

Notes of the OPERATIONS GROUP MEETING held on 5 September 1988

Present: Wilf Stevenson (Chair)
Tom Brownlie
Ian Christie
Chris Ellicott
Barrie Ellis-Jones
Ben Gibson
Gillian Hartnoll
Steve McIntyre
Jill Pack
Jayne Pilling
Philip Simpson
Paul Taylor
Irene Whitehead
Joy Wong

1. Apologies: Steve Brookes
Dinah Caine
Paul Willemen

2. Notes of Meeting held on 9 May 1988

The Notes of 9 May 1988 were accepted as an accurate record.

3. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising not otherwise covered on the Agenda.

4. Departmental Update

(a) Education

- Summer School on Melodrama - Philip reported that this had been extremely successful and that a publication would be forthcoming.
- Abolition of ILEA - Irene and Philip had attended meetings trying to establish some carry over especially with regard to formal education.
GLA/ILEA Working Party are keeping a watching brief.
- CILECT - Philip reported on his attendance at the annual Congress. Philip found the Conference interesting on a personal level but found that the dialogue centred around production in Hollywood with students having little apparent interest in documentary, or of television. Philip would be circulating a report.
- ITSC - should continue but the nature of the Conference to be changed.

(b) Library

- The Library was re-opening on 5 September and Gillian reported that the new shelving and chairs looked very nice but it was disappointing that the tables had not be delivered and temporary ones had to be installed.
- There were still problems loading data onto SIFT. Discussions regarding CD ROM were encouraging.

(c) Film Society Unit

- Tom Brownlie reported that FSU had been busy working on putting together film packages and film tours to make new material available, (as covered in the FSU Report).
- The BFFS AGM and Autumn Viewing Sessions will take place at Bradford Playhouse at the beginning of October. Several Production Division films were being screened and it was hoped that Terence Davies would introduce the screening of 'Distant Voices, Still Lives'.

(d) Funding and Development

- Barrie Ellis-Jones welcomed Steve McIntyre, the new F & D Officer. The new secretary, Debbie Cawkwell was starting on 5 September. Steve Brookes has been ill now for 4 months and Personnel were trying to ascertain a prognosis.
- Development Budget - the Division was now holding monthly meetings to discuss the budget and will circulate the sector in advance of the new year to inform people that this was how F & D were dealing with it. A list of the grants made will be circulated.
- REPF - Jayne and Irene were meeting later this week to discuss the second round of applications to the Fund.
- Training - the courses are described at the last meeting were progressing.
- Training Conference - Training within the Independent Film and Video Sector in London 25/26 October 1988 at the Connaught Hall. Irene said the aim of the Conference was to bring together people

from the London workshops to:

- * pool information on current training programmes and the aims and objectives behind them
- * encourage communication and co-ordination between groups providing training
- * try to develop a more strategic approach to training within the region
- * evaluate the current state of training provision and identify gaps or overlaps

(e) Distribution

Ian reported on the following:

Film Availability

- New prints of Fassbinder/Wenders had been acquired and were screened at the NFT/Everyman.
- A Gay and Lesbian season at the NFT was organised by Mark Finch.
- A programme of films by George Kuchar had been acquired and would be launched at the Scala.
- 3 programmes of French short films selected from 10 years of the Clermont Ferrand and a group of films by Robert Frank had also been acquired for regional tour.
- DD had largely supported and supplied the films for the Derek Jarman retrospective held in Florence.
- A programme of several Soviet Films had been organised for the Toronto Film Festival.

Restructuring

- DD were in the process of restructuring and were going through the stages of consultation and negotiation. This had delayed the appointment of the Ethnic Minorities Officer. However, discussions were taking place with GLA/Vokani to ensure that the BFI did not cut across what they were doing.

Under the re-structuring there were plans to wind up non-theatrical programming (NTP) because of a declining need making it increasingly difficult to justify the full employment of one and a

half posts. Now that there were only 3/4 main suppliers it was quite possible for the clients to book their films direct.

- A policy paper on the future of Glenbuck Films was being produced, Glenbuck now being a wholly owned subsidiary of the Institute.
- In early October it was hoped to have complete the experimental sub-titling of Crocodile Dundee and On the Black Hill for the deaf and hard of hearing. Ian had made representations to companies dealing in highly sophisticated electronic surtitles and was trying to organise a demonstration. MMI were also very interested in any developments and Ian would report as soon as he had information to hand.
- The Eisenstein Exhibition opened in Oxford on 17 July to record crowds and had been extended for a week. The exhibition opens at the Hayward Gallery on 28 September and Ian hoped that members of staff would visit it. To coincide with the exhibition, the first DD published video, on Eisenstein, would be on sale at the Hayward for £9.95. This would be important for testing the water for what demand would be over the counter.

(f) Production

- Jill Pack reported that 'Venus Peter' was in the second week of shooting. 'Play Me Something' - shooting in Venice and then Barra at the end of September. 'Melencholia' would start shooting mid-October and was in the procewss of casting and crewing.
- New Directors - Ben reported on the 8 films being funded by the scheme (see attached list for details). Over 520 scripts had been submitted; 65% of these came from the London area. Film Officers at RAAs were being asked to encourage more people from the regions to apply. To cope with the large number of applications, the process of advertising/decision date has been moved to 2 months earlier.
Ben would circulate statistics on the regional breakdown of applications to the Fund.
- Distribution - 'Distant Voices, Still Lives' had won the prize at Locarno. The film would be opening on 14 October at the Lumiere. 2

Proceeds from the Premiere on 13 October would go to the Aids Hospice at Mile End and tickets were now on sale at the Lumiere. The film has been sold to most major territories, including the USA and it was hoped that revenue from the film would be respectable.

- The Debt was now re-titled, Veronico Cruz and was being handled by Recorded Releasing.
- RPF - Ben reported that at a recent meeting it was agreed that all existing clients would have their funding renewed for one year at their present level, until March 1990. This would avoid giving the clients too short a notice period.

5. Conference

Moves were afoot to select a site for the Conference to be held in September 1989. The format would be broadly the same as last year's. Philip wished to place on record that he felt the structure had been very successful.

6. Information Update By Region

(a) Scotland

- Edinburgh: Wilf reported that the groups responsible for the separation of Filmhouse and the Festival had met during the Festival and appeared to agree to expedite the plan for the separation as soon as possible. It was hoped that the new Boards would advertise the Chief Executive posts of EIFF and Filmhouse in October. John Crichton and Colin Young were drawing up the job descriptions. Ron Inglis had now left and his assistant, who worked on the brochure and much of the administration would also shortly be leaving. The Festival would have to find a major funder for the future. The whole situation continued to be a problem.
- An announcement of the Review of the SFC might be made at the end of September however, Wilf stated that they were due to receive a fairly decent increase in funding for 1989/90.
- The proposed exhibition project at Aberdeen appeared to have collapsed.

- The SFC had published a paper on workshops which the Institute has noted.

(b) London

- Fantasy Factory Irene had written to Camden expressing the Institute's concern and distress over the rent increase. Camden have now restored FF's rent to the same level as the commercial tenants.
- Four Corners Tower Hamlets have now confirmed the second half of their annual grant.
- LBGS Irene reported that LBGS had, for reasons known only to themselves, demoted film and video to a low priority and as a consequence a large number of film and video groups had been cut. LBGS also do not appear to see the need to have an arts policy. Irene attended the appeal with Circles and 75% of their grant was restored. However, WFTVN were cut completely. Irene was very concerned about the attitude of the Chair, Cllr Williams who attacked her about the inappropriateness of the BFI making representations on behalf of their funded clients. It would appear that for Cllr Williams, abolition is pre-history and that any partnership deals are off. Irene will be meeting Mark Brangwin of the Association of London Authorities to try and get a Labour group organised to look at ways in which they can re-stimulate the LBGS to give greater priority to film and video.
- GLA Survey - Developing the Independent Film and Video Sector in London. After tenders had been received, Comedia had been appointed to carry out the survey, pending the £10,000 from LBGS. The interim report should be ready in December and the final report in February.

(c) South East

Nothing further to report.

(d) Southern

- SA are having a 5 year strategic plan undertaken by Comedia which will cover exhibition at Portsmouth and Southampton.

(e) South West

- With regard to cinema exhibition in Exeter, Jayne raised the general

question of whether the Institute had any intention of supporting commercial art-house cinema development of the kind currently being proposed by Tony Jones. Barrie said that non-repayable public funds could generally be made to produce a greater cultural return than commercial investment, and were therefore a preferable option when available. Wilf said that the Institute's cultural ambitions were clearly stated in the Corporate Plan and articulated in the RCC paper on Media Centres and that the Institute would wish to achieve its cultural objectives. This question would be pursued by the most productive available means.

- Philip said that following on from the Animation Festival, a day event would be held at Watershed reviewing animation for children on tv. Workshops would be held for children to produce their own animation.
- Also as a result of the TAM Conference, the Penwith Womens Group were working with the LEA to produce teaching materials.
- The next Easter School would be held in Plymouth and was being sponsored by TSW.

(f) Wales

- Barrie would be meeting Tom Owen and Mark Evans, who has been employed as a consultant for 6 months during Martyn Howell's sabbatical.
- The Education Department were involved in discussions with WAC re their Education Policy.

(g) West Midlands

- The report on the study on potential uses of the Triangle site was due out in September.
- Alan Fair had been appointed Cannon Hill's new Film Officer with an educational brief.
- Birmingham Film Festival 23 September - 8 October, would focus on Third World cinema. There was a strong preview line up and special sessions would be ehld around economic development. The Festival

suffered badly as there was no social centre and the distances between the venues created problems.

- Media Development Agency - the appointment of Director had been postponed until December and a meeting of potential sponsors was scheduled as the brief was still very vague.
- Warwick Arts Centre - Jayne reported that WMA had done an assessment of the Arts Centre and it was hoped that they would recommend that there was better provision for staff at the Cinema. The venue was very successful but they could be involved in more culturally ambitious work but this was not possible with the current staffing structures.
- Vokani - on 9 September Vokani were holding a presentation to launch a feasibility study which looked at the setting up of a Black and Third World film and video distribution/promotional agency in the region. The findings and recommendations of the study would be summarised by June Givanni.
- Macro Films - £15,000 had been withheld of their grant and an ultimatum given by Production on the nature of their production programme as Macro appears to be majorly conducting a training brief.

(h) East Midlands

- Caroline Pick has resumed her post as Film Officer.
- Nottingham Media Centre Nottingham City Council had approved £150,000 with the conditions that no more money is requested; there is no revenue request and that the refurbishment costs are raised.
The Fletcher Priest report on NMC was due out shortly.
Money might be forthcoming from EMA to appoint a Fund Raiser who would work to EMA or to the BFI.
- Leicester Phoenix Although the Phoenix would be re-opening in October, with Laraine Porter as the Film Officer, Jayne was signalling that there would be continual problems for film exhibition and a proper cinema was needed.
Leicester City Council had informally approved finance for a

consultancy to examine the possibility of a full-time film theatre.

- Derby Metro were urged to come up with a realistic 3-year plan which actually confronted the problem of the multiplex.

(i) Eastern

- Luton 33: have produced a Business Plan which indicates that they can operate as a commercial organisation providing they can raise £320,000 capital upfront. They are also trying to do a deal with Molinaire to get video production equipment.

(j) Lincolnshire & Humberside

- The feasibility study is going ahead. Steve McIntyre would be visiting the region to familiarise himself and he would also be talking to Philip re education.

(k) Yorkshire

- Sheffield City were producing a feasibility study on the Kennings Building as a possible new site for the Anvil and were in the process of appointing consultants.
- Bradford Irene and Steve were meeting Margaret Benton to talk about various developments. To stop all the confusion surrounding development in Bradford, Jayne suggested that a meeting be called with all the Divisions involved to keep them informed and to reach some agreed way to proceed. Wilf agreed to co-ordinate.

(l) North West

- Cornerhouse: Marion Doyen had started as Cinema Director. Barrie and Irene had met with Dewi Lewis to discuss their financial position and the problem of failing to pay distributors. Dewi was trying to get ACGB incentive funding and to raise the financial base as their revenue support was insufficient.

(m) Merseyside

- The Moviola Project, as part of MA restructuring plan was going ahead.
- The Phil Redmond scheme has been put back but he was still interested.

(n) North East

- Ben Moore's post had now been secured for another year but long term prospects were not good.

- Interviews for the Adviser's post at Morpeth would take place next month.

- Tyneside Steve reported on an emergency package of staff cuts which was put together intended to ensure break-even on the current financial year. This was the redundancy of the Director and Deputy Director (Programming) the two posts to be replaced by a post of Director; the redundancy of the education officer and publicity assistant. Fred Brookes has been commissioned as a consultant by NA to do a report on options for the long-term development of Tyneside Cinema. However, the consultancy period needs clarification as he has still not resigned as Director.

Philip said it was depressing that it was always the Education post that seemed to be the first to be cut irrespective of the quality of work being carried out and especially as it was precisely the work done by the EO that helped to build audiences for more adventurous programming.

(o) Northern Ireland

- Barrie reported that following their meeting, he had sent the Department of Education in NI a range of consultants who might wish to tender for a study into the Film and TV economy of NI.

- Queens Film Theatre have opened a second auditoria.

6. AOB

No items.

7. Date of Next Meeting

7 November 1988 at 1000hrs in the Boardroom.

REPORT TO OPERATIONS GROUP ON DEVELOPMENT BUDGET DECISIONS - SEPTEMBER 1988

ORGANISATION	AMOUNT
Greater London Arts	10,000
Merseyside Arts	20,000
Sheffield Anvil	5,000
Four Corners/Circles	4,000
Video Engineering Training	6,600
The Rainbow Alliance (SEFT, Co-op WFTVN, IFVPA etc)	2,000
Training Federation	5,000
Media Education Centre	3,392
South West Arts	10,000
North West IFVPA	1,000
Luton 33	1,000
British Council	6,000
Lincolnshire & Humberside	8,000
SEFT	5,000
Video Vera	2,000
Riverside	1,250
BFI Marketing Courses	5,000
Hall Place Studios	5,000

Funding & Development
September 1988

REGIONAL EXHIBITION PROJECT FUND 1988/89

The decisions in the last round of this year's Fund were as follows:

City Lights	£1395	printer for desk top publishing
Dovecot	£546	word processor/ desk top publishing
	£117	film programme
Bradford	£3500	interior improvements
Strode	£500	brochure re-design
Cinema City	£700	word processor printer/ training courses
Ipswich	£965	Jane Giles' training
Derby	£140	training in desk top publishing use

Jayne Pilling
Irene Whitehead
September 1988

MEMORANDUM

To: Wilf Stevenson
-Barrie Ellis-Jones
Irene Whitehead
Chris Ellicot
cc Colin MacCabe
Jill Pack

From: Ben Gibson
Production
Date: 7 September 1988

NEW DIRECTORS 1988/9 : BREAKDOWN OF SCRIPTS

I enclose a copy of our statistical breakdown of New Directors submissions. I'm sorry you didn't get these earlier. The organisation of the scripts is by RAA area and gender. They have already been circulated to film officers.

The current plan for New Directors 1989-90 is to advertise for script submissions in November, set a closing date in late January and come to a final list by April 1st.

I enclose a summary of the productions that are shot or in pre-production this year. Although 3 of the films are set largely outside London, 8 out of 9 applicants in the final list are from the GLA area. Bernard Rudden is in the Scottish Arts Council area.

We're composing a paper on all the scripts, as a sort of circular rejection letter, at present, and it will be circulated.

BG

Ben Gibson

NEW DIRECTORS 1988-9

THE CLOUDS Director - Patrick Keiller (16mm/b/w/drama/c.20 mins)
A black and white semi-narrative abstract film concerning itself with moments in the narrator's life unavailable to recollection. Set in Blackpool and the North-West. Shooting from mid-August.

THE LONG WAY AROUND (working title) Director - Martin Jones and Graham Young (16mm drama/colour/c.15 mins).
A Tati-esque short film populated by security guards, business people and a maintenance man, all of them continually frustrated by the everyday objects around them and their ability to defy logical expectations. Shooting from September 21st.

THE CHALK MARK Director - Bernard Rudden (16mm/colour/drama/c. 15 mins).
An atmospheric narrative short set in and around the tenement blocks and dumps of Glasgow. A young boy's view of his family, his gran and the local "bad man".

EROS EROSION Director - Anna Thew (16mm/colour + b/w/abstract drama/c. 30 mins).
Takes up the theme of transience from Thew's last film Behind Closed Doors ('88, 44 mins). The personal and the imaginary fuse diary text and document, with internalised fragments of literature, image (painting, film) and sound. Shooting from mid-October.

HOLY PHYSIC Director - Phil Hendy (16mm/colour/drama without dialogue/c. 10 mins).
An absurd Gothic narrative set in one room with a 60 year timespan. Holy Physic concerns itself with the build-up to one miracle event, of ten recalling the early surrealist films of Bunuel and Cocteau. Shooting from October 17th.

GRANNY'S IS Director - David Larcher (1" video from Beta and lo-band/colour/documentary/c. 30 mins).
A "geriatric anthro-apology" in which David Larcher turns video material made with his grandmother over the last ten years into an experimental documentary "a cross between an Open University social sciences study, a Horizon profile, an Edwardian affair with life, a video art tape and an exercise in electronic therapy." Shooting from end September.

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I'M BRITISH BUT... Director - Gurinder Chadha (1" video from Beta/colour/documentary/c. 25 mins).

A documentary exploring ideas of nationality and belonging through the eyes of Britain's second generation Asians. Shooting from mid-November.

NEVER COME MORNING Director - Tim Burke (Video 8 - 1" video transferred to 16mm for distribution/colour/c. 15 mins). The audiovisual equivalent of a '70s punk novel, shot in Video 8/neorealist style in real locations around London during the night, hardly disturbing the routines of bars, fast food restaurants, the streets. Shooting from October 24th.

MOMI FILM (Working title) Director - Danny Crilly (16mm to 1" video/colour/documentary/c. 15 mins).

A short impressionistic work covering some exhibits in MOMI; a description of 'moving image culture'. Shooting from August 30th.

DEVELOPMENT AWARDS UNDER 'NEW DIRECTORS'

NELSON MANDELA BIRTHDAY CONCERT TAPES

£1000 towards the putting together of 12 1 minute tapes for the Wembley concert, artists' works around the theme of the anti-apartheid struggle.

END TIME by Karen Ingham

£1000 script development for ND 1989-90.

MISSING PIECES by Lorraine Morley and Viviane Albertine

£1000 script development for ND 1989-90