

Some Notes on the proposed Coop Magazine

- 1. What is seen as the objectives of such a magazine?
 - : to inform coop members ;
 - : to promote/ introduce/advertise coop films to a wider audience
 - : to provide an easily accessible platform for coop film-makers
 - : to act as a forum for discussion

- 2. What would be its readership?
 - : Coop workshop members / catalogue contributors
 - : the wider spectrum of independent film, through regional groups of the IFA, production groups such as Amber, Four Corners etc, independent cinemas.
 - : education - film courses, art colleges, university libraries, schools.
 - : and a similar international spectrum particularly in Europe and North America.

I think we need to make a preliminary estimate of potential circulation. Perhaps through Coop membership - other film magazines' circulation numbers - IFA membership - BFI mailing lists etc.

- 3. Is there a need for such a magazine?

A number of widely distributed film magazines/publications already cater for the independent sector of film-making eg. Afterimage, Screen, etc. But of course no magazine covers the Coop exclusively or particularly comprehensively - though Readings, which I feel could be a good model in many ways certainly goes a good way towards it. If the proposed magazine avoided the areas already covered by existing magazines (by concentrating on the Coop) I think one must assume that there is theoretically a niche. (See para. 1.)

4. Finance

The most important issue after establishing a need is financing. How to finance - presumably we would be looking for a grant for initial production and a loss guarantee from the usual funding bodies, the BFI (BFI's published annual statement of accounts contains some interesting items under grants for film publications), GLAA, Gulbenkian, Arts Council And how far such a magazine could cover its own costs - ie how much would it cost to buy (at the NFT bookstall !). Also of paramount importance whether we could get a grant to pay the person(s) who will edit/ compile/ design/ produce the magazine.

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Finance is important not only in getting the project going at all - but also as to how it will look - ie costing of different production techniques (photo litho, letterpress (slight edge on quality but not so versatile). It seems to me very important in a magazine on film-making to be able to print good quality pictures/stills.

5. What about content?

I find it curious that the essential part of the proposed magazine (ie the content) has to be left as problematic. But I can't see that at this stage we can go beyond the objectives as set out in para.1. Too much depends on how the editor(s) and/or committee eventually see their job - what contributions are forthcoming from the membership and so on. Broadly I feel that the content should be initiated from within the Coop but don't think we can go much further than that at present.

6. How would it be run?

Talking to a friend who has run a press and publishes a limited circulation poetry magazine - it seems that the best way of assuring continuity (ie not a one off, flash in the pan job), that deadlines are met etc., is to make certain one person has overall responsibility. I find the idea of a team of say three people attractive, in that the load can be spread and there is less danger of a single point of view dominating (but it can be difficult to work). However as we discussed at the first meeting - a situation where there was one person responsible for the running of the magazine, accountable to an elected Coop committee which would supervise policy - could be the most efficient system. And it has the advantage that the Coop is ultimately in control.

7. A postscript idea on format

If we should get only minimum financing- contributors could send in their copy on a pre-determined standard size say A4 with a $\frac{3}{4}$ " margin for stapling times the number of copies we intend to produce. Offset litho/quickprint is cheap and easily available in the average High St. This would mean

1. the magazine would be a cooperative effort
2. and this brings up the question of editing/selection
3. the job of editor/and committee could then consist of collating/stapling/posting, and distribution/publicising.

A post postscript idea on postage. The front cover could be designed as an integral wrap around (roll over) postab cover, so avoiding paying for envelopes.