From the Editor...

Since our last Newsletter a number of extremely important events have taken place in the world of visual anthropology. Certainly the death of our esteemed colleague Margaret Mead will be felt by all of us as a great loss, for aside from being helpful to us all personally, Margaret was both an eloquent spokesman and ardent supporter of our new and growing discipline. In these days following Margaret's death it is now more important than ever that we seek to communicate with each other to generate a deeper and more cohesive sense of our directions and goals. It is no longer possible to simply say: "This is something that Margaret Mead supports strongly." as Margaret was so gifted at convincing others of the humanistic importance of visually documenting the numerous cultural styles that are a part of our world. Without her wise counsel and great influence we are faced more than ever with the challenge of collectively conceptualizing and convincing others of the importance of our new and growing discipline.

Our Newsletter can play an extremely important role in this process, for it is an unparalleled vehicle for bridging the diverse styles, movements and goals of our community. Through it we have the means to evolve our widely separated and fragmented ideas into a powerful and united agent for humanistic values. Through it the definitions of visual anthropology can be sharpened and our goals moved progressively forward through our cooperative communication.

In response to this challenge we have begun in this issue a new section entitled "Directions", in which both filmmakers and anthropologists are encouraged to share their views and move towards generating the type of dialogue we need to learn from each other and to develop a perspective which encompasses the individual concerns of our diverse professional community. Our first contributor to "Directions" is filmmaker Hubert Smith, long active in the field of ethnographic film, who writes about the complications of filmmakers and anthropologists working together to do what we call visual anthropology. Smith raises serious questions about our goals and our methods for achieving them.

The last four months since we went to press have witnessed an incredible vitality in our field, a vitality which Margaret worked so hard with us to create. In this brief period there has been a surprising number of national and international activities devoted exclusively to visual anthropology. In recent months there have been major programs in New York, Canberra, New Delhi and Paris, and a new and extremely important PBS series on anthropology has been initiated which will present a great deal of ethnographic film to the American public. We will be reporting in this issue on each of these major activities and on others that have taken place during this period which give us some sense of the growing scope of our field.

As editor it has been my pleasure to receive a great many favorable comments on the content and new format of our Newsletter, and on behalf of the staff and myself, I would like to thank all of you who have made helpful comments and contributions. Beginning with this issue we will have a new assistant editor, Kathleen Price, and a new Regional Contributing Editor for the Southwest, Ron Light. The increasing flood of materials submitted have allowed us to add an additional four pages to our last page count and to arrive at what I hope will now be our maximum length.

The deadline for submission for our next issue will be April 15. We are pleased to note that the number of subscribers to the Newsletter have increased and we hope that the SAVICOM Newsletter will soon become an even more vital source of information and dialogue among those of us who are seeking new ways to document the human condition and are concerned with the problems and promises of visual anthropology as a field of exploration.

IRA R. ABRAMS, Editor
NOVEMBER 1978 ELECTION ADDS 10 NEW OFFICERS TO SAVICOM ROSTER

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SAVICOM Bylaws Now Available

SAVICOM Secretary-Treasurer Bob Aibel has announced the availability of the SAVICOM By-Laws to any members wishing to receive them. He will send them to you upon request. Write to:

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SAVICOM Newsletter wishes to again express its appreciation to Dean John Shutz of the University of Southern California's Division of Social Sciences and Communication, College of Letters, Arts and Sciences. His generous financial support for the Newsletter has allowed this publication to expand and present new sources of information to visual anthropologists and filmmakers on an international scale.

Please send Newsletter contributions to appropriate regional contributing editors or to Editor. The deadline for submission of copy for the next issue is April 15, 1979. Please send contributions double space and in duplicate.

Published three times a year: Fall, Winter, Spring, the Newsletter is provided free to all SAVICOM members. Subscriptions are available to individuals and institutions for $5.00 per year. Subscriptions should be sent to: SAVICOM Newsletter, American Anthropological Association, 1703 New Hampshire Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20009. Payment should accompany any order. Make checks payable to the Society for the Anthropology of Visual Communication.
A PERSONAL COMMENT ON THE QUALITY OF ‘HUMAN DOCUMENTARIES’

By HUBERT SMITH

“Directions” is a new, on-going series of personal perspectives in Visual Anthropology. Our readers are encouraged to use this column to share their insights about the proper goals and methods of our growing discipline.

Hubert Smith is a documentary filmmaker who has been working with anthropology and anthropologists for many years. His major focus has been with films which convey the human experience through family life in the U.S.A., South and Middle America. From 1960, Smith worked in university television and then film production until he became an independent in 1969. He has made films on four separate American families and his work in Bolivia with the American Universities Field Staff includes such films as The Spirit Possession of Alejandro Mamaní, Magic and Catholicism and Viracocha. Smith is making methodology explicit and relevant to the filmic message in his latest project, a NEH funded filmmaker exploration of the Yucatec Maya which incorporates elements of self-consciousness and reflexivity.

PART I

I am not a professional anthropologist. My education, training, and practice are in communication and film. I was attracted to anthropologists some ten years ago because of their tradition of engaging in the observational act and its consequences in a deliberate manner. My hope was that I (personally) and film (in general) would unite with anthropology in a productive union. Although my own debt to anthropology is great, that larger unification has not taken place. It is precisely because of my belief that anthropology’s approach to understanding man is unique and valuable that I continue to seek ways to forge more useful exchanges between the two fields.

This, then, is the first in a series of personal articles about films which I call “human documentaries.” By that I mean those films which implicitly or explicitly advertise that they are telling their viewers something actual (i.e., non-fictional) about the lives of people, usually about people separated from the viewers by cultural and/or national boundaries. Since the films I speak of are referred to by anthropologists and others as “ethnographic films”, I think it best to say exactly what I mean to include in that definition.

By ethnographic film I mean to include those films which are made by anthropologists, supervised by them, or which are strongly influenced by anthropological ideas, methods, or intents. I include most of my own films for what good or ill may be their lot with the criticisms I will make. But I will not use specific films as examples here, mine or anyone else’s. Film critiques tend to become complex and problematic. I hope to treat larger issues in this series, and to let the articles prompt a dialogue on more specific matters which will be printed in future installments. The editor and I urge the readership to get involved regardless of their self-perceived level of expertise. The general run of films should make it plain there are few experts.

I will contend that today’s ethnographic film form is in a pretty shabby state. And I will further argue that the field of anthropology, because of its own disciplinary quest for high standards, must concern itself with leadership in this area. However, all current indications are that anthropologists are unaware of ethnographic film’s problems, much less concerned with correcting them.

Anthropologists’ notions of film practice, form, and criticism remains naive, a fact which does not prevent them from involving themselves with film in consequential ways. Further, ethnographic film seems to have become stalled, which in this fast-moving world, means it occupies a retrogressive position. This position eschews wide accept ance of its works primarily because of the general public’s supposed lack of knowledge and perception. I submit that the topics treated by ethnographical films (i.e., human social interactions) are inherently interesting, and that well-made films on such topics can always find wide audiences. Anthropology has simply contented itself with making generally unwatchable films.

On what grounds do I suggest that, with certain notable exceptions, the field of ethnographic film tends to be characterized by bad films?

In general, ethnographic films display inadequate mastery of important film crafts. It is beyond the scope of this article to treat in detail the various aspects of film craft I refer to, or to discuss their influences on subjects and audiences. Suffice it to say that these craft concerns fall in two broad areas: technical and conceptual. The technical (e.g., light, focus, framing, movement, sound) arts of filmmaking have been developed to enhance fidelity. To the extent that a viewer can see, hear, and “read” (i.e., absorb with ease the information it contains) a film, one may assume the medium is imposing minimal static between content and its perception. The conceptual (e.g., philosophical, directorial, editorial) arts assist the filmmaker in syntactical and organizational decisions. These decisions take place before and during filming and organize sampling, visualization, and theme. They also affect editing in ways which organize the basic material filmed coherently. In other words, we have to know what we’re doing before, during, and after we do it. One can’t just “shoot film”, and expect to come up with a good movie. To be sure, ethnographic film has and is developing alternative film languages. But what seems to escape many ethnographic filmmakers is precisely the fact that film is a medium which requires the deliberate use of manipulable structures. Structures common to all film endeavor.

Few ethnographic films evidence sufficient primacy of craft concerns either technical or conceptual. Rather, they tend to be made from a grounding in philosophical and intellectual bases which do not recognize the film medium as requiring its own genuflexions before other ideas are communicated with sufficiency. This is, perhaps, a difficult
concept to communicate to those who have not dealt with films over time. It is the kind of requirement which one wishes did not exist and, if the critical atmosphere is not rigorous, may find possible to ignore. However, it is a concept which is drilled into filmmakers‘ minds after years of facing the chilling consequences of ignoring it. For filmmakers, attention to film craft is a fact of survival.

However, by and large, ethnographic films tend not to be evaluated rigorously according to craft criteria. They seem to be treated as somehow other-filmic. When viewers go to sleep, students fail to understand, and Public Broadcasting fails to call, it is assumed that the fault lies with them. This reasoning becomes suspect, however, when the odd anthropological film manages to achieve wider success. In such cases this selfsame mass audience magically acquires proper sagacity.

This sort of fast footwork would probably not be possible if there were as long a tradition of film use and criticism in anthropology as there is for print. One has only to read the American Anthropologist to note the disparity in dialogues generated by printed and filmed communication. But this is a fact, not an excuse. So long as anthropology communicates via film there should be no lack of effort in improving those communications.

I submit then, that topics for most ethnographic films are inherently interesting and that film is an accepted and popular form of communication. Therefore, the failure of ethnographic films to attract wider audiences would seem to be the fault of the ways they are made and not of their content or viewers. This situation wants changing because anthropology is worthless if it does not seek ways to communicate itself effectively to the general good. Since film is now a recognized method for making anthropological statements, it must also aspire to fill this responsibility.

I believe that anthropology thinks, makes, and talks film in the way it does because it doesn‘t feel the need to do it differently. In one sense one can understand that the primacy of the printed word in career advancement hovers film aside. On the other hand, one always hopes what professionals attempt they attempt to do well. It seems clear that the long-standing lag between what is attempted and what is achieved among those who think about, consult upon, and make such films has gone beyond being explicable due to the medium‘s novelty. This gap has become institutionalized. In my experience such institutionalization tends to occur when there is an absence of clear and intimidating consequences for bad work. In short, anthropology seems to have become one of the fields where one‘s tenure is so secure that one of its public manifestations (i.e., film) can survive within a discipline-specific esthetic.

Thus far I have argued that no filmic communication should be exempt from superior uses of film craft. I do not mean to say that ethnographic film should ape other esthetics or formats not appropriate to anthropological intents, however. I mean only to say that ethnographic films should display the highest technical quality and conceptualization. That this is not the case is lamentable, that there is not a general criticism of this state and effort to change it is shocking.

Finally, I should like to argue that technically and conceptually bad ethnographic films are also irresponsible professional communications. Such films, as much or more than other forms of human documentary, make explicit and implicit assurances that they are showing the viewer “how other people are” as seen by serious and responsible mediators. To the extent this is not accomplished well, the films misrepresent exotic peoples to persons who may never know them through any other medium. The political consequences are profound. This issue will be discussed more fully in an upcoming installment. Suffice it to say that it is not unreasonable to surmise that people who are imperfectly known may also be seen as “discountable” members of the human race. Such peoples tend to suffer, disproportionately by actions or non-actions of more powerful peoples.

But discussions of film craft aside, there is another set of issues which bear upon many ethnographic films‘ production. These involve conscious and unconscious transposing and overlaying of concepts from other forms of anthropological endeavor on film work. Simply stated, it is folly to think that what serves formal ethnographic study will also serve the wholly different requirements of film. It is perhaps admirable that anthropology has such complete faith in itself; but to a filmmaker the image is one of a man setting out to build a house with dentist’s tools and blueprints for a boat. Such an approach tends to lead to what is, I think, a fundamental confounding of what film does well and badly. These transpositions have profound effects on the epistemology of ethnographic films. They affect the social climate within which such films are made. They also tend to circumscribe filmic sampling in important ways. The end result is often what John Collier so aptly terms “dead pictures”.

In the end these unfortunate failures or choices may far outweigh the influences of faulty craftsmanship. Therefore, I would like to discuss epistemological, social and philosophical issues in the next installments.
THE SECRETS OF FUNDING FILMS — An Expert Tells You What To Do
By STEVE PENNY

One of the most asked questions in Visual Anthropology is how to get funds to produce films. Steve Penny was awarded a grant from the James Irvine Foundation for a documentary on prehistoric art and culture in Southern California, and received complete funding for an around-the-world trip to produce radio and television programs on American Music in Pakistan. During this past year, he has been holding workshops throughout the U.S. to help media artists locate funding for their projects, and has published a book, “How To Get Grants To Make Films”. In the first of a two-part article, Penny presents the distilled wisdom of his book and his experiences of many years.

Over 33 million dollars will be given away this year for motion picture projects by more than 100 foundations and grant programs. While most of this money will go to seasoned filmmakers, a surprising number of grants will be awarded to people with little or no production experience.

I was able to get my start in filmmaking with a $7,500 grant to produce an ethnographic documentary on stone age art and culture in southern California. The grant was awarded despite the fact I had no previous background in photography. I’ve received grants to travel around-the-world and to make films, not because I have any extraordinary qualifications or contacts, but rather from a careful study and practice of grantsmanship.

Most people misunderstand how philanthropy works. A successful grant blends the mutual needs of the donor with those of the recipient. Many grant applications, however, do not fully appreciate the needs of the foundation to which they are applying. Since grants are given on a competitive basis, it’s essential to understand the nature of the granting agencies to maximize your chances of success.

Funding agencies vary immensely and part of the skill involved in grantsmanship is discerning those differences. There are basically five types of organizations giving film grants:

(1) Federal Endowments —
Funds established by legislation, such as The National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH). The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) is another, separate organization that also gives film grants through their Media Arts Program.

(2) Private Foundations Giving On A National Level —
The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation is an example of one of these giant organizations that gives film grants. Total assets: $636 million. Large foundations of this kind rarely give grants to individuals, but rather to non-profit organizations such as schools or museums.

(3) Private Foundations Giving On A Regional or Special Interest Basis —
These are smaller foundations and generally restrict their giving geographically or to a specific area of interest.

I received a grant to produce The Cave Paintings of The Chumash Indians from a regional foundation, the James Irvine Foundation. This foundation is the legacy of an early California rancher whose vast land holdings skyrocketed in value as it absorbed Los Angeles’ urban sprawl. Total assets: $93 million. The James Irvine Foundation limits its giving to California.

(4) Family Foundations —
These are relatively small funds as foundations go, and one has to dig deeper in a grants library to find these sources. Researching funding sources like these will be covered in part two of this article.

(5) Corporate Funds or Foundations —
There’s money coming out of corporations for film grants, but these are probably the toughest nuts to crack as far as discovering their giving practices.

It’s essential to know which of these types of foundations you’re dealing with to evaluate your chances of success and to best propose your project.

There are basically two ways you can apply for a grant. As an individual or as an organization. Some foundations only accept individual applicants. Many only give to non-profit tax-exempt organizations.

Getting a non-profit organization to sponsor your project is often one of the simpler steps in getting a grant. Provided that you can assure the sponsoring museum, school or other non-profit institution that you will perform your project as proposed, your sponsor will benefit from the relationship in several ways.

Part of your proposed film’s budget should include what are referred to as “indirect costs” in the world of philanthropy. Indirect costs are the administrative costs incurred in doing the bookwork and accounting. The figure is commonly arrived at as a percentage of the project’s total budget, usually ten to thirty percent. So the sponsoring organization gets cash in the hand if your project is funded, and most non-profit organizations are anxious to attract capital.

Your film will bring recognition to the sponsoring organization with good mention in the credits. Each time a non-profit organization receives a grant it usually enhances their chances of getting more funding in the future. So getting an organization to sponsor your project and be the recipient for grant funds is not as difficult as many people first believe.

Locating Funding Sources —
There are over 26,000 private foundations giving non-repayable grant support in the United States, and no single reference book covers this entire field. What’s more, grant programs often change quite quickly, making it essential for the motion picture fund raiser to do a substantial amount of research (1) to locate foundations giving in your particular area of interest; (2) to discover everything you can about any foundation that appears to be a good funding prospect, and (3) to follow current trends in philanthropy.

Following is a list of some of the principle reference materials for researching funding sources for motion picture projects:

(1) How To Get Grants To Make Films — by Steve Penny.
Available from Film Grants Research, P.O. Box 1138, Santa Barbara, CA 93102.
Lists over 125 foundations and grant programs that will give a total of more than $33 million this year for motion picture projects. This guide includes important budget considerations for the filmmaker, including various ways of providing for your own salary in your proposal. It also covers methods of contacting funding organizations and proposing projects with the greatest chances of success.

Lists on a state by state basis U.S. foundations with assets over $1,000,000 and giving grants of $500,000 or more.

A guide to Federal, private, business and professional organizations offering grant support.

Lists information on forty-six of the nation's largest foundations including names and addresses of foundation staff, their background and present activities, and lists of recent grants.


(6) The Foundation News — Bi-monthly periodical published by The Foundation Center.
This bi-monthly magazine provides you with the most current information on the giving practices of the larger foundations. Each year this listing of grants is compiled into the Foundation Grants Index.

Good for its international scope. Lists scholarships and fellowships in the U.S. and abroad.

(8) Foundation Center Source Book — Compiled by the Foundations Center.
Presents comprehensive profiles of two hundred and twenty-seven large foundations.

Comprehensive listing of Federal support eligibility requirements, how to apply, deadlines and legal basis for funds. Published at the beginning of each fiscal year.


(11) State Directories —
Several guides have been compiled listing foundations and grant programs in an individual state. These are useful for locating regional funding sources.

Lists professional awards and fifty-seven schools offering financial support for motion picture study.

(13) Annual Reports and Printed Information From The Funding Sources —

In the next issue of the Newsletter, Penny discusses researching foundations and writing applications for grants in part two of “The Secrets of Funding”.

ANIMATED FILM: AN INTERPRETIVE TOOL FOR MIXTEC PICTORIAL MANUSCRIPT STUDIES

By JOHN Pohl

Presently a second year doctoral student in UCLA’s archaeology program, John Pohl has been working to utilize ancient pictorial manuscripts to better understand the archaeological record left by the Mixtec of Mexico. Trained in film at Hampshire College and California Institute of the Arts, Pohl has been using animation to interpret and illustrate these ancient pictorial systems. He reports here on the making of his latest film, A Sacrifice of 10 Dog and Six House. The film is 9 min. in length, 16mm and in color. It may be purchased from Pohl directly at: 476 Landfair, Los Angeles, CA 90024. Price is available upon inquiry.

The ability of ethnographic films to convey aspects of modern cultural behavior not easily documented in written reports is becoming increasingly recognized. Such films provide dimension to a researcher's interpretations by enabling him to explain his findings while actually showing the process from which his understanding of the behavior is derived. Likewise animated films can be equally valuable for explaining reconstructions of past cultural behavior; in this case the power struggles of an ancient Mexican ruling class.

The source of my data is a body of eight major pictorial manuscripts attributed to the Mixtec Indians of Oaxaca. All of the manuscripts were constructed in the pre-Conquest style: they were made from animal hide which was covered with a gesso-like foundation upon which the characters were painted. They were folded so that they could be either stored compact or opened to reveal all of the pages of one side. Although none of the manuscripts has ever belonged to an archaeological complex (several were transported to Europe shortly after the Conquest) the Spanish chroniclers noted that they were executed for the benefit of lords and commonly hung fully extended on walls.

During the first half of this century scholars laid the foundation for our present research when they recognized the Mixtec were expressing historical and genealogical information about real persons. I learned that the historical narrative was conveyed through the arrangement of scenes on a page in sequential order. For instance, in one scene a lord is shown attacking a place, in the next scene he is shown capturing the enemy, and in the final scene he is shown ritually dispatching that enemy. This is an arrangement of scenes which are understandable as a true narrative of human experience, and I was struck by the similarity by
which such a narrative is conveyed both by an animation storyboard and a Mixtec pictorial. Both depend more on the sequential order of visual material to tell a story than on a spoken narrative. Furthermore, just as the filmmaker limits the range of visual material to coincide with the realm of common experiences shared by his audience, so the ancient manuscript painter limited the portrayal of activities making them understood to others with a kind of visual vocabulary of standard markers.

M. E. Smith's studies of place signs shed light on the manner in which visual terminology was used to stand for both words and concepts in the Mixtec language and culture. Smith (1973) demonstrated that Mixtec place signs are composed of 4 geographical substantive markers (such as town, river, hill) and with added qualifying elements. For example, the Mixtec name for Tilantongo is “Nuu Tooh Huahi Andehui” meaning “black town, house of the sky”. The place sign of Tilantongo is glossed in Spanish on the 16 century Mapa de Teozacalco first studied by Alfonso Caso (1949), and one can see the elements of the name were included in the place sign.

![Image]

huahi (house) andehui (sky)

Nuu (geographical substantive for town) tooh (qualifying element, black)

Place Sign of Tilantongo

The Nuu/town frieze is one of four basic substantives. The qualifying elements can vary considerably, however, as in this case, we have a black frieze surmounted by a building with sky band composed of star eyes.

This principle of symbol construction through the addition of meaningful elements is reflected again with the human figures. The human figure is depicted as a substantive with a pose representing intention. Nancy Troike (1976) has postulated poses for “capture”, “hostility”, “marriage”, “dedicated to going on a sacred mission”, and so forth. Portraiture and individualized characteristics are intentionally limited so there is no obstruction to the meaning of the event or interaction. The figures express meaningful stereotyped positions of the body as a whole, only the costume elements are separable parts. Therefore the costume conveys the context of an event and the posed body expresses the intention of the person involved in the event.

The Mixtec manuscript artists used a non-written form of communication, documenting historical and genealogical events of marriage, alliance, and warfare among their elite class. The posed characters with diagnostic costume elements and place signs were arranged on pages in a reading order. Dividing lines were added to guide the interpreter of the story and year/day dates located the events chronologically. The investigator begins an analysis of a specific activity by isolating an event and making an inventory of all the scenes in which the activity takes place. One can derive a set of conditions common to each scene while often discovering similar events generally precede and follow as well. Having gained a body of general conditions one can then direct a series of questions:

1. Who is involved?
2. What is the activity?
3. How is the activity carried out?
   (what costumes, poses, or ritual objects are employed?)
4. In response to what is the activity being performed?
   (a previous chronological event?)
5. Where is the activity carried out?
   (a temple, palace, etc.)

When one realizes a surprisingly standardized group of symbols were employed, one can begin to make specific conclusions about any activity and begin to understand more of the Mixtec social system in general. A real problem arises when the scholar has to effectively explain his conclusions to colleagues who may be dealing with similar ideas but generated from entirely different data bases. Since this is a visual communication system based on painted characters packed with detail, any adequate written description can become a formidable task. For this reason I became interested in the application of modern forms of visual communication to illustrate key points in manuscript interpretations. I have found that a film which could show both the important details of scenes and relate the narrative sequence through character animation could also ensure a more immediate response from persons unfamiliar with the data. Next I will describe both my own work with Mixtec manuscripts and the making of a short film which illustrated my conclusions.

"The Sacrifice of 10 Dog and 6 Horse"

My research has involved depictions of human sacrifice. Scenes of this activity are important as they often result from power struggles which had been developing previously. I have surmised human sacrifice was a politically motivated activity for the removal of lords from rulership positions. The ritual served as an elaborate ceremony to demonstrate both the passing of a ruler and the change of his political power to another. New dynasties were formed in this way.

Pages 83 and 84 of the Codex Zouche-Nuttal and page 10 of the Codex Becker depict the most elaborate sacrifices in any of the manuscripts. They actually relate the same event in which the great Mixtec lord 8-Deer dispatched his two half-nephews by gladiatorial combat and arrow shooting. The sequence of events prior to and following these sacrifices indicates to the reader that these two half-nephews were executed for political reasons. They obstructed 8-Deer's assurance of founding a new dynasty at Tilantongo by being close relatives of his older half-brother. However, the problem I was faced with was how to effectively demonstrate an interpretation of this narrative derived from a visual complex of markers. The answer was to use the visual complex itself to relay the interpretation. For this reason I designed a film which shows the key scenes from the manuscripts and then, through the use of animation, demonstrates the interpretation by bringing the characters to life.
The sacrifice of 8-Deer’s half-nephew, 6-House, in the Codex Zouche-Nuttall

Construction of the Characters—

The pictorial manuscripts were designed in the Mixteca-Puebla style. As a general Postclassic Mexican development, it was employed on ceramics and sculpture as well. The characters are constructed rigidly and simply, devoid of personal detail in order to communicate response and reaction through gesture. Expression of natural movement and individualism which was so striking in Maya art, against the concept of the Mixteca-Puebla style. For instance, the arms are enlarged to emphasize gesture, while the head and its decoration are purposefully exaggerated in order to emphasize key headaddresses, face painting or expressions. Sometimes the artists even created unnatural poses in order to avoid covering the face with any object or uplifted arm. For this reason I chose to construct my characters as individual puppets with hinged arms, legs, and head (much like Indonesian shadow puppets) so that their movements would be exaggerated as well.

I copied and enlarged the figures from facsimiles of the manuscripts onto tracing paper. I then broke the figure down into component parts. Each part was transferred to light cardboard, then cut out, and the figure was reconstructed from the parts with paper sockets. The movements which the characters made were therefore intentionally limited and express the Mixteca-Puebla style with an effect lacking from the naturalistic movements achieved through cell animation. The actual operation of the characters took place under the camera with two frames being shot for each movement.

The film is composed of three parts. First the viewer is introduced to the subject matter through the use of close-ups of the manuscript facsimiles. Thus the persons involved in the events are introduced and the importance of each scene is outlined. Next the manuscript image of 8-Deer is shown while it dissolves into a similar but animated figure moving to attack the place “Red and White Bundle”. The story which was outlined with the manuscript scenes previously is now acted out by the characters while the narrator points out further details. Finally, the scholar appears to emphasize the significance of the events as ritualized assassinations and to make comparative statements about the Maya and the Aztec.

The film is effective in two ways, for it introduces the nature and historical structure of Mixtec pictorial manuscripts in a novel manner while providing the detailed interpretation of an important political event with actual visual material.

“Visual Interpretations”

I have described above an unusual body of data relating the activities of the Postclassic Mixtec rulers of ancient Oaxaca, Mexico. The information was conveyed through a highly sophisticated visual communication system with a code based on hieroglyphic place signs, human body position and decorative costume elements. Little was left unclear to a native interpreter familiar with the code. Today, however, our decipherment of the various characters is a long process. One must isolate the important activities, compare them with similar scenes, identify the common elements, and then begin to draw conclusions. The problem is that we are breaking down a visual system into a written system in order to effectively communicate our results. When this occurs a substantial body of associated information is lost. Only when the researcher can make his interpretations with the use of the visual material which generated his ideas can arguments be presented most convincingly. For this reason I made a film which first explains the data, Mixtec manuscripts, interprets the data, human sacrifices as a means of ritual assassination, and finally compares the data to other Mesoamerican cultural co-traditions. The film is meant to articulate in visual terms what has been carefully worked out in the written report.

Through this articulation a viewer can be introduced to the subject and the method of inquiry, as well as having some basis from which he can evaluate the hypothesis presented.

The reconstruction of past events in order to interpret culture change through time is an important concept in Mesoamerican research. We are fortunate to be able to study the Mixtec because:

1. Archeological sites associated with place signs in the manuscripts have been identified;
2. Spanish chroniclers recorded the Mixtec culture in detail following the Conquest;
3. The modern Mixtec have preserved much of their pre-Conquest life style. They occupy the same towns, utilize the same fields, and preserve many ancient oral traditions.

The only information we lack is due to the absorption of the ruling class into the Spanish governmental system. However, the effective decipherment and interpretation of this unusual body of pictorial manuscripts can fill this gap. I emphasize here that the best way to fully understand the ancient visual communication system relayed in these manuscripts, is through a modern one: film.

BIBLIOGRAPHY—


IN PRAISE OF A NON-INDIAN MADE AMERICAN INDIAN FILM

By VINE DELORIA, JR.

While we do not wish the Newsletter to directly compete with the American Anthropologist for audio-visual reviews, occasionally specific reviews need to be printed in the Newsletter. We feel this to be particularly the case when a member of the group that is the subject of the film has something to say about it.

This need is clear in the case with Colorado filmmaker Jerry Aronson’s latest documentary on urban American Indians, The Divided Trail. Vine Deloria, Jr., an American Indian lawyer, writer of numerous books, lecturer and professor of political science at the University of Arizona has often looked critically at anthropologists who study Indians (Custer Died For Your Sins). He has been strongly affected by Aronson’s film and wishes to state his views here. We feel that Deloria’s comments echo those of many other American Indians. Marlon Brando, also long interested in the plight of Native Americans, has lent his support to aid the filmmaker in placing this independent documentary on national television. The Divided Trail is available for rental or purchase from Phoenix Films, 470 Park Ave. S., New York, NY 10016 (212) 684-5910. Rental $42.50, purchase $425.

American Indians spend most of their lives within the context of communities that have existed for many centuries. While some of the outward patterns of adjustment may have changed, the basic substance of Indian life and the tribal attitude toward reality have not materially changed. Yet non-Indian observers, be they scholars measuring outdoor ovens or youths in search of medicine men and ancient wisdom, enter the Indian community, spend precious few moments, and depart content in the knowledge that they have plumbed the depths of mysteries of Indian existence.

Daniel Boorstein once wrote in The Image that much of what we experience in modern life is a “pseudo” reality in that it has been constructed specifically for our entertainment, information and participation and were it not reported as important, would not be so regarded by us. Non-Indian participation in Indian affairs has much the same flavor and the radically differing perceptions of Indian life which emanate from the pens and mouths of non-Indians only testify to that portion of Indian experience which the non-Indian jointly shared and which, by most standards of measurement, the non-Indian misunderstood or badly interpreted.

The Divided Trail, a documentary film by a filmmaker named Jerry Aronson, clearly falls outside the voyeurism of traditional non-Indian accounts of Indian life. Aronson began this film on the chance happenstance of being present at one of the first Indian activist protests conducted in Chicago by a discontented group of urban Indians. Instead of immediately transforming his film footage into a symbolic “message” film on urban Indian protests, Aronson became interested in the continuing growth and experiences of urban Indians and the problems which they confronted at various stages in their stay in the cities.

Over a period of eight years Aronson returned again and again to record the experiences, attitudes, beliefs, and emo-

BETTY CHOSA JACK IN SCENE FROM "THE DIVIDED TRAIL"
Both scholars and filmmakers would do well to study Aronson’s technique carefully, to listen to his struggle to maintain a continuing relationship with his major characters and to understand his complete honesty in accepting changes which they are experiencing rather than to attempt to make them perform as actors in a larger symbolic universe of images and messages. By allowing the camera to become a participant in the period of life covered by the film and by becoming himself a fellow-actor through participation in the lives and emotions of his people, Aronson moves documentary movies to a new level of sophistication.

Every year various agencies, public and private, plan and scheme for ways to communicate the “real message” of the Indian-white relationship through the medium of film and recordings. For the most part they simply transfer their own stereotypes and preconceptions to the working medium and create endlessly dreary and inaccurate rehearsals of what they wish Indians were like. Film archives are loaded with half-finished films which collapsed of their own tediousness and while some excellent material exists in these archives, most of the material will never see an audience because it is burdened with the fantasy of the filmmaker rather than inculcated with the reality of Indian existence.

Perhaps the best analysis of The Divided Trail that could be made is that it strips away our presuppositions of how romantic and/or oppressed Indians are in favor of the stark reality of human choices in an increasingly confused world. In moving away from the traditional images and concepts and using the camera as an actor in a living drama, Aronson produces the first truly great film on urban Indians. The images are identical with traditional stereotyping insofar as they show poor and confused Indians performing a variety of acts. But insofar as the film itself perpetuates any stereotypes or misuses its imagery, the charge cannot be sustained, for we see human beings with a discernible tradition who have to make difficult choices in the face of overwhelming odds and circumstances. The characters do choose and they do not succeed in their goals but they do survive and survival is the fundamental reality of contemporary Indian existence.

Special Report . . .

“The Telco Report” Weekly Listings, Information On Films Of Interest To Anthropologists

Distributed to broadcasters, producers, and educational institutions in over 26 countries, “The Telco Report” selectively lists condensed information on documentary films and projects going on around the world. The report covers seven categories: art, science, children’s programs, religion, sports, features and current affairs. A separate section of the report entitled “Intelligence and Forward Projects” alerts readers to trade developments and productions in the planning or production stage, facilitating co-productions.

Each week’s mimeo report contains from 75-90 listings, and by the end of the month the subscriber is faced with a veritable stack of information. Our perusal of one month’s reports revealed 93 listings of specific interest to anthropologists — entries we had no idea even existed! Listings come from all over the world, and many are on films about ethnic groups or cultural phenomena in our own country done by non-Americans. The report is presently running an extensive 5-part series on North American Indians

The report also offers the services of a Central Index, covering entries since April 1969, which is available to subscribers free if little work is involved, or on a fee-paying basis is extensive research is required.

The Telco Report is sold by annual subscription only, prices varying according to the type of subscriber. A small film producer or organization pays considerably less than a large distributor or broadcaster. If you send them some details of your organization’s activities, they will be glad to quote you a fee.

Whether you subscribe or not, films may be listed in the report free of charge. If you have produced or are distributing films of international interest they will be glad to consider your listing. They need title, length, if in color or black and white, and a short list detailing what the film actually shows, copyright and distribution arrangements, etc. Interested clients contact the broadcaster, producer or distributor directly. The Telco Report does not handle films, only information about them, and they do not take commission on sales.

For more information and/or a month’s free copies of The Telco Report, you should write directly to the publisher:
Richard S. Clark (Telco) Ltd.
D. M. Davies (Mrs.), Company Secretary
19 Gurnells Road Sheer Green, Beaconsfield
Bucks. HP9 2XJ. U.K.

The following specific excerpts are examples of some of the anthropological listings in the report:

X7838d “MAN” SERIES NAV Productions, 6-27-27 Shinjuku-Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo 160 have available six English version episodes of the “Man” series No. 2 (See 783430) and currently being readied for September release are a film on the “Peyote Expedition” in Mexico, “The Nubas in Sudanese Back Country,” “Tuarags—Heroes of the Sahara Desert,” and “Bamboo Raft Expedition in the Black Current,” (following a journey from Luzon in the Philippines to Kyushu in Japan, proving that yams, taros and other agricultural products were brought to Japan in ancient times by way of the current).

784039 VOLUNTEERS IN AMERICA—45 minutes—Color “My Life Must Have a Purpose.” (Mein Leben soll einen Sinn haben). A film on voluntary help in America by Herman Renner. In Boston Mel Pel spends his spare time looking after visitors from all over the world, being one of 800 volunteers working for the Centre for International Visitors. Peggy Goldsby joins numerous colored Oklahomans who do voluntary work for their fellow citizens. In the suburbs of Shelby and Utica, north of Detroit, a recycling centre has been created by Marietta Crabtree which . . . . . . . . . . 8-8 Oct. 78 Bavarian TV. D-Telepool, Sonnenstrasse 21, 8 Munich 15.
News from the Northeast . . .

MARGARET MEAD FILM FESTIVAL — An Untimely Farewell and Tribute to a Beloved Leader

By EMILIE DE BRIGARD

Conceived in 1977 to honor Dr. Mead’s 75th birthday and her more than 50 years at the American Museum of Natural History in New York, the Margaret Mead Film Festival became, in 1978, a sad farewell to the leader of visual anthropology. This year’s Festival, which featured the work of Argentine filmmaker Jorge Preloran and included 135 other films from all parts of the globe, was Dr. Mead’s last public appearance. Though frail, she spoke forcefully about the teaching of visual anthropology, the nature of film actuality and propaganda, and her own experiences filming with Gregory Bateson in Bali over forty years ago. Even after she entered the hospital, she continued to work, and at her death. on November 15, she left behind many projects for others to carry forward. In her words, “the best possible work has not yet been done.”

Both in 1977 and 1978, the Festival was programmed in two parts: as an in-depth retrospective of the work of a single ethnographic filmmaker, and a broad-ranging sample of the dazzling variety of films of mankind on the move. Last year’s featured filmmaker, Jean Rouch, was not able to return, but he was represented by his cinéma-vérité “friend portrait” of Dr. Mead, filmed after the 1977 Festival and completed for the benefit of the Museum. The film, Margaret Mead: A Portrait By A Friend, has already been shown theatrically in New York, as well as in California and Europe, and, in an abridged form, on network television.

Jorge Preloran, who has made more than 40 films in his native Argentina, screened five of them during the subscription series at the Festival, including his most celebrated film, Imaginero, and his most recent, Zerda’s Children. This new film, about an illiterate woodcutter and his ten children, is so desperately grim that it is hard to believe that it was made by the same filmmaker who made the playful Chucalezna, about village children who paint. Yet whether embattled or tender, Preloran is “incapable of taking a bad picture” (Mead), and all of his films bear the marks of his individuality.

The 135 films which were shown continuously throughout the Museum to an audience of 15,000 during the weekend of September 16 and 17 ranged in time and place from Flaherty’s 1926 Moana Of The South Seas to a 1978 film by Mead’s students at Columbia, Puerto Rican Espiritismo In The South Bronx. In addition to special-interest programs such as archeology and children’s films, the programming emphasized three main themes, each related to an observational scale. The first, “Ceremonies and Celebrations”, dealt with collective behavior (La Tirana, NI/Um Tchai); the second, “Looking at Families”, with interactions between kin (An Afghan Family, Microcultural Incidents In Ten Zoos); and the third, “Personalities”, with the individual (The Sucking Doctor, Didikawa and Friends).

The selections included films produced by Mead, such as Trance And Dance In Bali, Bathing Babies In Three Cultures, and Four Families, and others by colleagues which she had used for many years in her courses: Dead Birds, ‘Oss Oss, Woe ‘Oss, The Feast, Intrepid Shadows, Broken Treaty At Battle Mountain, Holy Ghost People, and Nana, Mom And Me. Some of her favorites had to be omitted: Maya Deren’s At Land, an animated version of Rikki Tikki Tavi, and John Grierson’s send-up of Nazi propaganda films which showed Hitler dancing. Many themes remain to be explored in the incomparable, though incomplete, resource of nearly a century of world film, with its comparisons, contradictions, fleeting events, and continuities. Many more films remain to be made of vanishing and changing ways of life, of subtle interactions and complex events, so that the whole range of human behavior can be preserved for repeated study.

A complete listing of the films and distributors participating in the Margaret Mead Film Festival may be obtained from the Department of Education, American Museum of Natural History, Central Park West at 79th Street, New York, NY 10024.

Announcements Expected For Release of New PBS “Odyssey” Television Film Series

No formal announcement has been made or as yet cleared with the National Endowment for the Humanities, but it is expected soon for a new television series, Odyssey, which will begin on PBS next year. Thirteen film documentaries examining life and culture of present and past peoples will be broadcast beginning March 1980 with an additional 13 planned for Spring 1981.

The individual programs, dealing with archaeology and ethnography, will be a collection of films from several sources. About a third will be provided by a production staff based in Boston. Several will be the result of collaborative efforts with ethnographic filmmakers in the U.S. and abroad. Others will be co-productions with units in the BBC, ATV and Anglia Television in England which make the well-known Chronicle and Disappearing World series. The rest will be purchased from the world-wide stock of completed films.

Odyssey has been developed for Public Broadcasting Associates of Boston, Mass. by Michael Ambrosino, the creator and former Executive Producer of NOVA. The project is funded in major part by the National Endowment for the Humanities with additional funds from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and Polaroid Corp.
NEW JOHN MARSHALL D.E.R. FILMS TO STUDY CHANGES AMONG SOUTH AFRICA BUSHMEN

By SANFORD LOW

In the last issue of the Newsletter (Vol. 7, No. 1) Sue Marshall-Cabezas briefly described in her DER update article (pp. 8-9), John Marshall’s latest film project among the !Kung Bushmen. With Marshall’s subsequent return to Boston, Asst. Editor Sanford Low met with him this past November and describes here in greater depth the nature of Marshall’s latest work in South Africa.

Early in May of this year, DER’s John Marshall, anthropologist Patricia Draper, cameraman Mark Erder and soundwoman Adrienne Linden arrived in South Africa to begin filming with the !Kung people at Tshum!Kwe settlement. These were the same people that John Marshall and his family worked with during the years 1950, 1951, 1952-53, 1955 and 1957-58. Since 1958, John had tried to return to Tshum!Kwe but has each year been denied permission by the South African government. After completing work on his newest film, If It Fits, John decided he had to return — with or without permission: “I decided that this was my last chance, I was going back if I had to walk!” Due to his persistence and intercession by Philip Tobias with South African authorities, John was finally given a two-week permit to film in Tshum!Kwe. Another three-week permit followed, after which Mark and Adrienne had to return to the United States. A replacement crew consisting of Ross McGilvree (camera), Anne Fischel (sound), and Stan Levin (assistant camera) was quickly assembled and flown in for another six weeks of shooting.

John’s major concern was in filming the change that had taken place in bushman life since the implementation in 1960 of a permanent settlement program by the government for the once nomadic !Kung. “What we went to do was to try and ‘catch up’ in film on as many aspects as we could of Ju/oasi life, basing it as much as we could on people we’d known in the fifties. We were looking for extensive coverage of these changes, and material for a film on N!Ai and Gunda, her husband, so we did in-depth interviews with them and followed them around a lot.”

John found over 800 Ju/oasi living in Tshum!Kwe. The new settlement consisted of a complex array of infrastructure roads, fences, schools, administrative buildings, a store and clinic. “After being away for twenty years, I was naturally a little nervous about coming back,” John said, “but when I got out of the car in Tshum!Kwe, one of the first people I met was a guy named Black Bow, so I said: ‘Bow, how are you? Is your family all right? Long time, no see!’ He just looked at me and said, ‘You’ve aged! You’re fat! Look at your big belly! Look at your grey hair! God, you have a heavy tongue!’ And so I thought, ‘I’m home!’ It was just as though I hadn’t left!”

During the six months that John was in South Africa, a total of 136,000 feet of color negative film was shot. Using his now well-known concept of “event” or “sequence” filming, much of the footage focused on spontaneous occurrences at Tshum!Kwe which were filmed with long takes. One of these was a fight involving a rumored case of infidelity. “N!Ai was involved in a big fight,” John said. “It started off at 10 A.M. and ended at 10:30 at night. We filmed that flat out all day and then I asked people a few days later what the fight had been about and we filmed that. Ostensibly the fight was about an accusation of infidelity against N!Ai’s married daughter and a guy who was working for us, an Ovambo guy. She was accused by another woman in the settlement. There is absolutely no evidence of that! The interviews showed that the real reason for the fight was that we’d been paying N!Ai and some other people for their work with us. In the old days, my mother (Lorna Marshall) would go through a week of torment making gift packages for everybody which was then the proper way to do it. The egalitarian, sharing economy demanded it. But nowadays, and this is one of the profound changes, there is an increasing realization that with the many people around you can’t distribute wealth the same way you did before, you would just get overwhelmed! People said the real reason for the argument was jealousy over favoritism, we were favoring N!Ai and Gunda. This was the primary cause of jealousy in the old days and it still is today. But because there are so many people you can’t conduct your economic life the way you did 20 years ago and so the tensions build up and they are made worse by the fact that these people are drinking now. The woman who made the accusation was very sorry about it later. She said, ‘All I saw was the man giving the young woman some candy at the store, but I was bitter, I was angry, I was just shooting my mouth off!’ We conducted all of those interviews on camera and that particular event, that argument, will be one of the films.”

The major film which will be produced will tell the story of N!Ai and the changes that she has seen over the thirty years that she and John have worked together. Some of the other films planned will focus on different arguments and conflicts in the settlement; a discussion of the proper way to treat an ill child during which fame Kxao, the child’s grandfather, has to be convinced to allow him to go to the clinic; the marketing of bows and arrows and other traditional !Kung artifacts; and other changes experienced by the many !Kung people who have become familiar to us through John’s earlier films. This opportunity to follow specific people through a twenty-eight year time span will be a unique feature of these new DER films.

Canada Discovers “Reel Chillers”

Lest we forget that film has been around for but a short time . . . The Canadian Film Institute reports that more than 500 reels of 35mm nitrate film were discovered by an excavating crew last summer in Canada’s Yukon territory. The films, refrigerated and partially preserved by the covering layer of permafrost, were discovered in Dawson City, a gold rush town which was the last stop on the film distribution route during the silent film era. Among the films which have been tentatively identified are features from the teens such as Wild Fire with Lillian Russell and Lionel Barrymore; Polly of the Circus with Mae Marsh and others, as well as four serials which had been believed to be lost, and also newsreels of World War I.
Upcoming...

"Anthropology Through Films" Lecture Series At American Museum of Natural History

At the American Museum of Natural History, an evening lecture series entitled “Anthropology Through Films” will be held eight Thursdays from 7-9 p.m. beginning Feb. 15.

Dr. Malcolm Arth, Curator at the Museum, has selected a provocative group of films by anthropologists and filmmakers which provide insight into culture and human behavior. In addition to his introductions and commentaries, Dr. Arth presents several special guests: anthropologists Asen Balikci and Colin Turnbull; filmmakers E. J. Vaughn and John F. Schott; Jill Godmilow and Mitchell W. Block. Fee for the series is $50.

Feb. 22 — WORD IS OUT (color, 105 minutes), 1977, by Mariposa Film Group; Peter Adair, Producer. An exploration of homosexuality in American culture through sensitive interviews with 26 men and women who are homosexual. Special guests: Members of Mariposa Film Group.
March 1 — AN AFGHAN FAMILY (color, approx. 60 minutes), 1978, by Asen Balikci and David Newman. This study of a wealthy Pashtun family of northwest Pakistan is Dr. Balikci’s first major creation since his acclaimed series on the Netsilik Eskimos.
Special guest: Asen Balikci.
March 8 — THE POPOVICH BROTHERS OF SOUTH CHICAGO (color, 60 minutes), 1978, by Jill Godmilow in collaboration with Ethel Raim and Martin Koenig of the Balkan Arts Center.
A moving portrayal of a Serbian-American family and the central role of music in their culture. Special guest: Jill Godmilow.
March 15 — AU BOUT DE MON AGE (At the End of My Days) (color, 86 minutes), 1975, by Georges Dufaux. An unsentimental yet touching documentary of a crucial year in the lives of an elderly Montreal couple (French with English sub-titles).
March 22 — MOUNTAIN PEOPLE: THE IK OF UGANDA, by Colin Turnbull, formerly a curator at the Museum. Turnbull stimulated intense discussions among both scientists and laymen with publication of his research on the Ik in 1977. His book, The Mountain People, was dramatized in a theatrical tour de force directed by Peter Brook. Dr. Turnbull shows rare film footage of the Ik and discusses implications of their experience for all cultures. Special guest: Colin Turnbull.
March 29 — SPEEDING?? (color, 21 minutes), 1978, a film by Mitchell W. Block and Alec Hirshfield. This unusual film explores the attitudes of some Americans toward the law and law enforcement while at the same time raising important questions about filmmaking. Special guest: Mitchell W. Block, who also created the award-winning “No Lies,” will also show and discuss another of his works now in progress.

For further information, write the Department of Education, American Museum of Natural History, Central Park West at 79th St., New York, NY 10024.

Conference At Temple University Focuses On Culture and Communication

The Third Conference on Culture and Communication will meet at Temple University, March 22, 23, and 24. Sessions will be held at the University’s Center City Campus. The focus of this 1979 meeting will be mass communication and its relationship to social systems and structures. Both individual papers and organized symposia relating to the five theme below were proposed:

1. Cross-Cultural Media Communication: reassessing the role of media in developing nations; bringing the image of one nation to other nations; the role of the media in the recent Mid-East peace initiative and other intercultural political issues; decision making in public television (the British Connection); news presentation styles in different countries; the role of international news agencies in news flow; advertising trends and commercialism.

2. The Media and Interpersonal Interaction: the socialization function of the media; the shaping of worldview and ideologies through media images; language, literacy and mass communication; the notion of a “mass folklore”; use of the media by special groups and sub-cultures.

3. Technology and Society: technology as a “content-shaper” vs. a means of distribution; access as the limit of technology; the non-mass or personal media (e.g., CB, telephone); cable and interactive TV; television’s first war, or assessing the impact of a decade of Vietnam TV coverage; studying the introduction of technology; separating television from video; the role of feature film in the shadow of television.

4. Media Content, Industry and Institutions: how media are portrayed in fiction and documentaries; the function of public television; religion and broadcast evangelism; political image management; “entertaining” the masses; radio in 1978; message dramas on television.

5. Theory, Teaching and Research: the search for viable communication theories and models; mass communication, popular culture and traditional social science; teaching approaches to media anthropology/sociology; the “nostalgia ethic” as a major theme in communications; policy push and policy pull research.

Deadline for abstracts and papers was December 20, 1978. Inquiries may be directed to Dr. Richard Chalfen, Dept. of Anthropology, Temple University, Philadelphia, PA 19122, (215) 787-7616 or 7775, and Dr. Dr. Christopher Sterling, 329 Columbia Avenue, Lansdale, PA 19446 (215) 855-7778, or Dr. Sari Thomas, Dept. of Radio-TV-Film, Temple University, (215) 787-5005 or 8424.
News from the Southwest ...

SAVICOM Welcomes Ron Light to Newsletter As Southwest Regional Editor

Ron Light has just joined the Newsletter as Regional Editor of the Southwest. He has served as Media Coordinator for a Navajo bilingual education program in Ramah, New Mexico and as Media Specialist for the Center for Anthropological Studies and is currently the director of a native language multi-media training program for the Navajo Area School Board Association. He is the author of “The Role of Media in Ramah Navajo Society”, which was published in Audiovisual Instruction last December, and has been a member of SAVICOM almost since its inception. As new regional editor he has said, “I hope that this column will not only serve to communicate events of national interest, but that it will be used to facilitate communication among the readers residing or working within the region itself.” The staff welcomes him to his new position on the SAVICOM Newsletter. Send material to him at address listed on page 2.

USC CENTER FOR VISUAL ANTHROPOLOGY STARTS CERTIFICATE PROGRAM IN SPRING 1979

By DEBORAH BASS

The University of Southern California’s Center for Visual Anthropology has announced the start of a new certificate program in Visual Anthropology beginning this 1979 Spring semester. The Center is offering the certificate in cooperation with the departments of Anthropology, Broadcast Journalism and Cinema/T.V. Students who wish to emphasize visual anthropology will generally major in Broadcast Journalism and/or Anthropology, and, in addition to completing the required course work for the Bachelor of Arts degree, will take twelve special courses relating to visual anthropology in Anthropology, Journalism and Cinema/T.V. The new multi-disciplinary program offers specific seminars which include faculty members from all three departments to aid students in effectively integrating the information they learn in various courses. This faculty includes members who have won Emmies, Academy Awards and who are actively involved in the area of commercial documentary production.

The new program reaches into the field as well as the classroom, giving students the opportunity to actually use their knowledge and to gain practical training in the urban environment surrounding the USC campus. This area is rich in cultural diversity and students can work with many different groups and subcultures without lengthy travel. In addition to a Los Angeles field school, the program will offer summer field schools overseas, the first of which will begin this summer in Indonesia. To prepare for such overseas field schools, students will be able to enroll in special courses that will give them an overview of the culture and basic training in the language area. In this way individual research can begin in advance and the actual summer course can focus on the creative process of filmmaking.

Students in the Visual Anthropology program have the opportunity to team with students in other disciplines who may have special skills necessary for particular film productions. In this manner, students learn from each other as well as from faculty advisors. It is a program that gives them the flexibility to pursue their own individual strengths and interests in addition to receiving a basic introduction to all facets of ethnographic film production.

Each department in the certificate program contributes something unique to the educational experience of the students. For example, the department of anthropology provides the overall conceptual and theoretical framework for methodology and fieldwork methods. Students start the program with an exploration of culture through film, which illustrates how anthropological concepts can be used in framing a documentary film and adding depth and meaning. The School of Broadcast Journalism is involved with the development of ideas, ideas that can make good documentaries. Classes in this department emphasize teaching students to do solid investigative reporting, stylistically and interestingly. In the Television Documentary Production class students research and write a finished script for a half hour documentary, a class from which many students have had their products produced and aired for television. In Cinema/T.V., students start out with the basics of filmmaking, learning the technical and aesthetic skills of production. In the last semester of their senior year, students actually make the half hour documentary that they have researched and written, showing the cumulative efforts of their training in the certificate program.

Internships are often available with commercial and public television, and independent film companies. The Center for Visual Anthropology provides for student use a complete sound-sync super 8 film laboratory with complete editing facilities. Also available are video transfer and convergence video editing in both half inch and three-quarter inch. 16mm equipment and editing is also available.

For further information, please contact Deborah Bass, Assistant Director, Center for Visual Anthropology of the Anthropology Department, University of Southern California, University Park, Los Angeles, CA 90007, or call (213) 741-7100.

New Mexico Wheelwright Museum Features Film On Navajo and Pueblo Silversmiths

At the Wheelwright Museum (formerly the Museum of Navajo Ceremonial Art) in Santa Fe, New Mexico, John Adair will be showing his recently archived film, The Navajo and Pueblo Silversmiths which he shot in 1938 on the Navajo reservation in Pine Springs, Arizona. Adair is currently on leave from San Francisco State University to pursue field research for a new book to supplant his 1944 publication of the same title, The Navajo and Pueblo Silversmiths. The screening date has not yet been set but will probably occur during the month of April, 1979. Information will be available from the Wheelwright Museum, 704 Camino Lejo, Santa Fe, NM 87501 (505) 982-4636.
VIDETHOS: Cross-Cultural Video By Artists Featured At California’s Long Beach Museum of Art

An anthology of artists’ videotapes exploring a variety of traditional non-western societies entitled “Videthos: Cross-cultural Video by Artists” will open at the Long Beach Museum of Art Sunday, February 4 and will be on view through March 11, 1979. The program, featuring works by Juan Downey, Joan Logue, Tony Ramos, Ira Schneider, Edin Velez and Bill Viola, was organized by Eric Michaels, anthropologist at Temple University, Philadelphia, for presentation at the American Anthropological Association’s annual meetings in Los Angeles, November 1978.

Michaels, who is interested in modes of communication, feels the artists’ videotapes selected for this anthology are more satisfying as visual solutions to cross-cultural media than most ethnographic film that is offered for anthropological scrutiny. They avoid the usual documentary style distances and present an intimate view of the society, often collaborating with the subjects. Michael’s intent is to provide a context in which these works can be understood in relation to each other, rather than lost in the comparison to already defined conventions for video and TV.

In the anthology, Juan Downey explores the Yanomami Indians, whom he lived with in Venezuela. Joan Logue’s footage of Nigerian women of Africa, Edin Velez’s view of the Cuna Indians of San Blas, and Bill Viola’s impressions of the Moro Movement on the island of Guadalcanal, Solomon Islands, create a viewing experience similar to being there. Ira Schneider’s excerpts from Time Zones and Tony Ramos’, Nor Was This All By Any Means brings the past and present together in a temporal space.

The exhibition will be open to the public, Wednesday through Sunday, 12:00 noon to 5:00 p.m. There is no admission charge. A catalogue of the exhibition will be available. For information, telephone the Long Beach Museum of Art: (213) 439-2119.

African Studies Association 1979 Meetings In Los Angeles Feature “Africa and the Media” Theme

The 1979 meetings of the African Studies Association will be held at the Los Angeles Hilton from October 31 to November 3. The theme of the conference is “Africa and the Media: Changing Aspects of Communication.” Media productions including ethnographic, documentary and research films and videotapes are sought for the media panels and evening screenings. If you have such materials on Africa and/or AfroAmerica, please contact Dr. Bennetta Jules-Rosette, Program Director, Dept. of Sociology, UCSD, La Jolla, California 92093.

Original photographic essays on African topics are also sought for display at the conference. Contact the Program Director about arrangements for display of your materials. Panels on media research in Africa are also welcome. The deadline for submission of panel proposals and media products is April 1, 1979.

News from the Southeast . . .

Projections of the South: A Symposium on Film and Regional Ethnography on Film and Videotape

On Sept. 27 and 29, 1979 at the University of South Carolina at Columbia, a small three-day symposium/workshop on film/video and regional ethnography will take place. The first symposium, in Sept. 1977, brought together filmmakers, anthropologists, and folklorists who have been working in the South. As in the 1977 symposium, this year films will be shown and discussions will focus on improving these films by integrating the insights of ethnological and folklorist scholarship. Deadline for submissions is August 15, 1979. Please contact Karl G. Heider, Department of Anthropology, University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC 29208.

News from the Midwest . . .

PORTABLE VIDEO PROVEN SUCCESSFUL IN UNDERWATER ARCHAEOLOGY PROGRAM

By ALAN MAY

The University of Missouri-Columbia’s American Archaeology Division and the National Park Service’s National Inundation Study, have been studying the effects of inundation on archaeological resources. Seeking to document their fieldwork and the conditions under which it was conducted, they have used underwater recording to great advantage in two archaeological projects in Missouri and Arkansas.

The program’s initial test of the usefulness of using video underwater took place in Table Rock Reservoir, Missouri. Here, where they were testing several hypotheses concerning inundation, videotape was used to: (1) serve as a permanent record of site testing, (2) provide pictures of destructive mussel activity, (3) complement and enhance on-site notes, and (4) detect features that were not obvious to the archaeologist when the area was initially examined.

In Arkansas, videotaping was used to facilitate the program’s investigation of the U.S.S. Queen City, a Civil War tinclad which was sunk in June 1864, in the White River. With an underwater visibility of less than one foot, the video camera greatly enhanced visual resolution and clarity. Through the use of a topside monitor and diver-to-surface communication, specific areas of the site were visually documented. A careful analysis of the tapes produced increased detail that was beneficial both to the laboratory analysis and the writing of the final report.

Not only has video aided the research of the underwater archaeologist, but it has also benefited other archaeologists interested in examining and evaluating the actual conditions under which research was conducted.
INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF FILMS ON MAN HOSTS YANOMAMO SEMINAR IN PARIS

By EMILIE DE BRIGARD

From time to time since the beginning of ethnographic filming, certain peoples have exerted a powerful fascination which has led them to be filmed in various ways by many different observers. The Balinese are one of these peoples; The Yanomamo Indians of the Brazilian-Venezuelan border are another.

The existence of numerous film documents prompted Jean Rouche, Secretary-General of the International Committee of Films on Man, to organize a seminar for the comparative study of films made about the Yanomamo by filmmakers from different countries and with different backgrounds. In inviting filmmakers from North America, Venezuela, France, Yugoslavia and Japan, he took as a text Vertov’s 1923 pronouncement: “I am the cine-eye, I am the mechanical eye; I am the machine that will show you the world . . . But it is not sufficient to present fragments of reality on the screen to represent life by its crumbs. These fragments must be elaborated upon so as to make an integrated whole which is, in turn, the thematic reality.”

The following films were shown to the more than 100 participants who met for three days at the French Centre National de La Recherche Scientifique in Paris:

- Climbing The Peach Tree (9 min.), Tug Of War (9 min.), The Feast (30 min.), Ocamo Is My Town (23 min.), The New Tribes Mission (11 min.), A Man Called Bee (40 min.), and The Ax Fight (30 min.), by Timothy Asch and Napoleon Chagnon. Asch, the filmmaker and anthropologist who has just finished filming in Indonesia, came to the conference from the Research School of Pacific Studies at the Australian National University in Canberra. Also attending was his collaborator on the 39 Yanomamo films, Napoleon Chagnon, Professor of Anthropology at the Pennsylvania State University.

- Invitation Chez Les Yanomamo (30 min.) by Claude Bourquelet, a French photographer who visited the Yanomamo in 1969. His film describes the meeting of two groups of Indians.

- The Singing Mute (25 min.) and The Abandoned Shabono (26 min.) by Juan Downey, a Chilean architect and artist living in New York who spent 8 months with the Yanomamo in 1976-77, collecting over 40 hours of videotapes made by himself and by the Yanomamo.

- Suivez-Nous Chez Les Yanomami (30 min.) by Francois Floquet, a Canadian producer who has made a series about Canadians living abroad in unusual or difficult conditions. This film is about two Protestant missionaries who live with their three children among the Yanomamo, and is intended for young audiences.

- Chez Les Yanomami (75 min.) by Raul Held, a Venezuelan filmmaker originally from Switzerland who made this 35-millimeter film in 1976-77.

- Unedited footage (60 min.) by Jean Liedloff, an independent British producer originally from the United States, who made 5 expeditions to Amazonia in the 1950’s and 1960’s and spent a total of 2½ years among the Sanema and Yequana.

- Les Indiens Yanomami (75 min.), by J. P. Marchand for French television, made with the collaboration of anthropologist Jacques Lizot, a pupil of Levi-Strauss who has been studying the Yanomamo since 1968.

- War And Peace Among The Yanomamo (50 min.) by Toyotomi, a Japanese director who has worked for a number of years at Nippon A-V, and who spent 6 months with his team in Amazonia in 1974-75. His film is intended for general television audiences.

- In The Yanomamo Shabono (30 min.) and A World Without Greed (30 min.), from the “Tropical Rainforest” series by Andre Zupanic, a Yugoslavian professor of pathophysiology who made his films for Ljubljana television under the UNESCO program on Man and the Biosphere.

The proceedings, which included spirited debate, were videotaped by an American team led by Ann McIntosh. President of the conference was G. H. Riviere, and the moderators were Enrico Fulchignoni and John Middleton. The event culminated in a whirlwind tour, conducted by Jean Rouche, of Henri Longlois’ famed Musée du Cinema in the Palais de Chaillot.

CANBERRA’S FIRST ETHNOGRAPHIC FILM CONFERENCE FOCUSES ON ABORIGINES

By KATHLEEN PRICE

The 1978 Canberra Ethnographic Film Conference focused upon both the aesthetics of contemporary ethnographic filmmaking, and the effects on and involvement of Aborigines in Australian ethnographic documentaries. In the following two-part article, each of these facets of the Conference are described. The first part recalls the proceedings and the results of the Conference based on the report in the “Canberra Newsletter”, New Series, No. 10, June, 1978. The second part is based on a review by Roger Sandall in the quarterly film magazine “Sight and Sound” which discusses the successes and failures of the form and content of the films shown at the Conference.

The 1978 Ethnographic Film Conference at Canberra, Australia was held May 12-19 and was sponsored by the Biennial General Meeting of the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies, with additional funding by the Australian Film Commission, Film Australia and the National Library. A large number of Aboriginal participants attended, as well as delegates from Great Britain, the United States, Japan, New Zealand, and the Solomon Islands. The proceedings included screenings of recent ethnographic films and discussions on such subjects as the relationship of style and meaning in ethnographic films, ethnographic films and educational curricula, the influence of professionals and shifts towards the narrative, ethnographic film on Australian television, and ethical, political, and economic issues involved in people of one culture filming another. Also forming an important part of the conference was a retrospective review of ethnographic filmmaking in Australia from 1898-1966, a session devoted to Robert Flaherty and a final meeting in which the feelings and sentiments of the Aboriginal people about ethnographic filmmaking were recorded in the form of resolutions.

The resolutions were founded on the concept that film
and videotape have the power to create and affirm cultural strength and integrity and that the Aboriginal peoples have been excluded from access to this power. The committee, chaired by Marcia Langton, resolved to create organizations such as the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies to train Aboriginal people at filmmakers and to produce and distribute films with special attention to the economic, cultural, political and moral needs of the Aboriginal peoples. Furthermore, the committee established a Task Force comprised of one tribal Aboriginal person, one urban Aboriginal person, one educator, one filmmaker and one chairperson from the participants at the conference, to oversee all funds allocated for Aboriginal projects and to draw up a Code of Ethics for filmmakers in Australia. The committee declared it crucial that the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies Council insure that all filmmakers be required to meet the conditions of the Code before being allowed to make films about Aboriginals, and that the outcome of all projects involving Aboriginal peoples be of benefit and contribution to contemporary Aboriginal society.

The Conference at Canberra was the first such meeting on the subject to be held in Australia since the UNESCO Round Table on Ethnographic Film held in Sydney in 1966. Eighteen papers were presented or circulated at the conference and a volume of selected papers and proceedings is being planned for publication.

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The Canberra conference was reviewed in the Autumn 1978 issue of the British Film Institute’s quarterly magazine, “Sight and Sound”. The article, written by Roger Sandall, discussed the generally observational technique of documentaries screened at the festival. Sandall criticized the filmmakers for emphasizing “open” scientific criteria to the point of failing to consider presentational forms for the audience. He compared these supposed documentaries to research films, which lack either a dramatic or narrative structure to capture the underlying meanings and moods of the subjects.

Sandall briefly discussed a paper submitted at the conference by Jay Ruby, organizer of the annual Philadelphia Conference on Visual Anthropology, entitled “Exposing Yourself: Reflexivity, Anthropology and Film”. In the paper, Ruby insisted that if a film is understood to be based on scientific criteria then it is necessary that the film be wholly scientific which in part means that the methods and assumptions of the filmmaker must be disclosed. Sandall used Tim Asch’s film The Ax Fight to show this strategy. Asch’s film on the Yanomano in southern Venezuela, incorporates footage and sound that would normally be edited out, to enlighten the audience. For example, as the crew approached the fight, the film records their confusion, and later their off-camera comments. The fight itself is shown in four ways, with an unedited version, an explained version, a slow-motion version, and a version where a diagram of various shapes are superimposed over the members of the fight to indicate their relations and kinships to each other. Sandall commented on the positive received to this method by one Aboriginal man who attended the conference. As Sandall says, “‘It was this abstract and simplified representation of social structure, graphically displayed, which had allowed him to understand and psychologically participate in the life of the Yanomano... his comments... drew attention to something we have been inclined to forget: that when it comes to explanation, one diagram may be worth a thousand shots. Observation is one thing, Explanation another.’”

Reviewing many different examples of films at the conference, Sandall completes the article by saying that “the limits of observationalism:” had been disclosed with only a few notable exceptions such as David and Judith MacDougall’s Turkana Conversations and the Australian Belonging: Rituals of Friendship in an Australian Country Town. Sandall felt that these and other stylistic originals indicate a need for more eclectic and varied methods of documentary filmmaking. Let the content determine the form, let the artist feel his way through. The conventional, dry methods used up to now are sending the audience further and further away from the theater doors.

For a more detailed analysis please see the fall 78 issue of “Sight and Sound” and “Cambridge Anthropology”, Special Issue, “Ethnographic Film” for a review on one specific film shown, The People's Land.

Seventh Intl. Short and Documentary Film Festival In France Included 150 Films From 40 Countries

By KATHLEEN MODROWSKI

The Seventh International Short and Documentary Film Festival was held in Lille, France, December 2-10, 1978. Sponsored by the French Association for the Promotion of Short Films, a semi-official organization representing various technicians' and directors' unions, the festival included one hundred and thirty films representing forty countries. The geographical distribution of the films represented was a quantitative, if not qualitative, indication of the film production of this type. The United States led with eighteen entries, followed by eleven films from France, Europe (both East and West) and South America were well represented while the entire African continent was scarcely represented with only three entries, two Algerian films and one from Niger.

Participation films were classified as fiction, documentary, animation or a combination of these. While there was no official theme the films tended to deal with vital social issues. Several entries in the documentary category stood out because of the filmmaker's insistence that a communication be established between the subjects of the films and the viewing public. With intense conviction, meager resources and heroic efforts, these filmmakers presented their themes with striking frankness and clarity.

A few of the noteworthy documentaries were therefore chosen for review. Resistance of September 2, for example, by Işhak İsitan, documented the daily life struggle for survival by tens of thousands of rural Turkish immigrants who make their home in U’Mayis Mahalllesi, a squatter’s shanty-
town on the outskirts of Istanbul, and their march on Istanbul to prevent the government from demolishing their "city".

Another film which distinguished itself because of the close collaboration between those filming and those being filmed is The Land of April by Anna Gogowski and Phillippe Constantini. Filmed in 1976, in the northern Portuguese village Vilar de Perdizes in the Tra-os Montes region, the film juxtaposes the preparation of a Passion play presented only once every seven years with the event of spring planting and the second free election campaign since the end of the dictatorship.

Liana, by Toufik Snousii, presented the immigration problems of a village in semi-arid eastern Algeria. The sensitive camera work of Peter Chappel transcended the exotic beauty of the desert oasis and entered a spacial and temporal context where the ancient rhythms seemed unnervingly slow and the village stagnate, abandoned by her able-bodied men as well as by the government. Countless evenings are spent outside the walls of the mosque where the elders, sipping tea, discuss their plight and construct hypothetical solutions which are rejected with a certain sense of fatality. We are left with the impression that it will go on like this until all the old men have died and the village is empty.

Luis Ospina and Carlos Mayolo have made an important critical statement about documentary films in their fictionalized documentary, Vampires of Misery. The camera follows a mock German tv crew as they film the street children, beggars and prostitutes of Columbia, and record the sometimes passive, often violent reactions of the onlookers and those being filmed.

The parody on the film crew is very well done. Their obnoxious self-assurance in what they believe to be their control over the camera as well as the people becomes almost insupportable. We feel a sense of relief and satisfaction when in one scene the spectators start throwing rocks and try to push the cameras out of the way as the crew induces children to dive for coins in a fountain.

Commenting on the intentions of his film, Luis Ospina has said, "I see the camera as a weapon, one that can be directed against the people who are often unprepared to defend themselves. The film was made for filmmakers as well as for the general public."

The Seventh International Short and Documentary Film Festival enables participants to have some kind of global idea of the state of the art. The 1979 Festival is tentatively scheduled for September. Those persons interested in more information should contact Festival de Lille, 16 bis, rue Lauriston, 75016 Paris, France.

Visual Anthropology Resolution Adopted by International Commission At New Delhi Congress

The International Congress of Anthropology and Ethnological Sciences held its Xth annual meeting in New Delhi, India on December 7 and 9, 1978. During the congress, a symposium on visual anthropology took place. There, the International Commission on Visual Anthropology (ICVA) supported by the International Commission on Urgent Anthropology (ICUA) presented a resolution to reaffirm and emphasize the decision of the I Xth ICAES to intensify the preparation of permanent researchable illustrative records of vanishing ways of life and culture.

The ICVA based its resolution on the belief that studies of people should transcend any individual culture and make way for a new humanistic view. The commission believes that through film, a single culture's beliefs can be surrendered to the clear record of multicultural viewpoints. These new humanistic film studies should heighten national and international awareness of the needs of ethnic groups by presenting in accessible and understandable form, information vital to their social, cultural, and political life.

The resolution seeks to establish a network of regional and national centers to coordinate the filming, indexing, educational, archival and research activities required. This global network will emphasize developing nations and give proper help, coordination and training to develop local talents and expertise in visual anthropology.

The resolution recognized that technologically advanced nations need to strengthen and expand their training and availability of resources to developing nations, particularly those with broad independent cultural traditions. The resolution encouraged this global cooperation including the freeing of the movement of scientific film materials throughout the world.

To implement these goals, a Joint International Commission on Ethnographic Film and Urgent Anthropology is being formed to bring together collaboration between the existing International Commission on Visual Anthropology and the International Commission on Urgent Anthropology.

There Oughta Be a Law

[Image of comic strip]
JAPANESE ETHNOGRAPHIC FILM PRODUCTION ACHIEVING NEW PUBLIC ACCEPTANCE

By YASUKO ICHIOKA

In recent years, the main staffs of the News Bureau of the NTV network, which is one of the earliest national private networks in Japan, began to feel keenly the necessity for presenting much more information about developing countries of the world and their peoples to the Japanese public. Journalism has tended to stick to political and economic phenomena which are mainly teletyped from big cities of developed areas such as Washington, Moscow and London. Information appears only in the so-called Third World when the larger nations are involved. We believe that it is absolutely necessary for the Japanese public to know more about the countries and peoples who actually surround Japan. So we planned to bring into Japanese television another kind of journalism which may be called "journalism on man". 

In 1966, we commenced the new weekly documentary series entitled Our Wonderful World on Sunday evening prime time over the national network. In this series we have laid emphasis on introducing the life-styles or historical backgrounds of peoples in different cultures rather than dealing with the current affairs of the area. We have also tried to depict their way of thinking which is sometimes quite different from the Japanese, what they find happiness and pride in, how they behave towards others, what arouses their passion and so on.

To start the production, each of the staff was assigned to a particular part of the world for a substantial period. The advantage of this was that each director could gain knowledge and understanding of his area and the people who live there. He could establish a network of acquaintances who might be helpful in giving him advice and assistance. He might furthermore be able to avoid possible troubles with government authorities by working in the area alone. Although there has been a slight change of members, this practice still continues.

The present assignment of directors is as follows: Northeast Asia — Junichi Ushiyama; Southeast Asia — Yasuko Ichioka; Indo-Himalayan & Arctic — Susumu Noro; Black Africa — Tadao Sugiyama and Hidehiko Goto; Central and South America — Yasushi Toyotomi.

Each regional director is expected to work in his area more than half of the year. Directors who are working in areas remote from Japan and tend to stay in their areas more than eight months per year. As an example, the periods I have spent in the field are as follows:

1967 — 4 months in Bali, Indonesia, 1 month in Vietnam for research.
1968 — 1.5 months in India for research, the rest of the year was spent in Japan to cover the traditional women divers called “ama”.
1969 — 6 months in the Pacific Islands such as Western Samoa, New Caledonia, Tuamotu Archipelago, Trobriand Islands for both research and filming.
1970 — 2 months for filming in the Trobriand Islands, 3 months for research in Irian Jaya, Australia, New Zealand and Micronesia.
1971 — 1 month in Korea for research, 5 months in Trobriand Islands for filming.
1972 — 1 month in Korea for filming, 3 months in Sulawesi, Indonesia for research and filming, 1 month in Australia for research.
1973 — 3 months in Bali, Indonesia for filming, 2 months in the Philippines for research.
1974 — 3 months in Thailand for filming, 3 months in Trobriand Islands for filming, 1 month in Solomon’s for research.
1975 — 2 months in Bulgaria for filming, 1 month in Sepik in Papua New Guinea, 4 months in Madagascar for filming.
1976 — 2 months in Bulgaria for filming, 2 months in Trobriand Islands for filming.
1977 — 1 month in Tonga for research, 3 months in New Ireland Papua New Guinea for filming.
1978 — 8 months in Kalimantan and Sumatra, Indonesia for research and filming.

This year I plan to visit Indonesia again to begin a project on the nomadic forest dwellers on the Mentawai Islands.

* * *

Our complete series was planned as a cultural informational program for Japanese television. We have never intended that our productions should be fully academic ethnographic films. Therefore, we have not generally been accompanied by anthropologists in the field, although each director has obtained a great deal of assistance and encouragement from some anthropologists either in Japan or abroad. We would like to convey our sincere thanks to those who have been so kind to us.

Although our series was produced only for the general public, two anthropologists in particular, Dr. Jean Rouch and Dr. Jay Ruby, who are active in the ethnographic film field, were instrumental in convincing us of the possible contribution of our t.v. series to visual anthropology. In 1978, eighteen films from among Our Wonderful World series were shown at the Conference on Visual Anthropology held at Temple University in Philadelphia, and some twenty films were collectively shown at Cinematique Francaise organized by Musee de l’Hommes in Paris. Two were sent to the Ethnographic Film Conference in Canberra and another was shown at American Anthropological Association’s Annual meeting this past November in Los Angeles. At the end of the year, three films covering Asia were submitted to the Congress of the IUAES in New Delhi. Besides this participation abroad, some twenty films were shown at the Annual Japanese Anthropological Meeting and our films are now even used in some university classrooms.

We also plan to establish a documentary film library in Tokyo in collaboration with a non-commercial theater. A three hundred seat theater which is located in the Ginza, one of the downtown areas in Tokyo, will begin to show not only classics of the documentary film but also new trends of scientific documentaries such as our production every day all year around.

For the last one hundred years since the Meiji Restoration, Japanese have been following and adopting the technology and ideas mainly from the developed western world, and have paid little attention to developing areas. Now is the time for us to face the other half of the world. Realizing our geographical location and other conditions surrounding us, our nation must recognize and appreciate the third world, even though we are said to be an economically successful country. Therefore, we are determined to continue further efforts in bringing more information about the non-European countries and peoples to the Japanese public.
Tonacci Documentary In Production On Canela Apanieira Indians Of Brazil

Filmmaker Acha Tonacci has received a Guggenheim grant to make a documentary on the Canela Apanieira Indians (a Ge speaking group) in the state of Maranhao in northern Brazil. Partially completed, Tonacci feels the 16mm film Conversas no Maranhao will provide “a subjective means for the Canela to make statements about their own needs and life directly to the outer world instead of an objective view of the group as merely ‘objects’ of a film.”

Tonacci, who is making the film along with Gilberto Azanha and Maria Eliza Ladeira, both anthropologists, and Walter Regeria, soundman, is presently in New York City raising money to complete this documentary, which he feels is vital to the voice of the Canela Apanieira Indians. Contact Tonacci at 317 W. 99th St., Apt. 2C, N. Y., NY 10025.

Upcoming...

International Survey of Ethnological and Sociological Cinema Promoted by French Festival

The Bibliothèque Publique d’Information at the Centre national d’art et de culture Georges Pompidou, and the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (Department of Research, Production and Distribution of Audiovisual Documents), in view of promoting documentary and topical films, plan to present an international survey of ethnological and sociological cinema.

The Festival will take place in Paris, at the Centre from March 17 to 25, 1979.

Deadline for entries was January 1. Both full length and short films were accepted, either in 35mm with optical soundtrack, or 16mm with optical or magnetic soundtrack (single or double system), or super 8mm with magnetic soundtrack, or SONY ¼-inch and PHILIPS ½-inch video tapes, PAL or SECAM. Only films produced after January 1st, 1977 were accepted for selection of the best films.

For information contact: Festival international du film ethnographique et sociologique, Bibliothèque Publique d’Information, Service audiovisuel, Centre national d’art et de culture Georges Pompidou, 75191 Paris Cedex 04.

Notes from the Field...

FILM, VIDEOTAPE RECORDING USED BY VISUAL ANTHROPOLOGY TEAM IN BALI

By ELIZABETH YOUNG

Elizabeth Young conducted extensive fieldwork in Bali last year, primarily investigating the masked drama dance called Topeng. In her research, she used photography, audio-tape, video-tape and film to both obtain a complete record of various Topeng performances and to collect more information about the performances through video-tape playback. Ms. Young’s interest in visual anthropology stems from her background in the humanities and art. She received her B.A. in art and art history from Pomona College in 1972 and is completing her Ph.D. dissertation for the Department of Anthropology at the University of California, San Diego. The following is her report, filed from Cambridge, Massachusetts, where she now resides:

Last year (1977), I used videotape feedback methods to study the role of Topeng (masked dance drama) in Balinese culture. Topeng is widely performed in Bali in conjunction with temple festivals, family ceremonies, priest’s ordinations, cremations, etc. Performances typically take place at night in a temple courtyard, bale banjar (village meeting pavilion) or wide dirt area. The stories for Topeng come from the myth-histories of Bali, from the Jontars written by the court chroniclers, dating back to the Majapahit era. As a way of collecting data, I photographed, recorded, videotaped (½ inch black and white) and filmed (16mm) Topeng performances. The spoken parts of the audio and videotapes were transcribed and translated with the help of Balinese assistants for later reference, and videotapes of the performances were shown to informants during elicitation interviews. These were formal interviews and responses from perform-

ers, villagers, city people and religious experts, tape recorded as they watched the tapes. This videotape feedback method was invaluable because Topeng is such a complex dramatic (art) form. Topeng dramas combine all three forms of Balinese language, plus an archaic literary language, Kawi. There are numerous characters, constant joking, and comic routines in colloquial language. The dramas are improvised, there is no script, and each performance is unique. Through detailed questioning of informants as they watched the tapes, I learned the specific content (both verbal and non-verbal) and cultural referents of Topeng performances. The results of my research indicate that Topeng performances not only express Bali-Hindu religious concepts, but that Topeng is a method of religious and moral education in the maintenance and tradition and an indicator of differential cultural change in Bali.

During this research, Tim Asch and I simultaneously filmed and videotaped a 3½ hour Topeng performance. The videotape is a complete document of the entire performance and was both shown to informants for elicitation and used as a basis for editing the film. The film is a much shorter version (40 min.), containing only the essential aspects of Topeng drama.

I am planning to return to Bali next summer to study children’s arts groups. Videotape and film will also be a part of this project. In collaboration with Tim Asch, who is currently working with other researchers in Bali, we may be able to begin a series of films about Balinese culture. I am also interested in using film and video in teaching anthropology and producing audio-visual materials for educational purposes.
Grant Opportunities . . .

NEW MEDIA GRANTS AWARDED BY NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES

The media program of the National Endowment for the Humanities has provided funding for the following anthropologically oriented media projects for the 1978 fiscal year.

Greeks in America Project, Atlanta, Ga. 
Greeks in America — $397,536 outright, $800,000 G&M. 
A series of three one-hour television docu-dramas about the history of Greek immigration to America from 1890 to the present.

An eighty-minute film surveying the roots, in Poland, of the American Jewish community.

Southwest Missouri State University, Springfield, Missouri. Shannon County — $266,389.
Two sixty-minute films about Shannon County, an Ozarks community. The films will examine economic, psychological, cultural, and aesthetic expectations of the inhabitants of the region and juxtapose those expectations against past experiences and the present reality.

Milberg Theatrical Productions, Inc., East Norwalk, Connecticut. The Royal Archives of Ebla — $100,000. 
A one-hour film on the tablets found at the State Archives at Tel Mardikh, Ebla, Syria, in 1975. The film will enable the viewer to experience how such archaeological finds occur and the process by which the variety of details are amassed, collated, and evaluated.

The Wheelwright Museum, Santa Fe, New Mexico. The Pueblo Revolt — $10,000. 
A two-hour radio dramatization of the Pueblo Revolt of 1680.

S.W. Center ETV, Austin, Texas. Mexican-American — $30,000. 
An eight-part television series dramatizing significant periods in the history of Mexican Americans.

KAET-TV, Tempe, Arizona. The Navajo People — $101,965. 
A ten-part television series focusing on particular facets of Navajo life, such as birth, education, coming of age, marriage, illness, and death.

Cultural Research & Communications, Inc., Emeryville, California. The Wandering Jew — $20,000. 
For a film series examining the diverse Jewish cultures of the world, historically tied to the Diaspora experience.

The Newark Museum, Newark, New Jersey. Coastal and Tundra Eskimos of Western Alaska — $36,825. 
A one-hour television documentary, incorporating old film footage, analyzing cultural changes experienced by western Alaskan Eskimos.

Morgan State University, Baltimore, Maryland. Afro-Americans Face The City: Black Baltimore — $20,000.

For a film about the history of the black community in Baltimore over the past 200 years. It will look at the social, political, and religious organizations created by slaves, free blacks, and later freedmen in Baltimore in response to the realities of their urban experience.

Delbro Enterprises, Los Angeles, California. The Survival Series — $49,728.

For a series presenting the story of Black contributions to American life, tracing the strength and variety of African culture and examining the acculturation process with the “survival” concept as the central theme.

Humanities Grant Announced by Rockefeller Foundation Fellowships

A new humanities fellowship has been created by the Rockefeller Foundation and could mean a grant of $10,000-20,000 to some interested SAVICOM member.

Titled “Rockefeller Foundation Humanities Fellowships,” the program seeks applications from scholars in traditional humanistic modes whose research is concerned with illuminating contemporary values.


Normal length of the fellowship will be one year. Successful candidates will be expected to devote full time to their project during the fellowship period. Grants may be awarded to an individual and self-administered or to his/her respective institutions. Grants may cover salary, benefits, travel, secretarial or research support or research materials.

More information is available by writing: Rockefeller Foundation Humanities Fellowships, The Rockefeller Foundation, 1133 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10036.

Rockefeller Foundation Announces New Multi-Media Funding

The Rockefeller Foundation is making money available for Multi-Media Funding, “modest support for work in television and film for cultural and educational projects related to humanistic objectives. There are no deadlines. For information please write to The Rockefeller Foundation, 1133 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10036.

Congress Bill (H.R. 1042) Studying Tax Checkoffs for NEA or NEH

Currently being studied by various committees in Congress is a bill (H.R. 1042) which would provide a voluntary checkoff on your federal tax form for contributions to either the National Endowment for the Arts or the National Endowment for the Humanities. The process would be similar to the campaign contribution checkoff and could generate up to $1.7 billion annually for the arts. Considering that the NEA's entire budget is currently less than $90 million, the voluntary checkoff would have a dramatic impact on the arts. Write your Congressperson.
Cooperation Column . . .

Smithsonian Needs Anthropologists’ Photos for Indian Handbook

Photographs of anthropologists in the field working among Indians north of Mesoamerica (U.S. and Canada) are needed for the Smithsonian Institution’s Handbook of North American Indians. In particular, pictures of the following anthropologists are being sought for the Subarctic volume:

- D. S. Davidson (Algonquin)
- P. E. Goddard (Northern Athapaskan)
- W. H. Jenkins (Lake Abitibi)
- J. L. Lips (Mongagni de Boule)
- Robert Lowie (Chippewyan)
- J. T. McGee (Naskapi)
- C. Ogood (Northern Athapaskan)
- Alanson Skinner (Cree)
- F. G. Speck (Montagnais)
- F. W. Waugh (Naskapi)
- K. Birket-Smith (Chippewyan)

Anyone having such photographs, or knowing where they may be found, are asked to contact Joanna Scherer, Handbook of North American Indians, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. 20560; or call (202) 381-5091.

“Raising Consciousness Through Film”
Booklet Available From Holland

(Please refer also to New Sources column)

Reach A Wider Audience . . .

Public TV Programs Sought for Second Intl. Screening Conference

INPUT, the International Public Television Screening Conference, will hold its second session from April 2 to 7, 1979 at the Milan Trade Fair (MIFED) where RAI-Televisione Italiana, will be the host organization.

The program schedule will be coordinated by Barbara Van Dyke, administrative director of International Film Seminars, in New York; and by Sergio Borelli, president of CIRCOM, an organization of broadcasters interested in innovative television, in Europe. INPUT is an opportunity for the makers of programs to meet together for intensive screening and discussion, not a competition nor a market for programs. The aim of INPUT is to encourage the movement of broadly cultural television programs across national and cultural borders. Television's search for its own distinct aesthetic and its special role in society will be a main topic but the final conference agenda will be established according to programs offered.

The emphasis of INPUT 79 is on departure from the conventional, either in format, content, or in service to the public. Programs are sought that represent an innovative use of the television medium, and should be in one of the following broad thematic areas:

1. “Target TV”: Programs by, for and about minorities — geographic, ethnic and social. Programs are sought that reflect local or regional interests, and those of special concern to the underprivileged and the disadvantaged.
2. “New and Unconventional Approaches to Social Issues”: Programs that use, or combine either fiction, drama or documentary styles to illuminate and explore important issues in today's society. This may include costume drama as a vehicle for social awareness.
3. “The Language and The Art of Television”: Programs which explore the frontiers of video language: programs which provide new television approaches to the performing and visual arts.

INPUT 79 is organized under the auspices of the Rockefeller Foundation with the following participating organizations: The Corporation for Public Broadcasting and the Public Broadcasting Service in the United States; The Canadian Broadcasting/Société Radio Canada, and the Agency for Tele-Education in Canada; and in Europe RAI-Radiotelevisione Italiana and CIRCOM. Howard Klein, Director of the Arts Program for the Rockefeller Foundation is the Chairman of the INPUT Steering Committee.

Detailed Guidelines and Entry Forms are available from International Film Seminars, Inc., 1860 Broadway, New York, NY 10023 (212) 247-5536.

Feminist Films Sought

Films on feminist issues are being sought for exhibition in Europe by Lightspeed, USA, Inc. For more information write to 30 Vesey St., New York, NY. (212) 964-9600.

Maine Film Alliance Offers Loan or Swap for 16mm Projectors

The Maine Film Alliance is offering government surplus 16mm projectors available for semi-permanent loan to MFA members and non-profit groups. If you would like to have the use of one or more of these fine machines, please contact the MFA office, 4320 Sta. A, Portland, ME 04101.

The MFA is also seeking a place to store these projectors until homes are found for them. Some are not in working order and require permanent storage as a source of repair parts. Any offers welcome.

The MFA is seeking donations of the following items (or will swap for 16mm projectors): filing cabinet, electric typewriter, Super-8 equipment to be used in workshops. All gifts and contributions to the MFA are tax-deductible.

Edward Curtis Notes Sought

Jay Ruby is at work on a project involving origins of participant observation, comparing the impact of Flaherty, Malinowski, and photographer Edward Curtis. Information on the whereabouts of any field notebooks of Curtis is sought. Write Jay Ruby, Dept. of Anthropology, Temple University, Philadelphia, PA 19122.

Royal Anthropological Institute
Announces New Biennial Film Prize

The Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland has announced a new biennial film prize of £250. The first RAI Film Prize will be awarded in 1980 for the most outstanding film on any branch of anthropology or archaeology first shown on or after March 1, 1976. Both specialist academic films and films intended for the general public are eligible. The judges appointed by the Institute will give greater weight to content than to technical expertise. The prize will be awarded to individual filmmakers and not the organization they work for, if any. The prize is international in scope, but either the commentary (if any) or sub-titles must be in English, or a full English transcript must accompany the film. Films submitted must be 16mm optical prints and must in principle be films available for non-commercial educational use. No award will be made if the judges do not consider the quality of the films submitted to be sufficiently high.

The closing date for entries is March 1, 1980. Entry forms with full rules and conditions are available at no cost from the RAI, 56 Queen Anne Street, London W1M 9LA. Entry forms should be read carefully, for films will not be accepted unless they are accompanied by properly completed forms.

Overseas entrants are cautioned to observe rules for submission and postage to prevent possible loss of their films.
New Sources . . .

Visual Anthropology in Greece — Annotated Filmography Available

Visual Anthropology in Greece: An Annotated Filmography, recently published in “Modern Greek Studies: A Social Science Newsletter” by Peter S. Allen, Associate Professor of Anthropology at Rhode Island College, describes Greece and its inhabitants as increasingly the subject of published material in anthropology in recent years. Likewise, the number of films depicting aspects of life in Greece has also increased and there are now at least a dozen readily available films of anthropological interest that deal in whole or part with Greece. Some have been made by anthropologists, others by professional or amateur filmmakers, but all are of some interest and value to social scientists working on Greece.


The Filmography gives complete details credits, distributors, prices and reviews. For copies send $3.00 to the Newsletter at P.O. Box 9411, Providence, R.I. 02940.

“A Filmmaker’s Journal” On Ethnographic Filmmaking Released

Fieldstaff Reports has just released a new issue, entitled “A Filmmaker’s Journal” by Hubert Smith. The author describes both his professional methods and his personal reactions to the experience of making ethnographic films in an unfamiliar culture. Smith and co-author John Hafner have made six films about the Ayamara residents of Vitocota, a village in the Andean highlands of Bolivia. Smith’s “Journal” is available from Fieldstaff Reports, Volume XXIII, No. 2, West Coast South America Series, American Universities Field Staff, Inc., 4 West Wheelock Street, Hanover, New Hampshire 03755 or 535 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10017.

Northwest Film Study Center Membership and Newsletter Offered

The Northwest Film Study Center is a non-profit institution serving the states of Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Montana, and Alaska through film education, exhibition, publication, and circulating film programs. It is sponsored by the Portland Art Association through a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts and by the Ted R. Gamble Foundation.

Membership and contributions are tax-deductible. For information contact the Northwest Film Study Center, 1219 S.W. Park Ave., Portland, Oregon 97205. Tel.: (503) 226-2811. Subscriptions to the excellent newsletter Animator are $2 per year for individual, and $4 for institutions.

University of California Extension Media Center Newsletter Filmography

EMC Two-78, the current issue of the University of California Extension Media Center’s bi-annual newsletter, features the descriptive filmography “Folklore on Film and Tape” by Brooks Johnson. In part intended to complement Karl Heider’s selection of ethnographic films (EMC Two-74) and Clement Meighan’s typology of archeological films (EMC One-77), this article, organized into regional grouping, discusses the folklore value of select films and videotapes. Most of the productions mentioned are distributed by UCEMC, although some are not. Copies of the newsletter are available free of charge, as is their complete film and tape rental catalog, Films 1977-1978, by writing to UCEMC, Berkeley, CA 94720.

Bay Area Coalition Newsletter Useful to Video Artists, Producers

Networks is a monthly newsletter published by the Bay Area Coalition. Although the focus is on Bay area video activity, much of the information is useful to video artists and producers throughout the country. Available from BAVC, 2940 16th St., Room 200, San Francisco, CA 94103.

Ethnic Public Papers Published

Ethnic Images in American Film and Television, edited by Randall M. Miller is the first of a series of Public Papers in the Humanities published by the Public Committee for the Humanities in Pennsylvania, the state-based arm of the National Endowment for the Humanities. The issue includes chapters on Blacks, Jews, Irish, Italians, Poles, Puerto Ricans, and Asians. For information write to The Balch Institute, 18 South Seventh St., Philadelphia, PA 19106.

New Media Law Journal Covers Communications and Entertainment

COMM/ENT is the name of a new law journal exclusively devoted to communications and entertainment law. Under the direction of Roscoe L. Barrow and Neil Borstyn, faculty of the Hastings College of Law at the University of California, COMM/ENT has a student editorial staff. The journal will feature articles and a digest summarizing recent cases and other law journal articles in the field. Write: 798 McAllister St., San Francisco, CA 94102.

Southwest Quarterly Publication “La Confluencia” Releases Schedule

La Confluencia, a quarterly publication reflecting the confluence of cultures in the Southwest, has just released a schedule of forthcoming issues which are planned to include photographic supplements of both historical and contemporary work. The magazine welcomes any material expressing historical, political, or humanitarian approaches to the understanding of life in the Southwest, as well as literary contributions. Subscription rates are $8.00 regular and $6.00 for student or teacher, for four issues. A listing of upcoming thematic topics and further information can be obtained from co-editors Patricia D’Andrea and Susan Dewitt, La Confluencia, P.O. Box 409, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87103 (505) 242-302.

Film Fund Offers Publication

News From the Film Fund, a new quarterly publication is now being offered by Film Fund, an organization created to promote the production and distribution of quality films on social issues. To order the publication, please write to The Film Fund, 80 East 11th St., New York, NY 10003.

Independent Exhibit Listings Available

Film & Videomakers Travel Sheet — Lists upcoming showings and institutions that exhibit independent work. Film & Videomakers Directory — both available from Carnegie Institute Film Section, Museum of Art, 4400 Forbes Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15213. Annual subscription $1.80.
COMPETITION ANNOUNCED TO CHOOSE NEW NAME FOR SAVICOM NEWSLETTER

It was once wisely said that "If you are interested in growth, you will find yourself in transition". The increasing growth in scope and distribution of the Newsletter has brought with it a growing demand for a better, easier to pronounce and more readily identifiable name for our Newsletter. Such a change was in fact approved at the last SAVICOM Board Meeting in Los Angeles. We are therefore seeking any suggestions as to an appropriate non-journal sounding name to better express the nature of this publication. Some titles received to date include: Visions, Image, Ethno-graphics, Visual Anthropologist, Human Visions and Visual Explorations.

We welcome any and all suggestions on this topic and as an incentive will award a free membership to SAVICOM to the person submitting the name chosen. Please send suggestions to the Editor. Hopefully, we will have a new name for our next issue.

American Anthropological Association Offers 1979 Appointment Calendar With Photos


A request for photographs was announced in the Anthropology Newsletter for the calendar, and 61 people submitted 321 photographs. Photographs were chosen which combined high aesthetic quality with anthropological insight and represented the various fields of anthropology. The result is the 1979 Anthropologist’s Appointment Calendar, available for $5 from the American Anthropological Association, 1703 New Hampshire Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20009.

Another calendar is planned for 1980, and details will be announced in the January 1979 Anthropology Newsletter.

It is hoped that this will become an annual publication and will help to stimulate the art of anthropological photography.

SAVICOM Newsletter
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