

CLIPS

FOUNDED IN 1990, BRINGS TOGETHER PEOPLE FROM THE WORLD OF INDEPENDENT AND ALTERNATIVE VIDEO AND TELEVISION FROM EVERY CONTINENT. TOGETHER, ITS MEMBERS ACT TO PROMOTE THE DEMOCRATIC PRACTICE OF COMMUNICATION. THEY AIM TO BROADEN THE PARTICIPATION BY COMMUNITIES AND MOVEMENTS FROM THE SOUTH AND THE NORTH IN SOUND AND IMAGE PRODUCTION. THE COALITION ACTS THROUGH THE CREATION OF FORA FOR DEBATE AND EXCHANGE AMONGST THE MANY DIVERSE PARTICIPANTS IN THIS BROAD MOVEMENT FOR ALTERNATIVE MESSAGING.

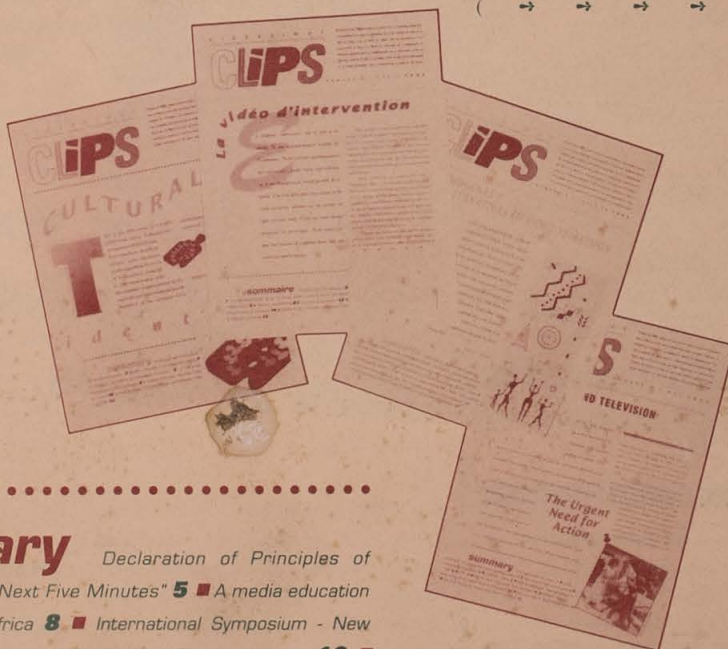
NUMBER 4 - OCTOBER 1993

Invitations

**You are hereby invited to:
become a member of
Vidéazimut, to attend the
New Technologies Symposium
in New Delhi and to contribute
articles to Clips.**

Vidéazimut is an international non-governmental coalition promoting audiovisual communication for development and democracy. Since its creation in 1990, it has brought together people from the world of independent and alternative video and television from every continent. Together, its members act to promote the democratic practice of communication and to broaden the participation by communities and movements from the South and the North in sound and image production.

(→ → → → →)



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VIDÉAZIMUT

- **GENERAL SECRETARIAT**
3680, rue Jeanne-Mance, bur. 430
Montréal, Québec, Canada H2X 2K5
Telephone : (514) 982-6660, Fax : (514) 982-6122
E-mail : videaz@web.apc.org

THE BOARD

- **CANADA**
Vidéo Tiers-Monde (VTM) - a/s Alain Ambrosi
3680, rue Jeanne-Mance, bur. 430, Montréal, Québec, Canada
H2X 2K5
Telephone : (514) 982-6660, Fax: (514) 982-6122
E-mail : vtm@web.apc.org
- **BURKINA FASO**
Fédération panafricaine des cinéastes (FEPACI)
a/s Cheick Kolla Maiga, 01 BP 2524, Ouagadougou 01,
Burkina Faso. Telephone : (226) 31.02.58,
Fax : (226) 31.18.59
- **BRASIL**
a/s Regina Festa - Av. Prof. Lucas Martins Rodrigues, 443
Cidade Universitaria, CEP 05508-900 São Paulo, Brasil
Telephone / Fax : (55-11) 443-6380
E-mail : aratama@ax.apc.org
a/s Luiz Fernando Santoro, Rua Conego Eugenio Leite, 568
Apto.502, 05414-000 São Paulo SO, Brasil
Telephone / Fax : (55-11) 64-1389
E-mail : fsantor@fox.cce.usp.br
- **HONG KONG**
CineReal Limited, a/s Derek Hall
P.O. Box 9467, General Post Office, Hong Kong
Telephone : (852) 524-3994, Fax : (852) 877-2531
- **SOUTH AFRICA**
Video News Services (VNS), a/s Shariff Cullis
P.O. Box 16455, Doornfontein 2028, Johannesburg,
South Africa, Telephone : (27-11) 333-5636
Fax : (27-11) 333-5353, E-mail : vns@wn.apc.org
- **ITALY**
Centro Internazionale Crocevia (CIC)
a/s Antonio Onorati & Maurizio Paffetti
Via Ferraironi, 88/G, 00172 Roma, Italia
Telephone : (39-6) 241-3976, Fax : (39-6) 242-4177
E-mail : crocevia@ax.apc.org
or crocevia@geo2.geonet.de
- **PERÚ**
Instituto para América latina (IPAL)
a/s Rafael Roncagliolo, Av. Juan de Aliaga 204, Lima 17,
Perú, Telephone : (51-14) 61.79.49 or 61.04.70,
Fax : (51-14) 62.90.32,
E-mail : postmaster@pal.rcp.pe
- **MOZAMBIQUE**
Instituto de Comunicação Social (ICS)
a/s Felisberto Tinga, av. Amílcar Cabral, 214
Caixa Postal 2546, Maputo, Moçambique
Telephone : (258-1) 43 09 51, Fax : (258-1) 49.26.22
- **INDIA**
Centre for the Development of Instructional Technology
(CENDIT) - a/s Rajive Jain
D-1 Soami Nagar, New Delhi 110 017, India
Telephone : (91-11) 643-9692/93
Fax : (91-11) 644-2728/643-1812
E-mail : cendit@unvnet.in
- **UNITED STATES**
Deep Dish T.V. Network - a/s Kai Lumumba-Barrow
339 Lafayette St., New York, NY 10012, U.S.A.
Telephone : (1-212) 473-8933
Fax : (1-212) 420-8223
E-mail : deepdish@peacenet.apc.org
- **FRANCE**
Fédération des vidéos des pays et des quartiers
a/s Olivier Pasquet, Place de la Mairie, 73270 Beaufort sur
Doron, France, Telephone : (33 79) 38 01 24,
Fax : (33 79) 32 60 71

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

- Luiz F. Santoro, President
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- Rajive Jain, Vice-President
- Lavinka Mohr, General Secretary

CLIPS

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The Board of Directors of Vidéazimut recently adopted a new membership policy to increase participation in the coalition. The membership is open to groups and individuals who share and actively pursue its goals and principles. The complete Declaration of Principles has been included in this issue.

Also, we want to welcome anyone who wishes to contribute articles to Clips. The articles must be on themes related to the democratisation of communications and can be generated from many sources interesting workshops, new research, recent reports, interviews, conferences, etc. They can touch on subjects like new technologies (the subject of the New Delhi Symposium), the problem of cultural identity, communications policy analysis, the democratisation of television, important experiences in video and television, etc.....or you can just send us news of upcoming events or interesting publications. Anything that has captured your imagination. Anything which will help to understand and to secure the right of people, of communities and of individuals to communicate. We publish in French, English and Spanish and distribute internationally. Articles should be approximately 1,000 words.

For further information on becoming a member, on contributing articles to Clips or on attending the Symposium (see inside article), contact the General Secretariat or a member of the board.

We hope you enjoy this issue of Clips.

Invitations

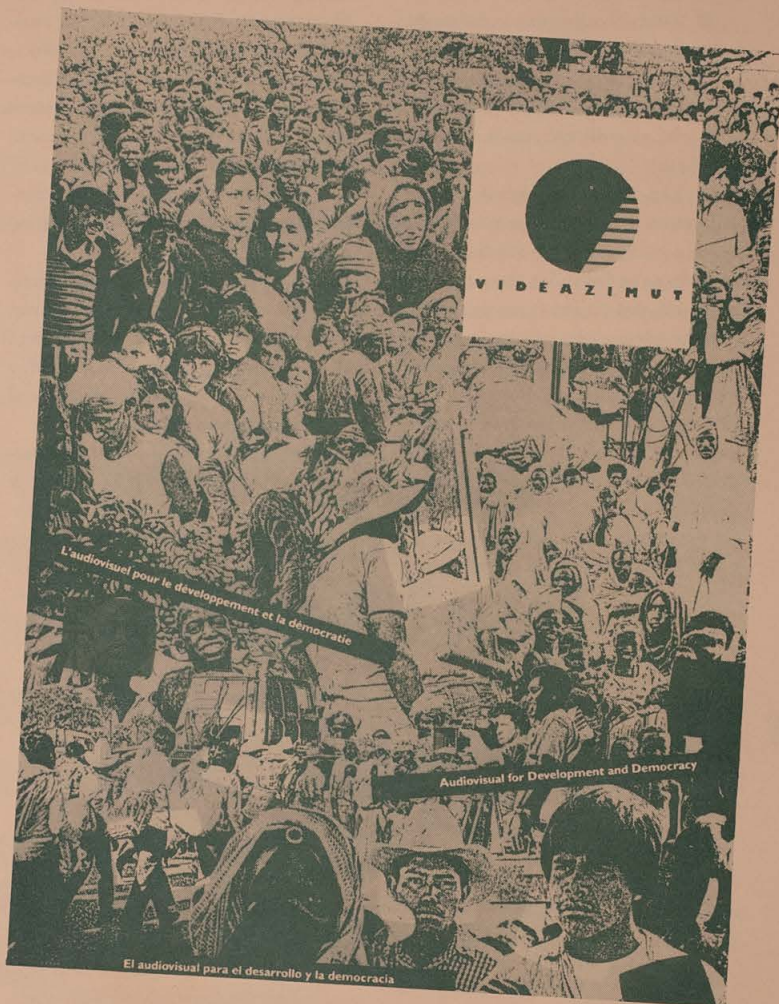




Declaration of Principles

COMMUNICA-
tion is a right of
peoples, of com-
munities and of in-
dividuals. Communication is a funda-
mental activity of human beings, indi-
vidually and in society. It is essential
to democratic life at all levels, as it is
to any process of development. The
right to communicate is seriously un-
dermined by the workings as well as
the structures and dominant models
of communications systems. Inequal-
ity of access to the means of produc-
tion and dissemination exist between
the North and the South but also
within each country, in the North as
well as in the South.

The International Coalition for
Democratic Communication known
as Vidéazimut is composed of organi-



sations and individuals using video and
television as a means to democratise
communications. The Coalition is dedi-
cated to defending and broadening ac-
cess to voice and image for all those who

are presently marginalised from them, in
the South and in the North.

In an age when new communica-
tions technologies, in particular video
and television, lend themselves to de-





mocratisation on a technical level, the Coalition aims to promote:

- greater access to these means on the part of marginalised communities;
- liberty of expression in the production of images and messages;
- greater access to the means of dissemination of voice and images on the national and international levels.

The right to communicate includes the right of communities and organisations to project an expression they consider to be faithful to their own identities and ideas; it also includes the right of those who are generally excluded from the means of communication to speak and to gain public visibility. The Coalition believes that the low level of participation of the majority of the world's population is a serious hindrance to development. A plurality of voices is necessary for democracy. The Coalition is committed to promoting the defence of the right

to transmit as well as to receive information, and the right to meaningful information. The Coalition aims to promote the practice as well as the recognition of the right to communicate, through the development of new strategies for communication and the creation of international networks (South-South, North-South, South-North) to facilitate production, distribution, training and access to communications technology.

The Coalition carries out its activities internationally with the following goals:

- to defend democracy in communication as a fundamental human right through the transformation of communications practices in video and television at the local, national and international levels;
- to promote the practice of democratic communication through public awareness campaigns, training, production, co-production, exchange and distribution of video

works;

- to facilitate individual and collective access to the mediums of video and television as well as communication for development;
- to promote endogenous production in all countries as well as the international recognition and dissemination of those productions;
- to carry out policy analysis and advocacy and to organise campaigns to effect concrete changes to further the democratisation of communication.

The Coalition understands communication to be a vehicle for the expression of the social project of a collectivity, and a vehicle for developing solidarity and mutual respect between and amongst collectivities. The Coalition considers itself to be part of an international movement towards the creation of a pluralist network of self-determined voices. ▼





HUMAN KIND'S APPETITE FOR INJUSTICE seems unassuaged by its growing capacity to create a world in which injustice and suffering are unnecessary but perpetual by-products of so-called social and economic progress. It is often the exploitation of such imagery — the ravaged land, the torn and beaten body, the emaciated corpse, the destitute child — that forms the foundation of a public response to the social systems that perpetuate our own hardships.

The systematic, widespread use of such imagery, however, continues to take place in a media environment in which the media practitioners are as much a part of the process of selective persecution and abuse as those who actually lead the assaults on human dignity in the first place. The same tool, it seems, is equally capable of serving two irreconcilable purposes. So where does one look to tip the balance in favour of morality?

The semantic collision of two timely themes — “tactical” television and “strategic” television — formed the theoretical basis for an unusual meeting for video practitioners and

Paradiso: “The Next Five Minutes”

television producers and broadcasters in Amsterdam last January. Organised by Paradiso, an Amsterdam forum for alternative community activities, the meeting attracted producers and broadcasters from an international cross-section of audiovisual media.

“Tactical” television, as an “informatics genre” seems to cover that which is primarily independently originated; alternative in character; inquisitive, chal-

lenging or even disputatious in style; and more likely to represent the underdog, the victim, or the rebel, than it is to represent the hero, the leader, or the conformist. “Tactical” television encourages its audience to rephrase social and political questions, and to see selected parts of the world through different eyes.

This partial description of “tactical” television may not in itself seem so new. After all, how does it differ from the work of the radical filmmaker of the sixties or seventies? The answer lies in the immensely important technological development of the medium itself and, in particular, in two fundamental characteristics; portability and affordability. In

other words, access — to expression and creativity — and, of course, creative control.

“Tactical” implies developing a coherent methodology with which one sets out to achieve a particular aim in the presence of an antagonist. “Tactical” television, therefore, suggests that “access” is merely one component of a conceptually more elaborate notion of reason and purpose. Simply having access and im-



What did “The Next Five Minutes” programme look like? It looked rough, it looked classy, it looked dangerous, it looked compelling, it looked personal, and it certainly looked different.

mediate control does not sufficiently explain the nature and context of “tactical”.

If the logic of mass communication and media is reduced to some of its simplest elements, then, just as the most authoritarian and repressive societies exert absolute control over the media and allow no genuine community participation in the media process, it follows, to a degree, that the most democratic societies might be expected to have the freest media with high levels of community and grassroots participation: people’s own images, on their own terms, to meet their own needs. “Tactical” television may be seen as a pathway leading from the (crudely-phrased in this instance) extreme of oppression to liberty through the exercise of the right to communicate.

This is the type of television that was enthusiastically feasted on and celebrated at Paradiso’s “The Next Five Minutes” programme, but what did it look like, and where did it come from? It looked rough, it looked classy, it looked dangerous, it looked compelling, it looked personal, and it certainly looked different.

It originated, mostly through independent producers, large and small, from the slums in South Africa and Brazil, the

streets of New York and Chicago, from snow-bound Siberia, from gruelling production lines and topless bars in Asia, from villages in Bangladesh and Thailand, from the flexible geography of Eastern Europe, and from the community television groups in Europe and of course Amsterdam itself. Videographers using the medium primarily for artistic expression were also represented in the event, as were innovative components of mainstream broadcasters such as the BBC and Britain’s Channel 4.

The almost overpowering multitude of images included: a Siberian recluse, captured on video in literally her first exposure to the outside world since the Russian revolution; African-American social activists caught at sensationally inspiring moments; community groups engaged in “front-line” housing and employment issues; a child-labour activist trying to help free children from 19th-century style sweatshops. The range of circumstances, techniques and obstacles was as broad as the variety of images themselves.

The meeting’s casual and disparate format was a bonus. The main hall hosted core presentations and panel discussions, while a mezzanine floor provid-

ed several small video booths for watching videos borrowed from a temporary library developed especially for the gathering. Two smaller simultaneous venues housed separate discussion and workshop areas.

There were perhaps two minor failures of this otherwise valuable Paradiso meeting. Ironically, the meeting itself served as an example of what it set out to oppose. The North was well represented and discussions of issues Northern were well attended, whereas the few contributions from the South were often more in the nature of side shows. This may not have been an organisational fault or a flaw in the agenda, however, and was perhaps partly a reflection of financial limitations. But the fact remains that this forum which in large part sought to represent the marginalised viewpoint was successful in marginalising non-Western or non-industrialised audiovisual practitioners.

Paradiso also helped demonstrate the continuing vulnerability of technology users to the influence of technology fashion, where passion for the instrument or the medium can still threaten to corrupt the purpose behind its utilisation. The fact that someone is able to





record an unusual event or situation in difficult circumstances does not automatically make a qualitative statement about the context or importance of that event or situation, and the work of alternative or "tactical" television practitioners is as susceptible to distortion or misdirection as any other. One hopes, however, that the interrogative and often sceptical nature of this type of work offers a useful safeguard against this natural weakness.

Although people are learning to take very seriously the question of access to and participation in audiovisual media, this meeting was a lot of fun, and the diversity of practitioners was a source of inspiration and optimism.

The meeting didn't set out to provide rigid descriptions of "tactical" and

Most practitioners had very clearly defined and specific goals in the work they were doing; most wanted to challenge the view or orientation of mainstream television and to provide more critical, analytical, or alternative explanations for the social, political, and cultural situations depicted by mainstream television. Some "tactical" producers had specific, issue-oriented goals, while others were more concerned with developing and expanding technique, style, and format.

The way in which modern television is encouraging not just a more critical reassessment of our own societies, but a deeper understanding and even more stringent evaluation of other societies, was a prominent and welcome feature.

Most wanted to challenge the view or orientation of mainstream television and to provide more critical, analytical, or alternative explanations for the social, political, and cultural situations depicted by mainstream television

"strategic" television, but rather focused on popularising public access to traditionally mainstream forms of social communication and exhibiting innovative techniques for individuals and community-based groups to become participants. It enabled a more casual inspection of the possible nature of "tactical" TV, and some experimentation in the formats that it might take. Interestingly, although, or perhaps because, the definition for "tactical" TV remained fluid and malleable, most participants apparently felt able to find a niche of sorts within the loosely defined criteria.

There are many different hurdles to overcome before the mere notion of "tactical" television may appear less threatening to the institutions that currently govern most audiovisual media systems, but the Paradiso gathering was another clear indication that the need for audiovisual media to be significantly more representative of all the elements that make up society is an idea that is becoming firmly established. ▼

DEREK HALL is a Vidéazimut member and works for Cine Real Limited in Hong Kong.

NEXT MINUTES



A Media Education Workshop for Women in South Africa

CAP, THE COMMUNITY Arts Project, which has a ten-year history in community media facilitation, recently ran a media education course. This course was the realisation of an idea which they had been dreaming about for years. CAP media workers strongly believe that the status of women in society cannot be addressed by simply offering them media production skills. The political analysis of media must be included so that women can then change and challenge its content.

I have always found the process of making visible the ideological operation of films and videos fulfilling. Since I had already begun to look at



ways in which this activity could have some practical use, I was quite enthusiastic when CAP asked me to take responsibility for the two days which would focus on video and television.

For this course, the training, was structured around workshop discussions

of the role of mass media in promoting violence against women. The session on video and television took place on the last weekend of the course. Other aspects of the course included making banners, using silkscreens, video recording and editing. We decided that the course would consist of the viewing of mainstream television genres. Video material would also be produced and analysed in relation to the workshop theme.

The twenty women who took part in the CAP course included representatives of the ANC Women's League, the Call of Islam, a national teachers' union and a rape crisis counselling service.

We viewed some TV advertisements, exploring the way in which mainstream television excluded certain audience groups in terms of both race and gender. To illustrate ways in which the same medium could be used for feminist purposes, we watched a documentary on eating disorders and the media's representation of women's bodies. We also

The status of women in society cannot be addressed by simply offering them media production skills. The political analysis of media must be included so that women can then change and challenge its content.





The experience of working with women had given her the confidence to speak her own mind. Other women, however, seemed to feel that the presence of the camera created conditions which crucially influenced their experience of “speaking out”.

looked at advertisements and feminist film within the context of violence against women.

At the beginning of the workshop, a video camera was set up in the CAP community hall. The women broke into pairs, and were asked to imagine their partner as someone whose attitude to violence against women they would like to challenge; someone, furthermore, to whom they would usually find it intimidating to speak.

Speaking in their first language, the women practised telling this person their views on violence. This process culminated in an exercise in which each woman stepped in front of the camera to have her statement videotaped.

This sparked off an initial discussion on the difficulty of “speaking out”. One participant said that the experience of working with women had given her the confidence to speak her own mind.

Other women, however, seemed to feel that the presence of the camera created conditions which crucially influenced their experience of “speaking out”.

“The reason why we became nervous”, one woman commented, “... is because you don’t know this and how to do it and we have the feeling that you are still in front of the same people who discourage you and shout you down.”

A connection was made between their exclusion from public forums of discussion and the intimidating nature of

the camera.

At the very end of the workshop, after all the screenings and discussions on media, we watched the videotape which had been produced at the beginning. The women talked about their reactions to watching themselves on video, and spoke about ways in which they would like to improve on the tape. Even though the women had expressed confidence, prior to the taping, in their ability to speak within the context of the role-playing and tape recording, the comments which followed the viewing of the tape were very critical. There was, in fact, a marked drop in the women’s satisfaction with their performance in front of the camera. They confessed that they felt quite embarrassed and exposed.

“It’s the first time I have seen myself on TV,” one woman said, “and I’m not so sure how I feel.”

Also, the women were unanimous that they should have been given the chance to prepare more thoroughly for the recording. This would have allowed them to school their body language and enunciation.

There are, I think, two reasons for these comments. Firstly, the women were expressing that familiar discomfort felt when one sees oneself on a screen: a

response which, I think, holds valuable possibilities for media education. We spoke, for example, about their feeling of exposure; did they feel that they had no control over the image on the screen?

Secondly, the women were clearly measuring their performance on camera against the criteria of polished television programmes. Again, this offered valuable material for discussion and we tried to draw out the connections with the points that had been made about mainstream television throughout the weekend.

As a whole, the course has been a success. It is difficult to say whether we managed to integrate skills training and the political analysis of media. Attention tended instead to veer back and forth between the two categories. Nevertheless, the project represents the



ILLUSTRATION: SARAH TABANE

beginning of a new mode of media education for CAP. For my own purposes, it opened up interesting possibilities for a practical use of my skills in film analysis. ▼

JEANNE du TOIT is a graduate student at the University of Cape Town.



NEW TECHNOLOGIES AND THE DEMOCRATISATION OF AUDIOVISUAL COMMUNICATION

*The impact, implications and appropriation
of new communications technologies*

New Delhi, India
February 9 to 12 1994

NEW DELHI WILL BE THE SITE OF AN INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM BEING ORGANISED BY CENDIT AND VIDÉAZI-MUT FOR FEBRUARY 9 TO 12, 1994. THE SYMPOSIUM IS OPEN TO INDEPENDENT PROFESSIONAL, SEMI-PROFESSIONAL AND COMMUNITY VIDEO AND TELEVISION PRODUCERS, NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS AND OTHER GROUPS WORKING IN AUDIOVISUAL COMMUNICATION FOR DEVELOPMENT AND DEMOCRACY. PARTICIPATORY PLENARY SESSIONS COMBINED WITH SEVERAL DISCUSSION, DEMONSTRATION, EXHIBITION, SCREENING AND EXPERIMENTATION VENUES WILL PROVIDE A COMPLETE FORUM FOR AUDIOVISUAL PRACTITIONERS TO EXCHANGE IDEAS, EXPERIENCES AND TECHNIQUE.

WHY THIS SYMPOSIUM?

Around the world hundreds of individual producers, non-governmental organisations, and community groups using video and television are contributing daily to the democratisation of communication and the use of communication for devel-

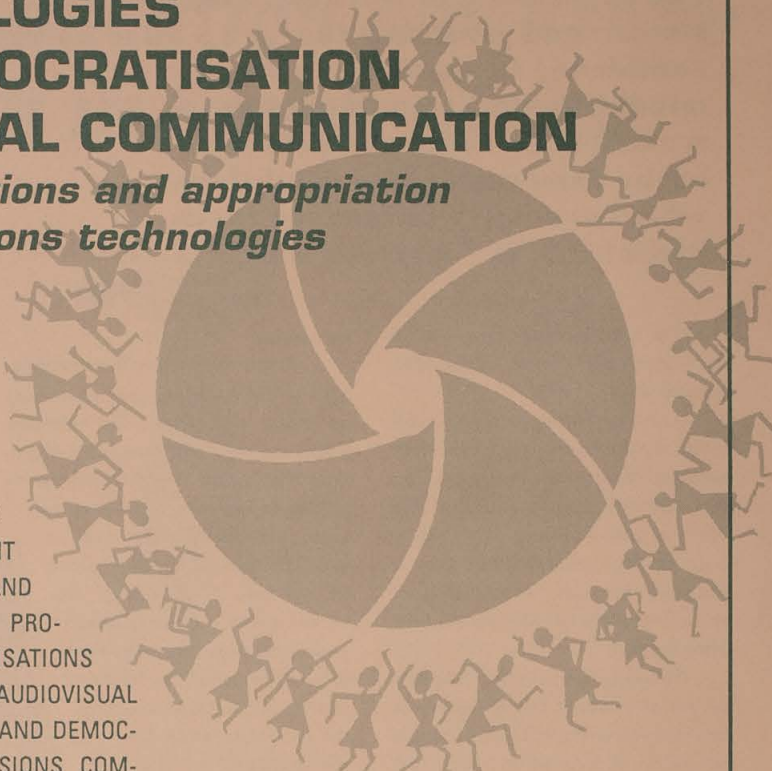
opment and social change. It is a decentralised and widespread phenomenon that serves to counter the ever increasing globalisation of communication.

New technologies in rapid development will profoundly change the context in which audiovisual communicators work.

Digital compression will soon make it possible to use direct broadcast satellites (DBS). Fibre optic cables will bring about high definition TV and the merging of television, telephones and computer communication into a "digital highway". These technologies which are currently being developed by major transna-

tional corporations will bring about a new communications framework much different from the one we know today.

People working in alternative and progressive audiovisual communication will be presented with great challenges and opportunities by the new communications technologies. Maintaining and widening the public communication space that has been gained so far and opening more public communication space not controlled by private commercial interests will re-





quire us to be prepared to act. The symposium is not designed as a forum for persons whose interest is primarily technical. In fact, men and women who are not technical experts are particularly encouraged to participate. We need to know the shape of things to come so that we can explore strategies to intervene in the development and use of the new communications technologies to maximize the space for democratic communication.

How will the digitalisation of broadcasting affect the independent producer in the South? How can people using audiovisual communication for community development prepare themselves? How can direct broadcast satellites be used by those who are working for development and the democratisation of communications? How can we ensure that non-commercial interests will be represented? These are just some of the questions to be explored.

THE SYMPOSIUM WILL ALLOW USTO:

- learn about the new tech-

nologies that are being developed;

- **explore** existing and potential alternative and creative uses at the local, national, regional and international levels of technologies already in place as well as those still to come;

- **identify** strategies and tactics for the appropriation of new technologies by independent professional, semi-professional and community producers so as to consolidate and expand the space available for democratic communication;

- **encourage** alliances and common strategies between groups from the South and the North to maximise the opportunities and minimise the threats of new communications technologies.

SYMPOSIUM AGENDA:

Each day of the four day symposium will open with a plenary session after which participants will gather in smaller groups to discuss specific topics of their choice. There will be an additional closing plenary on the final day. Some technical demon-

strations and video screenings will take place throughout. Simultaneous translation will be available in English, French and Spanish during the plenaries and some other sessions.

**FEBRUARY 9:
WHERE ARE WE TODAY?**

Looking at the new technologies that have already become available to us and exploring the creative initiatives that have already been taken to use them in alternative and democratic ways.

**FEBRUARY 10:
SPYING ON THE FUTURE**

Looking at expected developments in communications technologies and their potential impact and implications for democratic communication.

**FEBRUARY 11-12:
SHAPING THE FUTURE**

Looking at common strategies for the appropriation of new technologies by those from the South and the North working for democratic communication.

REGISTRATION:

Advance registration is required. Registration fee for non-Indian nationals is \$100 US which includes access to symposium events and the information kit as well as lunch. Indian nationals are requested to contact CENDIT for details on the various registration packages and fees available to them. The fee does not include hotel accommodation. Registration is limited to 250 people.

REGISTRATION DEADLINE IS DECEMBER 31, 1993.

Participants who wish to screen their videos should send them to CENDIT along with credits and a short synopsis by December 31st. Preference will be given to videos in English or with English subtitles.

For more information, or if you would like to make a presentation, please contact CENDIT or the Vidéazimut General Secretariat. Addresses are on the inside front cover.

CLIPS

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VIDÉAZIMUT

SUBSCRIPTION

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NEW TECHNOLOGIES AND DEMOCRATISATION OF AUDIOVISUAL COMMUNICATION

**New Delhi, India
February 9 to 12, 1994**

Open to audiovisual producers and non-governmental organisations using audiovisual communication, this symposium will explore the impact, implications and appropriation of new communications technologies such as direct broadcast satellites, high definition TV, fibre optics and the merging of television, telephones, cable and computers into a "digital highway". Organised by Vidéazimut in collaboration with CENDIT, the symposium aims to contribute to the identification of strategies favouring the maintenance and use of democratic communication space in the coming new communications infrastructure. See article in this issue for more information.



INTERNATIONAL GATHERINGS...



WOMEN EMPOWERING COMMUNICATION Thailand,

February 12 - 17, 1994

Organised by Isis International in Manila, The International Women's Tribune Center in New York and the World Association for Christian Communication, this conference will bring together representatives of women's groups and networks, alternative and mass media, educational and development groups in order to reassess media-related strategies and plan new directions and lines of action for the next decade. Themes to be explored include:

- Women, Media and Power
- Women, Communication and Development
- Women, Communication and Socio-Cultural Identity

For more information contact:

Conference Secretariat, World Association for Christian Communication, 357 Kennington Lane, London SE11 5QY, England
Tel (44-71) 582-9139
Fax (44-71) 735 0340

MEDIA CULTURE AND POPULAR HEGEMONY : A PAN-AMERICAN DIALOGUE Cuba, December 2 - 6, 1993

Hosted by the International School of Film and TV, the Union for Democratic Communication's annual conference will include bilingual panels on Cuban film, TV, radio, music and print media along with panels and workshops organised by UDC participants. The UDC is dedicated to the critical study of communication; the production and distribution of democratically controlled and produced media; and the development of democratic communications systems.

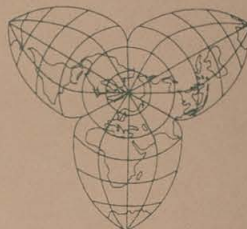
For more information contact:

Bill Barlow, 19 E. Curtis Avenue, Alexandria VA 22301 U.S.A.
Tel: 202-806-7927
E-mail: drblues@ipc.apc.org

OLYMPIADS OF LOCAL VIDEO AND TELEVISION, Scandinavia, April 1994

Starting in Copenhagen, the second video olympics for community television productions will cruise along the waters of the North Sea on an Olympic boat with stops in Gothenburg, Sweden and Oslo, Norway. The five day event will have working sessions dealing with issues of technical development, regulatory policy and economics, youth and creative production, programme profiles, etc. There also will be ample opportunity to view the numerous videos in competition.

For more information contact: Olympiads of Local Video and Television Secretariat, c/o Ted Weisberg, SAMBANDET, Box 2068, 10 31 2 Stockholm, Sweden
Tel 46 8 208178
Fax 46 8 108830



PUBLICATIONS...

AID FOR CINEMATOGRAPHIC AND AUDIOVISUAL PRODUCTION IN EUROPE

Commissioned by the Council of Europe, this book is an analysis and reference guide on the policies of 24 European countries regarding national support schemes for professional audiovisual production, including co-production. Useful for gaining an understanding of the various approaches taken to encourage a national industry and for producers wishing to learn about sources of aid for national production and international co-production. Contains many addresses for cinema, television, government and other organisations and institutions. Written by Jean-Noël Dibie, published by John Libbey & Co. Price: £30 or US\$ 60., 218 pages.

VIDEO THE CHANGING WORLD

Black Rose Books, Box 1258, Succ. Place du Parc, Montréal, Québec, Canada H3W 2R3. Price: \$20. CAN, 224 pages. Available in French and Spanish versions from Vidéazimut.

CLIPS

FOUNDED IN 1990, BRINGS TOGETHER PEOPLE FROM THE WORLD OF INDEPENDENT AND ALTERNATIVE VIDEO AND TELEVISION FROM EVERY CONTINENT. TOGETHER, ITS MEMBERS ACT TO PROMOTE THE DEMOCRATIC PRACTICE OF COMMUNICATION. THEY AIM TO BROADEN THE PARTICIPATION BY COMMUNITIES AND MOVEMENTS FROM THE SOUTH AND THE NORTH IN SOUND AND IMAGE PRODUCTION. THE COALITION ACTS THROUGH THE CREATION OF FORA FOR DEBATE AND EXCHANGE AMONGST THE MANY DIVERSE PARTICIPANTS IN THIS BROAD MOVEMENT FOR ALTERNATIVE MESSAGING.

NUMBER 3 - APRIL 1993

Advocacy Video

Advocacy is becoming something of a buzzword in English. We seem to be able to use it without needing to define it particularly clearly, happy in the knowledge that we understand one another, and that when we talk about advocacy we know that we are referring to positive social change. It is a word which allows us, in English, both to defend a cause and to promote it, to plead for it, and to intercede on its behalf. It is a word that covers a lot of ground, and yet remains usefully vague.

But, it is a word that has proved difficult to translate into French or Spanish. Does this mean that the concept does not exist in these languages? Or that the defence and the promotion of a cause are not as easily synonymous for French and Spanish-speakers as they are for English-speakers? What are the implications of these differences for the processes of social change in our different cultures?

This issue of Clips is devoted to advocacy video - that is, to the use of video as an agent for social change. For French, English, and Spanish speaking communities around the world, video has become a tool by which communities tell their stories, promote their interests, build movements, and represent themselves to others and to themselves. The list could easily go on. Since we have found no terms in French or Spanish that reflect what 'advocacy video' means in English - we have

(→ → → → →)

summary

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VIDÉAZIMUT

- ▶ **GENERAL SECRETARIAT**
3680, rue Jeanne-Mance, bur. 430
Montréal, Québec, Canada H2X 2K5
Telephone : (514) 982-6660, Fax : (514) 982-6122
E-mail : weblvideaz

STEERING COMMITTEE

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Vidéo Tiers-Mondé (VTM) - a/s Alain Ambrosi
3680, rue Jeanne-Mance, bur. 430
Montréal, Québec, Canada H2X 2K5
Telephone : (514) 982-6660, Fax : (514) 982-6122
E-mail : weblvideaz
- ▶ **BURKINA FASO**
Fédération panafricaine des cinéastes (FEPACI)
a/s Cheick Kolla Maiga
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Fax : (55-11) 881-4305
E-mail : axlararauna
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Asia Monitor Resource Center (AMRC), a/s Derek Hall
444 Nathan Rd, 8-B, Kowloon, Hong Kong
Telephone : (852) 3-32.13.46
Fax : (852) 3-85.53.19
E-mail : gn:amrc or GEO2:AMRC
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Video News Services (VNS)
a/s Mokonyanya Moleté & Jeremy Nathan
P.O. Box 16455
Doornfontein, Johannesburg 2026, South Africa
Telephone : (27-11) 333-5636
Fax : (27-11) 333-5353
E-mail : wn:vns
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Centro Internazionale Crocevia (CIC)
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Fax : (39-6) 242-4177
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Telephone : (51-14) 61.79.49
Fax : (51-14) 61.79.49
E-mail : axlupal
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Instituto de Comunicação Social (ICS)
a/s Felisberto Tinga
av. Amílcar Cabral, 214
Caixa Postal 2546, Maputo, Moçambique
Telephone : (258-1) 43.09.51
Fax : (258-1) 49.26.22
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Place de la Mairie, 73270 Beaufort sur Doron, France
Telephone : (33) 79.38.33.90
Fax : (33) 70.38.31.56

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- ▶ Coordinator : Katherine Gombay
- ▶ Editorial Committee : Alain Ambrosi, Rajive Jain,
Luiz F. Santoro
- ▶ Design : Laser Communications
- ▶ Printing : Imprimerie Falcon
- ▶ Translation : Scott Eavanson, Marie-France Hugon,
Michèle Gour, Tony Kwan, Ned Meredith

Advocacy Video

coined some : Vidéo d'intervention in French and Video Comprometido in Spanish, (or, literally translated, 'intervention video' in the first case and 'committed video' in the second). We hope that they will be useful.

The bulletin contains articles which provide a range of examples of the uses of advocacy video, along with an idea of the different forms that it can take, and the variety of processes by which it is made. One article focusses on the use of video as a means of bridging racial gaps in Canada. Another talks about a video that was made in Hong Kong to represent workers who died in an industrial accident at the Permanent People's Tribunal in Bhopal, India. Yet a third describes a Peruvian film in which the director has chosen to transmit his social and political message by using a music video. Another reports on the state of mass communication in the Philippines and describes a new communications centre whose aim is to impart communications skills to representatives from disempowered groups within Philippino society. In addition, there are also articles about the state of community broadcasting in the former Soviet Union, as well as about the latest FESPACO.

We hope that you will find this issue of the bulletin interesting, and welcome any comments that you may have. ▼

KATHERINE GOMBAY Assistant Secretary General





Why not a music video?



THE FEW YEARS

of experience that

I have as a First

Nations director

from the Third World has made it very obvious to me that we are being subjected to a cultural invasion on the part of the dominant cultures. I have also come to understand that this worries people in almost all of the cultures where there is a feeling that foreign values are being imposed upon them. This kind of correlation of forces exists at different levels within a hierarchical pyramid, the summit of which is occupied by the American model. In a recent issue of *Cahiers du Cinéma* devoted to the European cinema, an article entitled "The domination of the American model" asserted that "thanks to its superiority in distribution, the American cinema is dominant through

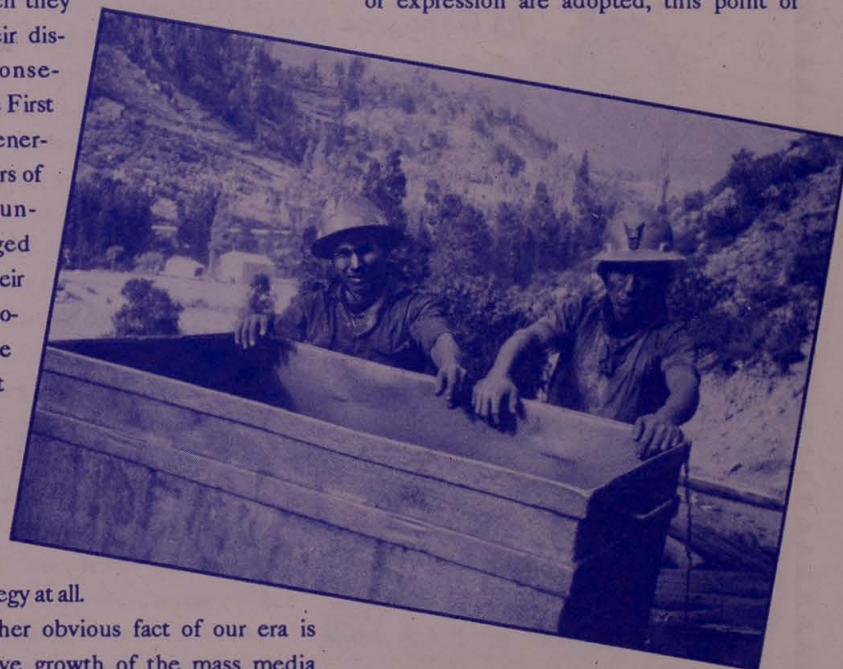
out Europe... what different European cities have most in common is the fact that everywhere 8 out of every 10 films showing are American". An analogous relationship of domination exists with respect to Third World countries. Finally, at the very base of the pyramid, we find yet again this same type of relationship between the local bourgeoisie and the First Nations - and this is the case both in the Third World and in the industrialized countries.

The strategies proposed in different nations for defending local cultures are proportional to the economic and technical means which they have at their disposal. Consequently, the First Nations, generally members of the most under-privileged sectors of their respective societies, are also the most vulnerable. They lack the means to elaborate any kind of strategy at all.

Another obvious fact of our era is the explosive growth of the mass media which has led to the cultural penetration of even the most isolated places on Earth. Like it or not, we are clearly facing an unprecedented process of cultural homogenization whose main features are defined in the dominant cultures. Nowadays, even in the most remote corners of the planet one is certain to find transistor radios or

television sets. It is therefore utopian to think in terms of protecting Native cultures through total isolation. Doing that would only contribute to making them even more vulnerable and dependent with respect to the dominant cultures.

Given the unfavourable correlation of forces facing First Nations, they must adopt a strategy of seeking out forms of cultural expression that allow them to both preserve their identities and to interact with the modern world. Since purists believe that this type of thinking leads to the total disappearance of native cultures, or to the loss of their identities once modern forms of expression are adopted, this point of



view is very controversial. However, the search for new forms of cultural expression has given rise to some interesting results. Peru, is an example - one which is close to home for me. When migrants from the countryside, most of whom are of peasant and Indian stock, arrive in the capital they are plunged into a new context where their



rural customs are out of place. For example, their music evoking the mountains, valleys and rivers back home has little to do with the industrialized world of factories, under-employment, asphalt and "barriadas" (marginal neighbourhoods). They realize also that neither rock music nor

cumbia offers them either a reflection of their lives or an expression of their feelings. These two facts lead them to seek new forms of musical expression. Out of this need was born, in the barriadas, a new music created by the immigrants and their offspring, in other words those eking out a

living in the informal sector. A mixture of "huayno", cumbia and rock, this music has evolved into something that the petty bourgeoisie refers to contemptuously as "chicha" - the name of an indigenous corn-derived beverage.

Highly criticized because of its tech-



"CHOLO SOY" - I AM INDIAN

Luis Abanto Morales



I am Indian don't feel sorry for me
It's like no good money
which whites freely give
we don't ask for anything
because what we got is nothing
but it will always be enough.

Let me live in the heights, climb
the mountains with my sheep
plow the soil, weaving ponchos
bring the lamas to graze
let the airs of the flute
fly high in the wind.

You think I am sad, what do you want?
You say the Indian has no soul
like a stone without voice or words
that we never shed a tear
though we are crying inside.

Didn't the whites come from Spain
exchanging gold and silver for death?

Didn't this Pizarro kill our Atahualpa
after promises beautiful but false.

So what do you want?

Should I be happy like on a holiday?

Should I rejoice when my brothers
bend their backs for the pennies
the master is willing to pay?
Should I laugh when my brothers
like animals carry the goods
which others enjoy?

Do you want to see me smile when
my brothers in the mountains
live like moles, digging and digging
while those get richer who never work.

Should I laugh when my sisters go to
the houses of the rich, like slaves.
I am Indian, don't feel sorry for me.

Let me live in the heights
climb the mountains with my sheep
plow the soil, weaving ponchos
bring the lamas to graze
let the airs of the flute
fly high in the wind.

Leave me alone here in the mountain
it offers me stones maybe softer
than the condolences you have to give.
I am Indian, don't feel sorry for me.





nical and musical limitations, "chicha" is still in its initial stages of development. This being said, it is the only type of music that has successfully resisted the invasion of foreign music - its record and cassette sales beat out even



Michael Jackson and Julio Iglesias. There is nothing lucky nor supernatural about this feat. "Chicha" is quite simply the music in which a segment of the Peruvian population finds reflected the various problems of everyday life - work, love, confrontations with society, etc.

We must accept the fact that it is natural for cultures to evolve. The alternative is to remain static and thus be condemned to wither and die. For a culture to stay alive it has to renew itself. It is the only way to guarantee its health and its legitimacy in the eyes of the younger generations, ever attracted by all that is modern. It is clear that they are influenced by whatever techniques and instruments are available. The challenge will be to use these instruments while appropriating them for ourselves, while transforming them, while mastering them and by putting them to the test with respect to musical forms rooted in local cultures.

This is a tentative vision of how to promote the production and the legitimacy of new types of locally-derived music instead of simply settling for the passive consumption of foreign culture. As a result of my thinking on this question I have adopted the video format in order to see if it works when applied to a local form of musical expression. Thus my experiment with the song "Cholo Soy", composed and interpreted by a "Cholo" named Luis Abanto Morales. This Peruvian waltz was banned in the 1970s because it was considered racist. In reality, the song was a

painfully accurate portrayal of the relations between Whites, Mestizos and Indians.

Riding with the wind, a horseman gallops down from the snow-covered mountains and stops in front of the camera. The wind then turns into words that fill the entire screen proclaiming "Cholo Soy". Thus commences our video-documentary which is composed of pictures of the Peruvian, ie. the "Cholo", going about his daily life, throughout the country. Some of the images correspond to words in the song, others provide a contrast.

Conventional video techniques are used - the short and punchy images change constantly. The marriage of words and pictures is a more effective way of getting the song's message across. This approach has the advantage of asking a few relevant questions and of provoking thought without becoming the equivalent of a pamphlet for preaching to the converted and without being perceived as an "attack" by the general public. In other words, it's an approach that avoids negative reactions.

A second objective of this video was to coopt, with pride, the term "Cholo", in a country where it has always had a strongly racist and segregationist connotation. It is a question of transforming an insult into a positive term of which we should be proud. In fact, it is a term that should, without a doubt, be the national nickname of a nation whose majority is composed of "Cholos".

This was a first try and it still has a

lot of bugs to work out. And maybe we simply didn't get the right tone or the best way of adapting our tools to the song in question. Nevertheless, I believe that in the process of searching for forms of cultural resistance, we must take chances in

order to safeguard and recover the differences that give a culture a character that is at once both original and universal. ▼

CÉSAR GALINDO is a Peruvian filmmaker currently living in Sweden.



ONE SNOWY WINTER EVENING, SIX TRAVELLERS CLIMB OFF the train in Albertville (Savoie, France), where they have arrived from Moscow, via Paris. They are the "CIS" delegation that has come to take part in the First Local Video and Television Olympics (Beaufortain, January 6-9, 1992). Actually, in January 1992, with the unsuccessful "Putsch" of August 1991 and the departure of Gorbachev in December, the CIS is no longer anything more than a dream.

On the Development of Local TV in The Commonwealth of Independent States



However, in this delegation where Ukraine still rubs shoulders with Russia, the dream continues. This dream is shared by many participants in the Olympics (Americans, Australians, Africans, Latin Americans, Europeans), who are finally witnessing the partial opening of a door leading to an unknown world. Tatyana has brought boxes containing a samovar and a nest of dolls. Georgij had all his money stolen in the Stabiopol-Moscow train by a pretty traveller who slipped a sleeping pill into his coffee. Serguei cannot be separated from his BETACAM SECAM cassettes. But where are the bureaucrats, militiamen, KGB agents, and the party members? In the ruthless world of Marxist-Leninist totalitarianism, could a pocket of democracy and alternative radicalism possibly have grown up around local television?

In an attempt to understand and to put a foot in the door before it slammed shut, we had to make the trip ourselves, we had to see, hear, ask questions, and shoot film.

Our March 6-28 study tour was the result of an invitation extended by Tatyana Bolchakova, the executive director of MART (International Radio and Television Federation). MART has approximately 75 members in different states of the CIS. As mentioned before, Tatyana is this federation's executive director. Its president, Anatoly Lysenko, is also the director of Russian Television.

The four following examples of organizations which we were able to visit provide a sampling of the diverse situations and experiences that characterize MART members in Russia:

VOLGOGRAD RECREATIONAL CENTRE AND CABLE TELEVISION

Four years ago, Volgograd's recreational centre undertook the initiative of install-

ing television cables in order to develop and promote cultural programmes. There are approximately 300,000 homes in the city, and 70,000 of them are currently connected to the cable lines.

Volgograd's cable service is based on a tree network whose main section is composed of an 80 km long fibre-optic cable. The company, which employs 210 people, produces local TV programmes, assembles cable equipment, installs the network, manages rental services and trains young people. It relies on a combination of local-

ly-produced programmes and satellite transmitted international broadcasts dubbed into Russian (35 channels are received) to provide round-the-clock broadcasting.

NIZHNY NOVGOROD'S "CETI NN" CABLE

On the initiative of the Novtech Soviet-American Joint Venture Company and local partners, the NN Network Company succeeded in federating some ten small private networks spread across the city. This roughly amounts to 15,000 subscribers, each of whom pays 15 rubles per month. (The average monthly salary is 800 rubles.)

As in Volgograd, the cable network has just one television channel with local programming, but broadcasting (on VHS) comes from approximately ten small studios (sometimes nothing more than a VCR-VHS set up in a tenant's living room). Of course, NN Network's longer-term plan is to interconnect these small networks and offer new cable services (telephony, telematics, etc.).





NOVGOROD'S LOCAL CHANNEL : TV 6

First and foremost, TV 6 is the local TV station for the M6K neighbourhood - a young people's rental housing complex in the western part of Novgorod. It came into being on the same principle as a housing cooperative which is built by its future tenants. A group of young people, most of whom worked in the electronics industry, had been together for two years on the construction site where they were building their new homes. They decided to install cable lines in the apartment blocks and to start a local TV station.

The first experimental television programme in black and white goes back to April 1987. Since its official inauguration on September 3, 1987, this station has broadcast high quality programmes seven days a week (VHS production and broadcasting). In many ways, this experience seems comparable to neighbourhood television in France.

SABOUROVO TV, ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF MOSCOW

Sabourovo TV, the first cable television company in the USSR, like TV 6, grew out of a young people's housing cooperative. However, in the case of Sabourovo TV, the municipality took the initiative because high buildings were causing difficulties in the reception of Hertzian waves. The area which at the outset - 4 years ago - held a nucleus of 3,500 co-op dwellings, now accounts for 50,000 cable subscribers (1 household = 7 or 8 people)

The cable company broadcasts the five national television channels, CNN, and a local channel. Until recently, the local tel-

evision station was a non-commercial organization with a deficit. It broadcast, unscrambled, teletext, local live programmes and MTV, 24 hours a day. As of March 16, 1992, it has become a commercial firm that manages its rentals (up from 3 to 25 rubles monthly) and scrambles its pro-

between 10,000 and 15,000 subscribers.

Six months later (August-September 1992), a second trip to Russia and Ukraine allows us to gauge the rapid evolution of the situation in the ex-USSR - evolution toward greater complexity and more uncertainty. The world of local television follows its countries' politico-economic ups and downs.

The possibility of holding together a transnational television organization covering different republics from the ex-USSR is becoming increasingly unlikely. The recent formation of the Ukrainian Television Union and the emergence of new rival organizations are but one indication of the difficulties in creating such an organization. The multiplicity of actors - and even concepts - makes for confusion. For instance, the rejection of "state television" in Ukraine has led certain people to put their many years of experience in the communication departments of the military-industrial complex at the service of local television: the manufacture, installation, and sales of transmitters, cable equipment, etc.

Local Television - Is this a new market? Is it freedom of expression? Or perhaps a new tool for exercising socio-economic political power?

In this very difficult socio-economic context, local audiovisual media are searching for an original way to move off the beaten track. ▼

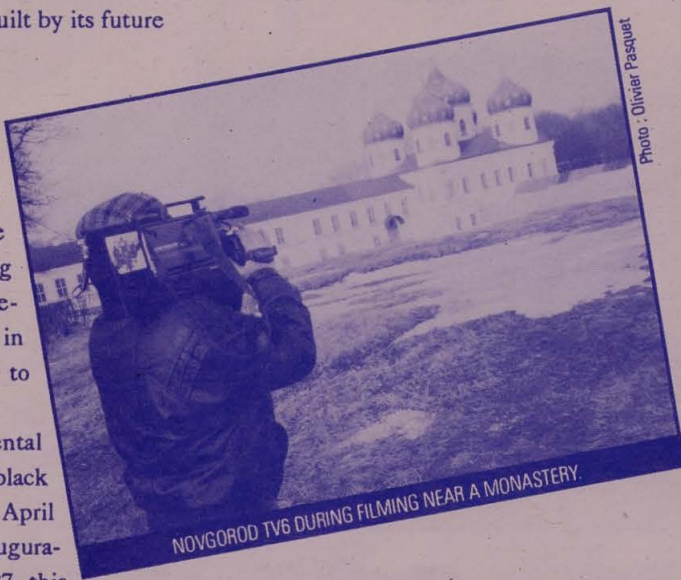


Photo: Olivier Pasquet

NOVGOROD TV6 DURING FILMING NEAR A MONASTERY.

grammes. Sabourovo TV has also given birth to a joint-stock company named Computer Science Technologies. With 84 full-time employees, it is one of the largest cable companies in the CIS to assemble equipment and install networks (without managing them itself). In 1991 it assembled ten new cable networks, each with

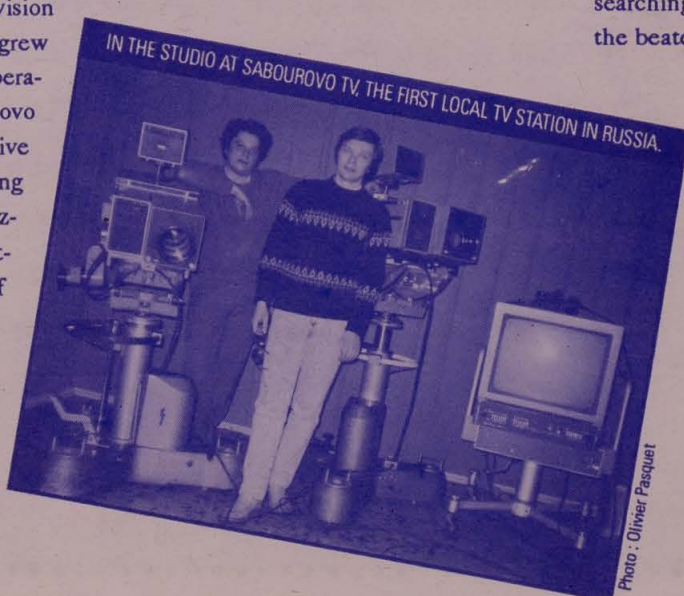


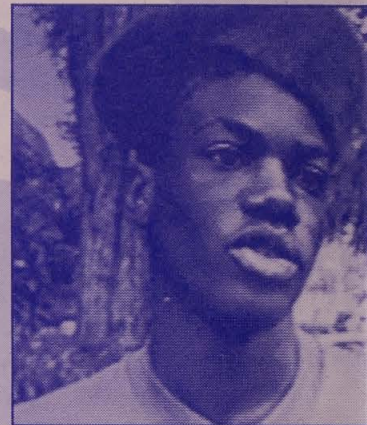
Photo: Olivier Pasquet

IN THE STUDIO AT SABOUROVO TV, THE FIRST LOCAL TV STATION IN RUSSIA.

OLIVIER PASQUET is a director and producer with TV.TV Beaufortain and is responsible for international relations for Vidéos des pays et des quartiers.



« Crossing



Building Co

THE INCIDENTS

On July 21, 1991 in a peaceful residential area in Montreal, a murder took place outside the Black Community Council of Quebec (BCCQ). A dance was ending when four men arrived and opened fire with automatic guns, murdering a woman and injuring two men. Bullets were strewn everywhere. The ambulance and the police were delayed in arriving. Neighbours' cars were damaged, their windshields destroyed.

The print and broadcast media sensationalized the fact that a **white** man killed **black** men, but also drew attention to the fact that this incident was an example of how soon as violence occurs in Montreal, it becomes a "racial" incident. As observed, "It was completely unexpected, a crisis occurs, peoples' racism is revealed. White people were screaming."





Borders”



ommunities

cast news not only sensa-
white woman was shot by
attention to the fact that the
of black-on-black crime. As
Montreal’s black commu-
incident. As one neighbour
pandemonium. When a
ism comes to the surface.
ing racist names at blacks

and vice versa. It was disgusting.”

Following the media coverage, some neighbours called police and City Hall anonymously and asked them to close the centre down. In the meantime, the BCCQ received bomb threats and racist hate calls over the phone. The black women working at the centre were frightened that they would suffer violence as revenge for the death of a white woman.



ADVOCACY VIDEO: THE ROOTS OF "CROSSING BORDERS"

The Black English-speaking community in Montreal is the subject of continued negative stereotyping within the mainstream media for a number of reasons. There are very few representatives from this or other "visible minorities" working in media institutions and only a handful work as senior decision makers. Furthermore, journalists' deadlines do not allow sufficient time for individuals from outside these communities to integrate themselves into the various communities, or to become sensitized to the issues (and the emotional minefields!). Moreover, the Québec media has tended to devote its time and space to the continuing debate between the French and English-speaking communities, ignoring the changing demographics of Montreal. As a result, we find predictable, one dimensional portrayals of members of minority groups. Media attention is focussed on blacks only when the tragedies occur.

There is a clear dissonance between the way that the Black community sees itself and the way in which it is depicted by the media in Quebec. As one neighbour of the BCCQ put it, *"The media took shots of the blood on the street. But when it came to scraping the layers behind it, they didn't even come close."*

Accordingly, after the shooting outside the offices of the BCCQ the Director at the time, Leith Hamilton, contacted me to ask if I could use video as a tool to explore the dynamics behind this tragedy and to turn a crisis into a "window of opportunity" for change.

I immediately thought of the National Film Board of Canada's advocacy media model CHALLENGE

FOR CHANGE used in the '60's and '70's. The model for "Crossing Borders" had three objectives: to use video as a tool to mobilize communities to communicate; to decrease the sense of anonymity; and finally, to build bridges between the communities and to work towards mutual goals.

With the misinformation distributed by the print and broadcast media, both

community (the black community workers and the neighbours) were interviewed separately. Each group screened the "other" group's interviews and their reactions were filmed. The second phase brought both communities together to screen the developments over the past year. When the time came to meet, both sides had heard each others' points of view.

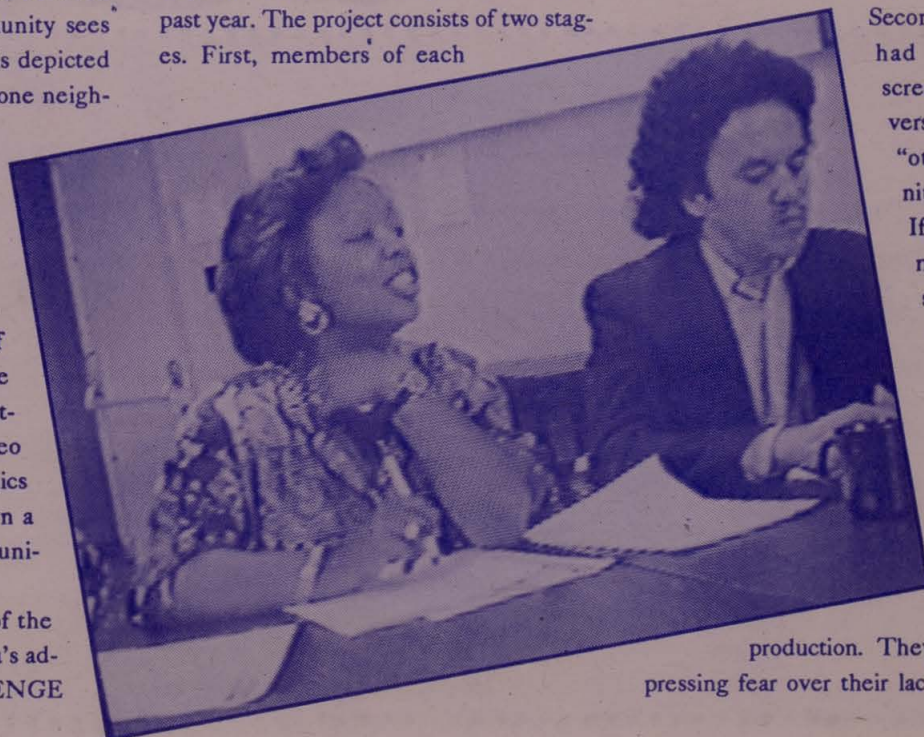
We discovered that each community had to reflect upon who they were as a community in order to communicate effectively to the "other" community.

communities needed to redefine who they were to one another in their own voices. Collaboration between the BCCQ, the neighbours and the videomakers was essential.

The video "Crossing Borders" portrays the evolution of the process over the past year. The project consists of two stages. First, members of each

POLITICS OF PRODUCTION

In order to gain trust from media-wary participants, we ensured that everyone had the right to screen their rushes and to omit anything they regretted saying. Secondly, everyone had the right to screen the edited version before the "other" community screened it. If they felt that material was absent or needed to be added, we would comply. The Montreal Urban Police had initially been invited to participate in the production. They refused, expressing fear over their lack of control of





the video's content and citing previous bad experiences with the media.

At first, the BCCQ staff were cautious about talking about the event out of fear that they would be held responsible for its occurrence. Moreover, they did not want to be blamed if property values on the street decreased. The insurance company had already refused to renew their policy, citing the news reports as grounds for doing so.

Over the course of the year, however, several other violent incidents occurred at other black community events. The black leaders felt that they had to start defining their point of view publicly - but in a forum which they trusted. The community to which they had devoted their lives was now under siege due to the violence caused by a few isolated youth. To their distress, these individuals were from their own community. The leaders wanted to give the message that, "Hooligans who break the law must be held accountable."

On their side, the neighbours of the BCCQ felt confused about being labelled a "community" simply by virtue of their geographical position. Typical of urban dwellers, alienation led people to ask where their community existed. Anonymity between the neighbours had to be broken down as well.

Upon beginning "Crossing Borders", we believed that the main bridge to be built was between the workers at the BCCQ and the neighbours. In fact, we discovered that each community had to reflect upon *who they were as a community* in order to communicate effectively to the "other" community.

THE RESULTS

Both the BCCQ community workers and the neighbours were pleased with the final version of "Crossing Borders".

It is obvious that the media remains a major player in the construction of the reality of everyday life for many in the mainstream.

A community organisation in the district of Notre-Dame-de-Grâce (NDG - where the murder occurred) organized a "village forum" on building a multicultural coalition. The video and the process of making it was used as a concrete example of community building. This forum was the first in a series to develop on a pragmatic level around the issues of public security, education and social policy.

After finishing "Crossing Borders", Leith and I met to develop a strategy to not only "market" the video, but also to use it as a tool for social change. The objective was to communicate the possibility of new partnerships within diverse communities based upon the "goodwill" demonstrated through the communication process seen in the video. The strategy involved developing a partnership with the NDG Community Council, the City of Montreal, the Ministry of Cultural Communities and Immigration and other cultural communities to promote a positive vision of a diversified community with a focus on communication as a first step.

It has been gratifying to see the reactions to "Crossing Borders". Resolving the conflict between two cultural communities is the immediate benefit. But

just as important, I have seen that advocacy video has acted as a public educational tool which has reframed the "objective" information that the mainstream media put out.

It is obvious that the media remain a major player in the construction of the reality of everyday life for many in the mainstream. For those on the margin, video advocacy becomes an important mechanism to recapture their real voice. Not only was the message of "Crossing Borders" given legitimacy on the mainstream TV channels, but the video was used for presentations to community groups, students and policy advisors in government. The lesson learned: communicate diversity effectively and there is a groundswell of support to be tapped. ▼

Shanti Thakur with Leith Hamilton.

SHANTI THAKUR is an independent filmmaker working out of her company Lucida Films at 21 Côte Ste. Catherine, #2, Montréal (Québec) H2V 1Z7

LEITH HAMILTON has been a community activist for many years and specializes in advocacy.



Advocacy Video in Defence of Workers' Rights

THE VARIETY OF INNOVATIVE USES OF ALTERNATIVE FILM/video in the field of advocacy is growing constantly and an interesting example has emerged from a small Hong Kong collective - Video Power - on behalf of workers' rights and occupational safety.

mental Hazards and Human Rights. The tribunal is an international court of public opinion and is the permanent successor to the Bertrand Russell Tribunals on crimes against humanity in Vietnam and Chile. PPT was established in 1979 as a quasi-judicial international body, based in Rome. It is made up of 61 distinguished persons from the world of humanities, arts



The production was prompted by a May 1991 industrial disaster at a factory in China's Dongguan County, in Guangdong Province bordering Hong Kong. The factory produced Ninja Turtle raincoats, one of many products in the profitable Ninja Turtle line, turning a small group of Hong Kong industrialists into multi-millionaires in a short space of time. The young women who actually produced the Ninja Turtle items in China fared less well, however. Not only did they receive the customary low wages of the average Asian factory employee, and worked in the customary less-than-satisfactory conditions, but they were also locked in their jail-like dormitory each night.

The women were imprisoned behind barred windows in a fourth floor dormitory above the plastic storage and production facilities in a building with no fire safety precautions. When fire broke out on the first floor, there could be only one result. Eighty young women, most of whom had migrated from poorer areas in China for the comparatively better paid

work in the factory, were killed in the fire and another forty were injured.

Industrial disasters, even on this scale, are not as uncommon in developing or newly industrialised countries as one might think, but they are rarely newsworthy enough to make much impact in the mainstream media. With few exceptions, this is neither 'entertaining' nor marketable news. Efforts to interest European and North American broadcasters in this particular tragedy were unsuccessful. "There's not much in it", they said.

The advent of grassroots and community-based advocacy in audiovisual media, however, is giving rise to some interesting examples of the way in which this newly accessible technology can work at another level. The small but active Hong Kong video collective, Video Power, put video technology to innovative use in October 1992, as a means to represent the workers from the Dongguan fire who were unable to attend an industrial accident tribunal. Although they could not attend the tribunal in person, their case was taken to the court on video tape.

The "Permanent People's Tribunal" (PPT) held a session in Bhopal in October 1992 on Industrial and Environ-

Industrial disasters, even on this scale, are rarely newsworthy enough to make much impact in the mainstream media.

and public affairs, including members of the judiciary proper. The 1992 session was the first time that the PPT had heard cases involving the violations of human rights of victims of industrial and environmental hazards.

Together with local trade union education staff and occupational health and safety activists, Video Power produced a 35-minute video describing the disastrous accident in China's Dongguan County in such a way that the video could be presented at the Tribunal and explain the circumstances surrounding the multiple





fatality, and the issues that this accident highlights.

Initial investigative work was undertaken by trade unionists from Hong Kong and workers from Guangdong Province. When a decision was made to produce a video, the thorny question of logistics arose: it would be essential to film discreetly when in China, and where necessary, the identities of victims or workers from the Dongguan area would have to be concealed to protect them from official reprisals.

The film examined the fatal fire itself, carried interviews with some of the hospitalised victims and their relatives, and interviews with unionists and occupational health workers from Hong Kong. It is a source of moral discomfort that without such intervention, even by a small grassroots "media" team, such disasters are so easily swept aside, and the circumstances that lead to them are so easily overlooked.

The advent of comparatively low-cost, high-quality video in a small and unobtrusive format has made this sort of videography, whether it be in the field of advocacy or elsewhere not just possible, but in some instances even desirable. It opens avenues for peoples' circumstances or experiences to be represented without those involved necessarily having to be present, or in some cases identified.

Arguably the same could be said, of course, for the 'traditional' documentary, although the conventional documentary film (if one can be forgiven for encapsulating such a broad genre), no matter how well intentioned, seldom acts primarily or exclusively in the interests of the subject. All manner of compromises have customarily been made to suit the televising time allotted, the style of programme, the perceived sensitivity or "needs" of the audience, political influences, the personalities and aspirations of producers and editors, advertisers, and so on.

Only with the recent availability of full production facilities under the com-

It is a source of moral discomfort that without such intervention, even by a small grassroots "media" team, such disasters are so easily swept aside.

plete control of the filmmaker at a grassroots level (even now available in much of the economic/political South) can we expect to see this medium exploited to its greatest potential to date.

The half-hour plus production by Video Power was made on a slim budget. Grants from European aid agencies and national union centres helped cover some production costs, although by and large the work was done using voluntary labour and self-financed facilities. Concern and commitment were the most valuable and productive elements. Video Power have for several years been involved in the production of video material for worker education and labour organising, and have documented the efforts and concerns of various special interest groups.

Unfortunately, the results of the video presentation at the Tribunal will not be known for some time. No announcements or 'judgements' were made at the time of the Tribunal so the presenters were left guessing as to the effect of their technological advocacy. The video has helped to focus attention not so much on this accident in particular, but on the terrible working conditions in many industries which enable this horrific sort of accident to occur.

As a simple example of advocacy video this work is excellent. Better still if it is a source of inspiration for others who might also have the need and/or opportunity to make similar use of the medium. It also points the way to a new area of media development, where people have more choices, and more local choices, about what is produced, for what purpose,

and for what audiences.

In the imminent proliferation of imagery that threatens to swamp our senses with material from every imaginable source and covering every imaginable subject, much of what we will see will be of little meaning or value. There will nevertheless always be strong threads of communications activities that will carry forward the ideals that one hopes will one day lead the world beyond its present state of violence, injustice and uncertainty. Perhaps it is not too much to argue that those who share a vision of a better future owe it to themselves - and to those who will inherit our destruction - to foster a social and technological climate in which a new generation of democratic communication will imbed itself in the masonry of more just societies. ▼

DEREK HALL is the Director of the Asia Monitor Resource Centre in Hong Kong.





IN A COUNTRY

that boasts a vibrant

press it seems iron-

ical that most Filipinos

do not enjoy any access to the

media. When critical issues affecting

their lives arise it is the voice of gov-

ernment bureaucrats and the minori-

ty elite that the media projects.

same, although the church in this largely Catholic nation is also involved.

Tabloids, which are preferred by most newspaper consumers, are about personalities, sex, crimes and entertainment. Both TV and radio serve mainly as entertainment outlets. Sixty-percent of TV programming is entertainment, with most of the canned programmes being American-produced. AM radio stations air some news and commentary programmes, but FM stations broadcast 75 percent entertainment. Original Filipino music, which enjoys grudging support from both radio and TV industries, is very American-influenced.

The cinema is also popular in the Philippines. Until about 10 years ago

to the trimedia (radio, television, press) to popularize their agenda or articulate the sentiments of their powerless constituents. Yet the commercially dominated media offer limited opportunities to these groups to make their views known, and the latter are often forced to try to create their own media outfits, usually with limited success.

There are only a very limited number of video productions depicting Philippine social reality and grassroots issues. A few programmes focussing on issues such as the environment, human rights, women and street children are shown on TV. Some are produced by independent filmmakers and NGO offices. Occasionally, high quality video documentaries from the Philippines find their way into European TV networks.

Aside from video productions, the country's alternative media is typified by small independent news services, a few magazines and community papers, and radio programmes produced by non-profit agencies, NGOs, grassroots organisations and church-based groups. These media projects stem from the organisations' need to articulate their programs for the poor and marginalised and come into being in response to the restrictions imposed by the powerful commercial media on people's development issues.

Against this backdrop, the Centre for Advocacy Communication Services (CACS) stands as an institution which seeks to raise the quality standards of current communication programmes of NGOs and community groups as well as to enhance their capability in using the trimedia. After only a year and a half of existence, CACS has received a popular acceptance in the NGO community particularly in mass communication work.

CACS was actually founded in 1987 by Ed Aurelio Reyes, a newspaper columnist, radio broadcaster and press ombudsman. But it was only in July 1991 that the Centre was formally organised in Manila,

Empowerment through Mass Communication

All of the country's national dailies (30 broadsheets and tabloids) are concentrated in Metro-Manila, which hosts roughly 18 percent of the population. It is also in the metropolis that the six TV networks are based, with about 60 relay and replay stations in the provinces. Of the 300 radio stations, 48 stations including the most powerful are in the metropolis.

Ownership of the country's major media enterprises remains in the hands of a few affluent families who have business interests and political affiliations. Many Manila dailies, for instance, are owned or controlled by either Chinese-Filipino billionaires or mestizos (Filipinos of Spanish descent). Ownership in the radio and TV industry is much the

Western movies were favoured by film distributors. Now the number of Filipino movie productions shown in cinemas in the Philippines can compete with the number of American films shown. Commercialism prevails however. With a few notable exceptions most Filipino films are either slapstick comedies, or are about sex, crime and toilet humor.

The contents of newspaper pages and radio and TV programmes are dictated largely by commercial and advertising needs, though political and apostolic-evangelical ends also play a role in influencing the media.

Major victims of this media bias are grassroots groups and NGOs. Their publications and radio programmes constrained by limited outreach, they look



an event which coincided with the launching of its training programme in mass communication. The Centre offers short courses on subjects such as mass communication in the advocacy movement, public speaking, writing skills, media campaign, communication management and publication design. Each course averages three days of discussion and is based on a workshop structure. Video and radio facilities are used in courses such as that on public-speaking.

Close to 200 communicators (writers and editors, broadcasters, community organisers, development workers and mass leaders) have already undergone CACS training. Many of those who have taken courses are from women's organisations, while others are peasants, labour educators, human rights volunteers and anti-nuke activists. The challenge is clearly there for CACS not only to pursue its mission, but also to serve as an alternative mass communication centre that is accessible to a great variety of non-government communicators. Given the positive response of those who have participated in the training programmes thus far it is to be hoped that the good work will continue. ▼

BOBBY TUAZON is the Executive Director of CACS and a past editor of *Philippine News and Features*.

FIRST AFRICAN VIDEO AND TELEVISION - PRODUCTION COMPETITION AT FESPACO '93

THE 13TH PANAFRICAN FESTIVAL OF CINEMA AND TELEVISION OF OUAGADOUGOU (FESPACO) WHICH TOOK PLACE FROM FEBRUARY 20-27, 1993, HAD A SIGNIFICANTLY EXPANDED FORMAT. UNTIL NOW, THE FESTIVAL HAS LARGELY CONFINED ITSELF TO AFRICAN CINEMA. FOR THE FIRST TIME, AT THIS YEAR'S FESTIVAL, AN EFFORT WAS MADE TO INTEGRATE THE CONTINENT'S MOST IMPORTANT TELEVISION PRODUCTIONS INTO THE COMPETITION.

The International Market of Television and Cinema (MICA) runs concurrently with the festival. Since 1983, MICA has sought to promote the African film industry by encouraging the exchange and distribution of films within what is currently a very difficult audiovisual climate. At the sixth MICA, which took place this year, a television and video production competition was finally introduced.

While the need for visual self-representation grows, Africa lacks the audiovisual resources it requires, producing very few film and video projects. Across the continent problems related to production, distribution, promotion, and training remain almost insurmountable for many film and video-makers

NATIONAL TELEVISION

The state of the African television industry is particularly important at this point. Once limited to certain major urban centres, television has now become a common part of village life as well. While the total number of television sets in any given African country remains unknown, the practice of watching TV in groups means that the medium reaches a fairly wide audience. However, local production has not grown along with the audience.

At present, it is rare for a national network to produce more than 20% of the films, TV series and documentaries it shows. From Dakar to Niamey, from Abidjan to Cotonou, programs such as *Dynasty*, *Dallas*, *Santa Barbara*, and *Dona Beija* attract the biggest audiences. This is particularly frustrating to those African producers still struggling to produce

their first work. Satellite technology creates further problems as northern networks (including CNN, France 2, and TV5) are now in close competition with local stations. The negative effects on a population of being exposed to productions geared for an entirely different audience, and the danger of their trying to emulate other cultures, must not be ignored.

It is clear that the stakes are high.

It is difficult to understand that while African directors are recognized and celebrated outside the continent for the originality and quality of their work, African television networks continue to supply programming of very little relevance to the African viewer. There is little excuse for this since there is no lack of interesting African productions.

In Senegal, in 1992 alone, two films were produced specifically for television: *Lat Dior*, by Babacar Saër Diagne; and *Fann Ocean*, by Johnson Traore. There are also a number of interesting recent productions from Cameroon, and from several countries in southern Africa (Zimbabwe, Namibia & South Africa itself). Yet these works have little chance of being widely distributed. Given this situation, the introduction of a television and video competition should be supported and encouraged.

Putting aside the difficulties involved in actually creating television productions in Africa, those rare projects that do get made do not have access to adequate promotion, exchange and distribution. In 1991, nearly 300 films were registered at the MICA and of these, 250 were available on U-MATIC or VHS video cassettes. In the same year the national television network of Burkina Faso received more than twenty African films, a dozen of which had also been selected by the Union of Radio Television Networks of Africa (URTNA) of Nairobi, Kenya. While this does not go far enough, by further developing a system of exchange and by promoting co-productions, television stations in Africa will be able to present their viewers with high-quality, indigenous productions.

Check Kolla Maiga is responsible for communications for FEPACI - the PanAfrican Federation of Film-makers.

CLIPS

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1993 ADVOCACY VIDEO CONFERENCE



The Benton Foundation will host the first American Advocacy Video Conference in Washington, D.C. from May 21 - 23.

The event will bring together participants from around the world to showcase the pioneer achievements, emerging uses and visions of video as an agent for social change. American public interest leaders along with video producers from the U.S., Europe, Africa, Asia and Latin America will meet to examine the unique capabilities of video as a powerful tool for advocacy. Participants will include American grassroots producers along with representatives from Vidéazimut and from the British Television Trust for the Environment.

Sessions will address the unique strengths and limitations of video: as a tool for policy advocacy and building citizens' movements; and as a means for communities to tell their stories and make their case. The potential of new technologies like desktop video and interactive multimedia will also be examined.

Registration is limited to 200 participants.

For further information contact :
Kay Johnson, Project Assistant,
Benton Foundation,
1710 Rhode Island, NW, Washington
D.C., U.S.A. 20036
Telephone : (202) 857-7829 # 25
Fax : (202) 857-7841.

PUBLICATIONS...

A PASSION FOR RADIO - RADIO WAVES AND COMMUNITY

Written by people actively - and passionately - involved in the medium, this book presents the experiences of 20 alternative radio stations located in as many countries on every continent of the globe. From Salvadoran guerilla-operated Radio Venceremos to the native-owned Wawatay Radio Network in northern Ontario, alternative and community radio stations play an essential role for those at the margins of society - a medium that lets them speak as well as hear.

Edited by Bruce Girard - An AMARC Project. Available from Black Rose Books, Box 1258, Succ. Place du Parc, Montréal, Québec, Canada H3W 2R3. Price : \$15.00 Can., 200 pages.

THE CHALLENGE OF DEMOCRATIC TELEVISION

By Nahum J. Gorelick in *Voices from Africa 4 : Culture and Development*.

Published by United Nations NGLS, Palais des Nations, CH-1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland. The article focusses on developments in television broadcasting in Namibia, and is based on the text prepared by the author for the Vidéazimut conference on "The Challenge of Democratic Television" which was held in Maputo, Mozambique in 1991.

SOCIAL MOBILIZATION & SOCIAL MARKETING IN DEVELOPING COMMUNITIES

Lessons for Communicators - This work examines the role of communications in social programmes and constructs a model for successful development communication. Written by Neil McKee. Published by Southbound, Sendirian Berhad, 9 College Square, 10250 Penang, Malaysia.

SEEING AND SHOWING OURSELVES

A guide to using small format video as a participatory tool for development. The guidebook is a synthesis of lessons learnt from the experiences of various organizations currently using this medium in India. Written by Maria Protz and published by CENDIT, 96 pages. Available in English from Vidéazimut. Price : \$10.00 Can. + postage.

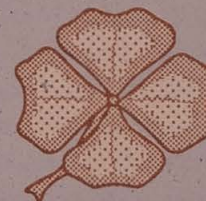
VIDEO THE CHANGING WORLD

Black Rose Books, Box 1258, Succ. Place du Parc, Montréal, Québec, Canada H3W 2R3. Price : \$18.00 Can. + tax, 224 pages. Also available in French and Spanish versions from Vidéazimut.

PORTABLE VIDEO PRODUCTION

A training kit consisting of a forty-five minute video cassette and three volumes discussing the language of audiovisual communication, the production process, technical aspects of production and distribution. Available in French and English from Vidéo Tiers-Monde, in Spanish from IPAL, Peru. See page 2 for addresses.

INTERNATIONAL GATHERINGS...



INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR MASS COMMUNICATION RESEARCH CONFERENCE - DUBLIN, IRELAND 24 - 26 JUNE, 1993 "EUROPE IN TURMOIL : GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES"

The European communication landscape is in disarray - or at least in transition. Public service broadcasting is disappearing, long-time telecom monopolies are being deregulated, and there are rapid changes from State censorship to TNC control in the East European region. These changes affect not only Europe, but also the rest of the world. Along with regular conference sessions, the conference will also include poster sessions and exhibitions of audiovisual artifacts. For more information contact : Ms. Louise McDermott, School of Communications, Dublin City University, Dublin 9, Ireland. Fax : 01-7045447. Tel : 01-7045236. E-mail: MCDERMOTTL@DCU.ie

II INTERNATIONAL TV CONGRESS - NOVOSIBIRSK, RUSSIA 23 - 25 MAY, 1993

The Congress will include an exhibition of television equipment, along with competitions for TV programmes and for commercials. For more information contact : II International Congress Organizing Committee, 630054, Rimskogo - Korsakova St. 10, Novosibirsk, Russia. Fax : (382-2) 23-57-75, 61-09-55. Tel. : (382-2) 47-56-85, 76-13-80. E-mail : root@intersib.nsk.su