

INDEPENDENT

Media

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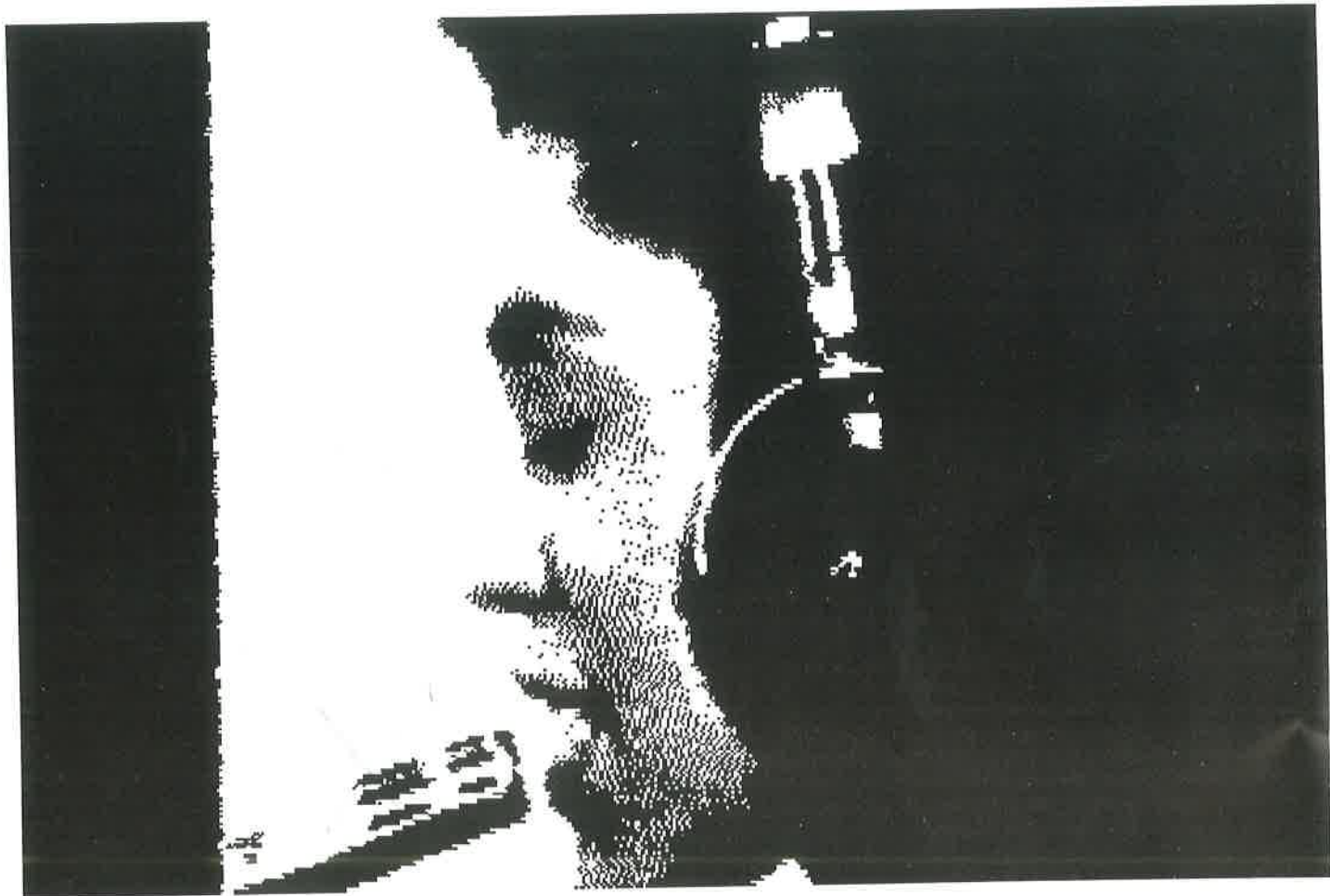
8th  
National Festival  
of Independent Video

Oct 30th, Nov 1st & 2nd. South Hill Park, Bracknell. Full programme and details.

## FESTIVAL SCREENINGS

### NEW SOCIETY - selection by Nick Fielding with Jackie Shaw (Real Time Video)

Saturday, Cinema  
11am & 2pm  
Sunday, Studio Theatre  
5pm



**GOODBYE VIENNA** by *Connections*, 12 minutes

**MAKING FLIPPY FLOPPY** by *Kamina Walton*,  
7 minutes

**THE ENGLISH ESTATE** by *Community Arts  
Workshop*, 25 minutes

**POLSOW HUDOL** by *Falmouth Film & Video  
Workshop*, 4 minutes

**LITTLE BOXES** by *Mark Sebbal/Cogent Films*, 1  
minute

**1987 YEAR OF THE BIG BANG** by *Aileen  
Burgess*, 1 minute

**TED ROGERS CONDEMNS POLICE STATE**  
by *Piers Storey*, 1 minute

**TURNING THE TABLES** by *Jo Chiles*, 6  
minutes

**DOES IT TALK** by *John Morgan/Chris Bray*, 11  
minutes

**IS THERE ANYBODY THERE?** by *Fiona  
Mackay & Julia Barton*, 12 minutes

**BABYLON - POLICING INNER CITIES** by  
*Anthony Lesforis*, 10 minutes

How do you assess community video? More than any other branch of the burgeoning video world, community video defies traditional categories. Production values are still a matter of considerable debate; subject matter is diverse; form encompasses every technique from drama, vox pop, documentary to cartoon and collage.

Budgets vary from literally nothing to thousands of pounds. Even the question of what it's all about has a variety of answers: it's about giving the makers a sense of their own ability/identity say some; it's really about informing people of an event/situation say others. There are those who argue it is about nothing at all.



## FESTIVAL SCREENINGS

These thoughts come to mind having, for the second year running, selected and watched a couple of dozen videos submitted to this year's festival. The initial selection criteria were that the budget should be less than £5,000 and the subject be of interest to community groups - a category as diverse as the eventual selection of videos.

The final selection of 11 videos was chosen not just on the grounds of excellence - it follows from above that such categorisation loses meaning outside personal preference - but also to highlight particular techniques and (sometimes) shortcomings.

There are three miniatures in the selection, each one of which shows that brevity is no barrier to creativity. Ted Rogers Condemns Police State, 1987 - Year of the Big Bang and Little Boxes use very different techniques to make their point. These tapes are an inspiration to would-be video makers. They demystify the process of production/creation through their simplicity and directness.

Worries about AIDS have prompted a spate of films about sex and sexuality - notably absent from last year. Goodbye Vienna, despite its overpowering interviewer, uses vox pop to bring out popular prejudices and remarkable truths from a random selection of passers-by. Making Flippy Floppy looks at who should be responsible for contraception.

There were surprisingly few good videos examining a local community and its inhabitants. The English Estate stands out as an exception, covering aspects of life on a Rochdale housing estate with wit and clarity. Polsow Hudol, a short from Cornwall, makes its point sharply with the minimum of resources.

Two videos present strong images of people who are often overlooked or misrepresented: Turning the Tables paints an impressive picture of a black woman DJ, while Does It Talk? turns the tables on people who look down on those with physical disabilities. Is There Anybody There? uses several different techniques to highlight the growing difficulties of using public transport.

Perhaps the most impressive video, Babylon - Policing the Inner Cities, adopts a journalistic approach to present disturbing evidence about police attitudes to black people. It has little to offer to those for whom the process is all-important, being made by one person with a large(ish) budget of £3,000, but in terms of presenting a case on behalf of a community it would be hard to improve upon.

Community video cannot easily be judged and compared. Its diversity is its strength. The entries to the festival this year show that none of the pioneering attitude, disrespect for orthodoxy and inventiveness has disappeared. It's still like being on the frontier.



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