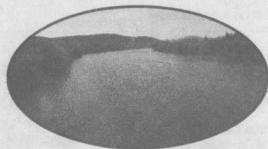


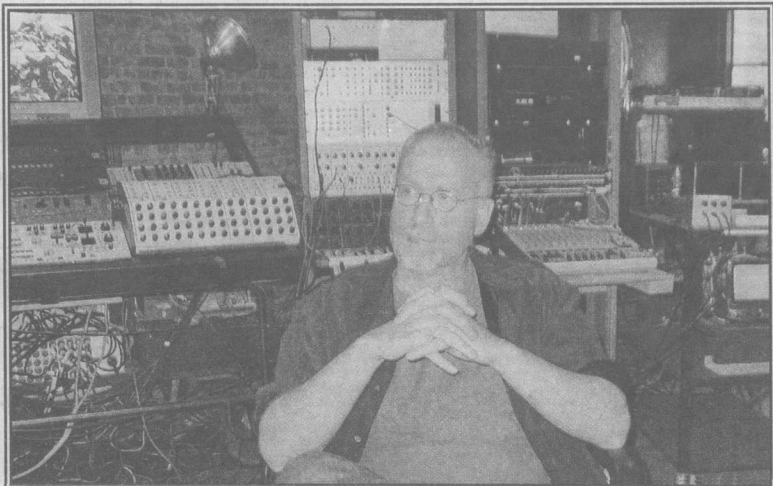
TIOGA COMMUNITY



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ETC 4 2610



Instructor Hank Rudolph sits amidst equipment at the Experimental Television Center in Owego.

SUZANNE MEREDITH / Correspondent

Hidden treasure – 3 flights up

Owego media studio attracts artists from the world over

By SUZANNE MEREDITH
Correspondent

OWEGO

Finding the Experimental Television Center Ltd. is an adventure: locate the right brick building on Owego's Riverrow, where the buildings were crafted in the 1860's, walk carefully up three floors on a slightly creaky wooden stairs, make a quick right turn at the top of the steps into a huge room with brick walls mellowed by time.

It's a quirky location with worn wooden floors and tall windows that let in the sunlight that dapples the room and offers a breathtaking view of the

Susquehanna River and downtown Owego.

In contrast to the vintage surroundings, the center of this space is video nirvana. Dozens of machines are connected by a hundred miles of cable. Artists, teachers, historians and other scholars come from all over the world to spend time at this video studio.

The ETC, a nonprofit organization, was founded in 1971 as an outgrowth of a media-access program established in 1969 by Ralph Hocking of Binghamton University.

"All the tools at the center are custom-made, except for the modern digital equipment," said Sherry Miller Hock-

ing, assistant director and the wife of Ralph Hocking. "We provide support and services to the media-arts community. The center assists in the creation of work using new electronic and vintage media technologies, providing space and time for self-directed creative projects," she said.

The center's programs are supported by grants from the Electronic Media and Film Program of the New York State Council of The Arts, as well as several other organizations.

SEE CENTER 5

Center's equipment one-of-a-kind --

CONTINUED FROM THE COVER

Some of the funds are used to maintain an Artists-in-Residence Program. "Each year we have at least 100 applications from artists to spend a week at the studio," said Hank Rudolph and instructor at the ETC.

"From this group we choose 45. Since 1971 we have provided residencies for over 1,400 artists from throughout the world. This adds up to about \$100,000 worth of services each year," Rudolph said.

He said working at the ETC does not seem like a job. "It is stimulating dealing with brilliant people from many disciplines and backgrounds. I learn from the artists I teach," he said.

The center also opens a world of terms that need interpretation, such as sticky shed, flagging and skewing, creases and wrinkles and vinegar syndrome -- all of which have specialized meanings in the video business.

The week of Oct. 10, two video artists, Benton C. Bainbridge and Stephan Moore of New York City, were in residence.

"We can work almost 24 hours a day, using every minute to work on making a unique video," Moore said. "We can create images in dynamic vibrating colors enhanced by electronic music."

The tools used in the studio and the software make it possible to manipulate the video into anything we can imagine, Moore continued.

"It is great that the vintage equipment, and original one-of-a-kind tools, such as the Jones colorizer, are being preserved and blended with modern digital systems," Moore said.

Both New York City residents seemed impressed with the many "real dials and levers" on the vintage machines.

"Such hands-on equipment gives me insight on how videos evolved and how I will design software for future projects," Bainbridge said. "We are brainstorming and doing research and development and being inspired by all the custom tools in this one-of-a-kind studio," he said.

The colorizer device that



PHOTO PROVIDED

From left, Annie Langan, Monica Duncan, and Matt Underwood were instructors for the 10th annual International Summer Workshop, held at the Experimental Television Center. The workshop is a collaborative video and sonic arts program sponsored by the center and the Institute for Electronic Arts. Langan teaches photography and video in Louisville, Ky.; Duncan teaches at the Atlanta College of Art & Design; Underwood is studying at the School of Art and Design at Alfred University.

impressed Moore and Bainbridge was designed and built by Dave Jones of Owego, specifically for the ETC.

The machine takes an input of black and white and adds color, based on the direction of the artist. The multifunctional image-processing device with six channel controls can mix, cross-fade and offer a choice of hue to any image.

"I have always been interested in experimenting with ways to change regular video into something different," Jones said. "The colorizer enhances a normal image, turning it into something entirely changed," he said.

The machine can interact with an image, instantly inverting change, and that is why some residents are impressed with the vintage dial-and-lever system, Jones said.

"The problem with using a computer to control color is that each change must be scripted and planned with several calculations per frame; the effect is not immediate," he added.

To the casual non-tech visitor, a few of the creations look like bouncing Picasso paintings interspersed with psychedelic bursts of color and throbbing to unusual sounds. But Sherry Hocking said every artist works on his own vision of the media. Some artists find more traditional performance art, do

research or experimental animation, or participate in other parts of ETC's mission.

"The custom-made equipment found in Owego cannot be found anywhere else in the world," said Kjel Bjorgeengen of Norway, a recent participant in the residency program. "I work in all venues and show in Europe and Norway, and have had exhibits in museums and galleries. Large-scale installations are my specialty. Creating video at ETC in Owego is a unique experience," he said.

Another facet of the ETC is the Video History Project.

"It was started in 1994 as an ongoing research initiative to document video art and community television as it evolved in rural and urban America," said Sherry Hocking.

"We want to trace, collect and assist in the preservation of media history," she said. "We further the critical discourse among scholars and historians engaged with the study of the origins of media art. Moving image preservation is an exciting project," she said.

Many of the projects spon-



SUZANNE MEREDITH / Correspondent

Stephan Moore of New York City uses a video camera to colorize his experimental video. He spent a week at the Experimental Television Center in Owego.

sored by the ETC have been exhibited in prestigious museums and at international film festivals. The economic benefit to Tioga County is great.

Artists, students, and researchers spend time and money living in the area during their residency. Our contribution to the promotion and preservation of video art extends worldwide...all done from right here in Owego," Hocking said.

To learn more

For more information about the Experimental Television Center contact Sherry Miller Hocking at 687-4341 or etc@experimentaltvcenter.org or visit the Web site www.experimentaltvcenter.org.

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