

CONFIDENTIAL

Minutes of the 40th Artists' Film and Video Committee meeting held on Monday, 9 March 1981 at 105 Piccadilly, London W1V 0AU.

Present: Ian Christie	Chairperson
Joanna Davis	Committee Member
Tamara Krikorian	" "
Al Rees	" "
Guy Sherwin	" "
Rodney Wilson	Film Officer
David Curtis	Assistant Film Officer
Tom Dolan	Assistant Accountant

1 Apologies for absence were received from Carola Klein and Simon Field.

2 Minutes of the last meeting were still in preparation.

3 Financial Report

The Assistant Accountant reported that the amount remaining in the current financial year was £24,377 with the following amounts earmarked: LVA - shows £1,300, Portable Facility £9,297. To the Chairperson's question as to whether any money was likely to fall in from Film Makers on Tour, the Assistant Accountant thought this was possible, although there would not be much. Tamara Krikorian asked that fees for Film Makers and Video Artists on Tour be discussed under Any Other Business.

4 Matters Arising

a) London Film Makers Co-op

The Chairperson reminded the Committee that, at the last meeting, the recommendation had been made to find a method of clearing the deficit. The Arts Council had taken the view that it would be improper for them to meet the accumulated deficit on the grounds that (a) the body responsible for funding was the British Film Institute and (b) it would be a retrospective payment relating to accumulated deficit. At a meeting between officers of the Arts Council and BFI held the previous week, it was confirmed that the Arts Council could not and would not provide general funding in the present financial year, but would take steps to provide additional project funding to the Co-op in the course of the coming year. In anticipation of that, the BFI was persuaded to make a pre-payment of £2,000 which would be paid on 10 March 1981. The first quarter payment of its full grant (£6,000) would be received at the beginning of the new financial year. There had been an undertaking by the Arts Council and the BFI to set up an informal working party to examine the problems of the Co-op and to draw up a list of proposals and recommendations to discuss with the Co-op Executive. This would take place on 11 March. Items covered would include the need for a full-time administrator and means of raising the money; rates of payment for the workshop; and the distribution split between film makers and the Co-op.

The Assistant Accountant noted that, as the BFI was paying next year's money now, it would mean the Co-op balancing its books and if necessary making economies. The Chairperson

explained that the BFI grant for 1981/82 was greater than for the present year; but they would be starting £2,000 down, and so there would have to be greater revenue earning as well as economies.

b) Completion : Paul Denby

The film "Linderidge 137" had come back to the Committee as it had been rejected prematurely. Although seen at a completion application meeting, the rejection had not been referred to the full Committee. IT WAS AGREED to discuss this under item 5(d) of the Agenda (Awards).

c) Distribution : Report on Meeting 5

Christine Felce - Telling and Showing - £500. Agreed.
Peter Knight - Secret Monkeys. Rejected.

Both recommendations were accepted.

d) London Video Arts

The Film Officer reported that the Gulbenkian would not be considering the application for revenue funding until June at the earliest, and there would not be any cash available until September/October. The Gulbenkian was insisting on what amounted to a guarantee that the Arts Council would continue revenue funding, and that they themselves would only fund for one year. The Film Officer pointed out that the money earmarked for LVA this financial year might have to be withdrawn and re-used at the present meeting. Tamara Krikorian pointed out that LVA was at make or break point. The Assistant Film Officer asked whether the long-term strategy for LVA could be for them to become a BFI client. The Chairperson thought it would be appropriate for them to apply, although it had to be recognised that BFI funds were very limited and that there was great resistance to taking on new clients - which, in effect, meant dropping certain existing clients.

The Assistant Film Officer said that, although everything depended on the Gulbenkian, it was not possible to give cast-iron assurances that LVA would be funded as a revenue client. If they were rejected by Gulbenkian then the Arts Council might consider a placement bursary for an organiser at LVA.

The Chairperson agreed there was a general administrative problem at LVA and that there was a need for an organiser to spend considerable time there. Urgent steps needed to be taken. It might be possible to consider funding an administrator in the short term, perhaps for one year; it was risky to wait for the Gulbenkian decision.

The Assistant Accountant believed that having an administrator would attract other costs, although the Assistant Film Officer explained that much of the necessary apparatus existed. The Assistant Accountant suggested the possibility of a bursary to cover one person working for, say, three days a week on video, and two days a week as administrator, since it was not possible for the Committee to give a bursary to an administrator because this was in effect revenue funding. The recipient would have

to be an artist. The Chairperson thought it could be project funding; the project being to assess the viability of LVA. It could become a revenue client of the Arts Council if a decision were made to fund a video arts body. At present LVA were below the level of viability. The assessment would be best done by someone who was a video worker, who could maintain its structure, distribution, programme, etc. He suggested (a) allowing time for a specification to be drawn up and (b) earmarking capital money and possibly exhibition money against satisfactory completion. To the Chairperson's question, the Assistant Accountant explained that it was possible to make a capital award this financial year - to commit it, although LVA would not be obliged to buy anything during this financial year. The Assistant Accountant drew attention to the fact that the Arts Council could find itself in the position of being a revenue funder. If the Gulbenkian did not make any grant, the Arts Council would have raised LVA to a certain level and then find it had to cut off support.

The Chairperson raised the possibility of seeking some element of non-public funding, e.g. equipment manufacturers. He was of the opinion that putting in money for one year was a reasonable risk to take.

i) IT WAS AGREED generally that £5,000 was a reasonable figure for net salary of a full-time administrator. The proposal was agreed in principle and officers undertook to investigate ways in which this could be effected.

ii) Portable facility - £9,297 earmarked: AGREED.

iii) Exhibition - £1,300: AGREED.

IT WAS AGREED to carry the discussion forward.

e) ACIT Code of Practice and Guidelines for Applications in the absence of Carola Klein, discussion of this item was deferred.

5 APPLICATIONS

a) Capital

i) ICA: The Chairperson was concerned that there was no proposal before the Committee, other than a letter from Bill McAllister to Joanna Drew, of which the Film Officer tabled a copy. The Assistant Film Officer had asked Archie Tait to prepare a proposal for discussion but it had not arrived.

The Chairperson pointed out that, as far as the BFI was concerned he himself was responsible for revenue grants to the ICA and Arnolfini. He believed the video capacity was an interesting area which ought to be explored, although the BFI could not include it in its funding. To the Assistant Film Officer's question as to the ICA's ambitions, the Chairperson thought these were unclear.

Tamara Krikorian raised the question of Waterhead which she believed to be relevant to any decisions taken regarding the Arnolfini.

The Film Officer explained that, within the ICA's annual revenue application was provision for a video access library. They were asking for £15,000 in 1981/82. This had never come to the Committee as a separate application before. The Arts Council's annual revenue funding for the ICA was £300,000 which covered everything except the cinema, which was funded by the BFI. The Film Officer had attended a meeting with Chris Cooper, Assistant Regional Director, and Joanna Drew. The Regional Department was asking the Film Committee to make a one-off injection of £5,000 which would be passed to the Regional Department and incorporated in the ICA general funding to cover deficit on video access library in 1981/82.

Tamara Krikorian said that the ICA and Arnolfini had made their own decisions as to how artists should be paid, without any consultation with LVA. What they had suggested did not relate in any way to LVA's policy on fees for tapes and artists were still getting less than institutions. The Assistant Film Officer explained that this was an attempt to form a different kind of initiative; to buy all the tapes at LVA rates would inevitably change the situation. If their library was based on those rates they would be coming to the Arts Council for much higher sums, or would have to restrict their selection. Tamara Krikorian was anxious that it would create precedents; the ICA would not be unique.

The Chairperson questioned whether it was feasible to decide at the present meeting either about the ICA or Arnolfini or whether to have a longer process of discussion. Al Rees pointed out that the Committee often decided upon rates charged for admission in relation to exhibitions. Joanna Davis believed there should be consultation rather than be confronted with decided policy. The Chairperson asked whether the Committee would be prepared to enforce any policy they might advise. Otherwise there was little point in discussion. He suspected that the ultimate decisions concerning video access libraries at the ICA and Arnolfini would be made by those responsible for their main funding and not by the Committee.

The Film Officer wished to assess the attitude of the Committee to the ICA proposal for an access library. Al Rees pointed out that no details had been submitted, and the Chairperson suggested waiting for an application which could be assessed, clearly identifying capital and revenue items. The Assistant Film Officer questioned whether this was entirely the Committee's responsibility, and not the area of the Art Department. The Chairperson thought the Committee would be interested in the process of selection and the kind of relationship with film makers and film makers' bodies.

IT WAS AGREED to note the ICA's intentions and to await an application.

ii) Arnolfini Video Resource : £7,409

The Assistant Accountant queried the salary item, which was revenue and not capital. He pointed out that the organisation received funding from the Arts Council at a high level. In any event, the Committee could not give the money this financial year as it would not be operational until 1982/3. Regarding the fees to acquire rights to tapes, this was a cost of running the facility. The Assistant Film Officer explained that it would be a bill from the film maker, as purchase price. The Chairperson said it was an accounting decision.

It could be regarded as capital expenditure. The Assistant Accountant pointed out that if music were involved there would be fees to pay to the Performing Rights Society. The Chairperson thought the Committee should not be represented on the selection panel of either the Arnolfini or ICA as individuals or representatives of the Arts Council (or BFI). THIS WAS AGREED.

IT WAS AGREED that the proposed scale of charges be 25p and 50p based on length. There was some discussion in which Tamara Krikorian expressed anxiety about payments to artists. The Chairperson asked whether, given that there would be other such libraries, it would be possible to have a unified standard system covering cost of access, viewing fees and also acquisition fees, on a single scale.

On item 5 of the application, there seemed to be no reason not to include overseas work.

Scale of fees (over and above material costs): the Assistant Film Officer thought there should be a damage clause. With the clause regarding fees paid for the rights to tape use "for the duration of the life of the tape" there was a danger that tapes would continue to be shown when no longer in a suitable state.

The Chairperson asked whether the Committee wished to endorse the scale of fees, to comment on them, to disagree with them or to note them.

IT WAS AGREED to note the scale of fees.

It was pointed out that £1,500 for the cost of an assistant had been deducted from the budget.

Recommendation: £5,909 Capital Grant from the 1981/82 Artists' Film and Video Allocation

iii) Basement Group - Exhibition Equipment : £3,228

The Chairperson pointed out that a great deal of support had gone into Newcastle: there was video equipment at the Tyneside Film Theatre, the Side Cinema and Workshop, all within a few hundred yards of each other, but all working in isolation. The Assistant Film Officer explained that the Side projection facility was being run on a semi-commercial basis. The Film Officer thought it important to support the group, which had been functioning for a number of years on very small resources. THIS WAS AGREED.

Recommendation: £3,228 Capital Grant from the 1980/81 Artists' Film and Video Allocation.

iv) Publishing

The Film Officer reported that the Art Publishing allocation had been cut by 30% and film magazines had received a total of £6,000 from Art Publishing. Screen was going to be cut completely. Afterimage, Film Makers Europe and Cut were all endangered and the Art Publishing Officer was keen that they should receive some

support. The Film Officer felt that the Committee should comment on the cut in the Publishing budget, and that any support it gave would be on a one-off basis, with a recommendation that future policy be rectified. He was anxious there should be discussion in advance of any proposal to drop magazines.

The Assistant Film Officer thought that if film magazines were to be funded, perhaps some re-apportioning of funds should be made and applications come to the Committee; alternatively, it might be possible to reserve a certain amount within the Publishing budget for film magazines as was the case with photography. The Chairperson questioned whether the Committee would approve of handling publishing applications.

The request was for £4,000 from next year's money for the three publications. Afterimage : £2,000, Film Makers Europe : £740, Cut : £5,200, i.e. £6,000, of which the Committee was being asked for £4,000. There were reasons to respond quickly because what was really at risk was Screen, although the interests of the Committee were closer to the other three magazines. The Chairperson thought the Committee should agree the £4,000 while at the same time expressing its unease at the situation. The Committee could then take stock of whether it wished to assume a closer responsibility for some magazines. Al Rees referred to the question of the Committee's competence to deal with publishing. While these things were in the general sector, it was quite rare for the Committee's interests to coincide with other art sectors. The Chairperson agreed it would be more appropriate to leave them within the general pool of publishing. The Assistant Film Officer emphasised the need for a separate allocation in the Publishing budget for film magazines.

IT WAS AGREED to allocate £4,000 and the Film Officer to write expressing the Committee's disapproval.

Recommendation: £4,000 Capital Grant from the 1981/82 Artists' Film and Video Allocation.

b) Exhibition

i) South West Film Tour : £300

The Chairperson pointed out that there were to be two tours, the one before the Committee and a larger tour in the same financial year for which there were no figures. The Film Officer said the estimated cost of the bigger tour was £1,645 and the Committee would be asked for £1,200. The Assistant Film Officer pointed out that the application before the Committee could not be deferred since it applied to April/May 1981. The Film Officer thought it worth supporting and THIS WAS AGREED.

Recommendation: £300 Exhibition Grant from the 1981/82 Artists' Film and Video Allocation.

ii) Cambridge Animation Festival : £1,000

The Chairperson thought the application slender and uninformative. The Assistant Film Officer had suggested they submit more information. The Chairperson felt the Cambridge Animation Festival to be potentially a useful event. Joanna Davis thought

too many things were missing from the application, for instance, a catalogue. The Assistant Film Officer pointed out that they were also looking to the BFI. IT WAS AGREED to defer the application and request a fuller submission.

Deferred.

c) Film - Bursaries

Simon Blanchard : £400

The Committee supported the application.

Recommendation: £400 Bursary from the 1980/81 Artists' Film and Video Allocation

Ian Kerr : £900

A 16mm film was viewed.

Joanna Davis thought that Ian Kerr had enough of a track record not to rely on this piece as being representative. There was general support for the application.

Recommendation: £900 Bursary from the 1980/81 Artists' Film and Video Allocation

David Parsons : £900

A slide and film piece was shown. The Chairperson thought the work was of high quality; scrupulous, if rather narrow in its concerns, and worth supporting. There was general agreement.

Recommendation: £900 Bursary from the 1980/81 Artists' Film and Video Allocation

d) Film - Awards

Paul Denby : Completion (see item 4(b) of the Agenda)

The film shown to the Committee was the direct result of a bursary previously awarded. Having seen the work, the Committee decided to uphold the rejection.

Rejected.

David E. Hilton : £1,162

There was no film to view. The Assistant Film Officer had seen some work as had Al Rees, who thought that, although there was little in the written application to suggest it came within the Committee's remit, there was a large body of work which did. IT WAS AGREED to defer a decision until the Committee had seen some film. The Committee also agreed with the Film Officer's suggestion that the application forms make it a condition that material be submitted in support of an application for an award.

Deferred.

Malcolm Gibson

There was no material to view, and the budget was considered

unrealistic. There was no support.

Rejected.

6

Any Other Business

a) Fees for Film Makers/Video Artists on Tour

The Assistant Film Officer reminded the Committee that the fee paid by organisations booking film makers was £15, and the fee paid to the film maker or video artist was £32.50 and £37.50 depending on distance travelled to venue (limit 125 miles); plus train fare or 10p per mile by road.

Tamara Krikorian thought it needed to be discussed, although recognising the arguments against increases, e.g. Coventry which had been unable to take on anything because of the cuts and were not even able to afford the £15. She thought the fees were too little because they amounted to the same as a short teaching day, and new pay increases would create an even wider gap. The Film Officer said the intention was that it should be as for a visiting lecturer, which was less than for a day's teaching.

The Assistant Film Officer pointed out that audiences were very small and the Arts Council level of subsidy was about £45 per show. The average length of performance was one to one and a half hours and was not like a day's worth of contact teaching. If fees were to be increased too much it would come under a great deal more scrutiny.

Tamara Krikorian asked whether, as bursary levels had gone up for the new financial year, there was a case for adjusting the level of fees. The Assistant Film Officer pointed out that, if the rates went up, the £15 organisation fee would go up, and he preferred to see things left as they were, with perhaps an increase in the distance compensation. If the organisation fee of £15 were increased to £17.50, this would make it too expensive for some organisations, particularly when taking VAT into account.

The Film Officer suggested that, if the increase in fee was kept to 10%, i.e. £35 and £42.50, there was a better chance of leaving the charge to institutions as it was.

IT WAS AGREED that fees be put up to £35 and £42.50 and the mileage allowance increased to 13p per mile, and the distance for the higher rate be brought down to 80 miles. To come into force on 1 April 1981.

b) Joanna Davis reported that the Berwick Street collective had an optical printer available while the Co-op printer was in a bad state. The Chairperson pointed out that the informal working party would be discussing the question of Co-op equipment. Joanna Davis raised the possibility of paying for the Co-op printer to be overhauled and of paying someone to instruct in the use of both on a rotating basis. She thought it would be desirable to have two printers operating in London. After some discussion, IT WAS AGREED that no conclusions could be reached at present.

Thanks were extended to Guy Sherwin and to be conveyed to Simon Field who would be leaving the Committee, for their services while members.

7

Date of next meeting : Monday, 11 May 1957

The meeting ended at 3.40 p.m.