

Extra Notes on the proposed Co-op Magazine  
(additional to Andrew Dunlop's Notes of 5.2.79.)

1. Objectives. The informative function of the magazine should include current factual info about festivals, venues, grants, resources, etc. Also, it should specifically serve, among others, Co-op Cinema club members and film-goers to allied work.

2. Readership. Again, we would hope for readers among Cinema club members, and if the magazine were a bi-monthly, giving topical articles on recent and forth-coming screenings and events it would benefit the cinema and the magazine. Subscriptions could be offered at the point of sale of memberships. The same would apply to workshop joiners and renters of films too, if bulletins of Workshop and distribution news were included.

3. Circulation. 'Musics', published next door at LMC, is increasing its print run from 1,000 to 1,500 at 35p 6 times yearly, and is optimistic of selling most of the run. We talked to Steve Beresford, of the 'Musics' group, who thought that the avant garde/independent film constituency was probably much larger than the free/collective music one. 'Musics' is deposited with the statutory libraries and an international subscribership has resulted from the world-wide library information network. 'Filmmakers Europe and the Film and Video Makers Newsletter/Directory' are sources of potential subscribers.

4. Necessity/Niche for a mag. No extra comment, except that we thought that 'Cinemanews' and 'Musics' as well as 'Readings' would be good examples to follow.

5. Finance. The BFI Editorial department has made grants to periodicals which turned out to be short-lived. This suggests a reasonably risk-taking attitude on its part given a persuasive application.

'Musics' runs self-sufficiently now, the last issue having cost about £450 to produce 1,000 copies, apparently. This is on the basis of free contributions and voluntary editorial & handling work (paste-up, collating, mailing). It might be worth aiming for self-sufficiency after a starting-up grant, especially if our main BFI grant is not enough to pay for editorial work.

If the magazine accepted advertising, which 'Musics' does not, its finances would be easier.

6. Content. As Andrew Dunlop points out, we are taking this for granted to some extent - perhaps justifiably, since one can guess the probable types of contribution. Specific content would be up to contributors and editor(s). One point he raised was the perennial one that the first issue of a mag is often great and its example is hard to live up to. Another point is that it may be an uphill struggle to keep material coming in from/about ~~active~~ active Co-op and visiting film-makers.

Extra notes on magazine, continued.

7. Running it. The question of individual v. group work is debatable, not necessarily clear-cut, and the outcome may depend anyway on the financial situation and the particular people who get involved. Responsibility for income and expenditure should be clearly assigned, and there should be a contact name for subscribers and for contributors.

There could be advantages in making it autonomous from the Co-op financially and editorially, so that it is published 'at' rather than 'by' LFMC. The extent of Co-op control could be confined to the annual election of a separate magazine group or committee at AGMs, which would receive annual reports. A separate bank account would be required for efficient budgeting and running.

8. Postscript. I feel that the magazine should be unashamedly Co-op-centred, perhaps publishing our annual report, and specifically serving Co-op members and sympathisers as well as a wider readership.

N.B. One option raised by the working party was to have in mind the ultimate objective of anthologising the magazine into a book which would be a critical catalogue/directory/anthology of Co-op work. This would add to editorial policy the aim of comprehensive coverage of new acquisitions and active attention to retrospective articles.

The suggestion of offering LFMC Catalogues/Supplements with subscriptions was also made.

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Andrew Nicolson. 12.2.79.