying is that I don't want to see it contained realistically the way people contain other things. I think we can deal with video art as a kind of containment of contemporary art, so you can understand it.

PEGGY: But, that's exactly what we're not doing, though. That was my point a couple of minutes ago. I think we're getting confused here. On the one hand you're saying that well if you put video on T.V., then it becomes television and not video. . .

JAIME: Television has such a bad taste with all of us.

- discussion inaudible -

CLIVE: I'd like T.V. to take 25 times longer to say what they say in 30 seconds; to deal with the same information, but to take longer to deal with it. . . Cable could do it but they don't have the economic basis to do it.

JAIME: Why not? In April, there will be a very interesting program that the Center for Non-Broadcast Television is doing. This is not related to art, this is information. I think it's very interesting that you brought it up. It's going to be a problem dealing with the multinational corporations in the United States. This is the first problem of this nature done in the United States using the cable system. And the problem is that more and more job in the United States, are being lost to foreign countries. For instance, in the television industry, the factories are being closed, and the set are being made in Taiwan, they are being made in Hong Kong, Japan, et cetera. And a lot of people in the United States are losing jobs. So the Machinist Union in the United States organized this program and it is going to be cable-cast from the Center for Non-Broadcast Television, the last week in April. It is going to reach 200 cable stations around the country. with a live telephone line from different people all over the country directly to the Center. There will be a representative from the government, there will be the president of the Machinists Union, there will be representatives of the companies that are being forced to close down because of foreign competition. This is just one way that cable is going to be used. The program is called Runaway Jobs. Later there will be other programs dealing with other crucial political issues, which will get the community involved, not only the art, that is one of the problems but the community at large. They will be able to have a continuous feedback that they couldn't have with the commercial television. Their time is too valuable, there are too many pressures and too many millions of dollars at stake. I don't think that we have the political base or the power base to change that structure. But we can have this other thing that cable can do to get the very crucial issues. You know, this has a lot of impact. And this is one thing that the broadcast television stations are afraid of. They are afraid of this potential in the cable system.

- remainder of discussion inaudible -