

FESTIVAL PROGRAMMING REPORT

There are two kinds of international film event. A. the commercial festivals (Cannes on one extreme and Edinburgh on the other) whose reasons for existence are that they function as a market place for the film industry (MGM to the BFI production board ((the consumer orientated product at whatever level))) and also offer token patronage to alternate cinema/film by staging concurrent secondary events - ie the Jungen Forum (Berlin) - in order to ease their (who?) conscience, rather like the Nazis handing out wet hankies in the showers. B. International and local events (in terms of the work shown) brought about by the efforts of film-makers and viewers in order that they may see work otherwise inaccessible and by the need for an ongoing discussion between film-makers and between film-makers and their audience (not usually provided for at International commercial festivals). Both types of event also, of course, operate as prestige displays for their location and funding bodies.

Given that our small group is unlikely to be able to change the nature of the International commercial festivals we must find out how we can best ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ modify the presentation of independent work at these events in order to increase the discourse between film-maker and audience. From my own previous experience three main problem areas seem present:

1. the planning stage.  
Insufficient prior notification is the major stumbling block to organising a cohesive show. The practice of A being approached by organisation X to select a programme of 'Co-op' films for a venue at short notice limits selection to the body of work already familiar to A. This seems especially to be the case where A is an advanced film-maker/theorist devoting most time to producing his/her own work and tending to lose touch with current work by newer film-makers (the forming of Academies).

The simplest and most effective solution would seem to be the setting up of a body of interested persons (ie people who would be willing to devote some of their time) to monitor festival bookings. They would have three main functions: a) ~~to obtain full information on~~ to obtain venues, b) to inform the general membership and select a programmer or programmers from those who subsequently propose themselves, c) to provide a back-up advisory service for the programmer/s. The selection of the programmer/s for each event could be arrived at by consensus at a meeting between the proposees and the panel.

2. Film Rentals

Normal festival practice (and normal NFT practice) is not to pay rentals on films shown. This is due to the fact that festivals exist to promote films in order that they gain a distributor, and is seen by the organisers as a service to the film industry. The relationship between AG film and festivals is quite different as the film-makers are self-distributing. The audience has to pay admission therefore the film-maker should receive a rental. The 'Co-op' should not involve itself in events where the organisers do not offer to pay rentals although the membership should still be advised of the event.

### 3 Discussion

One of the committee's main functions would be to ensure that adequate provision is made at each event for ordered discussion and seminars. This seems to be sadly lacking at most events.

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I don't have a copy of this.