

OPEN THE GATES ... IT'S TIME FOR

TWO-WAY

BY NORMAN MARK

Somewhere out where the ether meets a mind there are people smarter than broadcasters. And more entertaining. And more opinionated. And able to create better solutions. That is the essence of two-way communication, whether it be on radio or on cable, and that is frightening to most folks in the media.

Imagine getting all the training necessary, imagine paying all the dues and working all the nothing jobs so you can be in charge of a broadcasting operation. Then imagine giving over your franchise, your future, your possible earnings to the great unwashed, *who might say anything.*

There are, of course, problems associated with actually listening to the public. First, some folks in the audience are just plain nuts and they want to talk endlessly about the Martians who visited them, love affairs they had when they were 12 years old, or they want to attack the boss who fired them or the wife who justifiably left them.

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TV

Tracking
Tracking
Tracking
Tracking
Tracking
Tracking

CABLE COAXING. The wheels continue to turn—or is it spin?—on Cable TV in Chicago. Mayor **Jane M. Byrne's** 11 alderman committee came out in mid-October with its revised recommendations for an ordinance based on the work of consultants **Malarkey and Taylor**. Current best guesses are that the final ordinance and guidelines for a Request for Proposals will be officially set by mid-December. The deadline for bids is expected to be March, 1982. Contracts will be awarded in mid-summer and construction would begin in December, 1982. In the immediate term, the Chicago Cable Television Study Commission, headed by **Bill Singer** with a 17-member panel has been pushing forward with its efforts to issue a report with a firm recommendation on ownership and structure for Chicago cable TV by December 4. "I'm confident that nothing will be done of a permanent nature to preempt our work," says Singer, whose base of operations is the law firm of Kirkland and Ellis. Singer's panel held two weeks of public hearings beginning November 2 at which it heard testimony from cable companies, investors and governmental and cable officials from other cities. The goal is to translate that testimony plus the briefing books prepared by its staff into solutions and recommendations for what will work most equitably for the people of Chicago. While the "Blue Ribbon Panel" funded by a \$75,000 MacArthur Foundation grant, and the "Vrdolyak Committee" can and will make recommendations, Cable TV is still a Chicago City Council decision and none of the participants underestimates the clout of the Mayor in the process.

CHANNELS. Well, Channel 66 IS on the air, from Joliet via the Hancock Building. It's primarily "Spectrum," a scrambled-signal subscriber-TV movies service owned by the Buford interests of Tyler, TX. Rumors abound about a tie-in with systems for addressable decoders that would permit more than one channel to be received (and jointly marketed) with the "Spectrum" service. In any case, it seems to be clear that the emphasis on local Chicago programming via Channel 66 is minimal... Channel 60, licensed to Aurora, is the vehicle for the newly announced Sportsvision Channel headed by **Eddie Einhorn** and including a pay-to-see the White Sox, Bulls, Black Hawks and Sting service. The owners need approval from the FCC to operate from Chicago rather than Aurora. The announced plans call for STV, operating from the Sears Tower, in 1982... Channel 26, long-standing bastion of local programming, primarily for minority interests, reportedly has permission to go to a scrambled STV service. Who does it and for whose benefit has not been totally clarified... and **Channel 20** has been given away. The City Colleges of Chicago, according to a mid-October press release, will take over the license from the Chicago Metropolitan Higher Education Council (CMHEC). Chancellor Oscar Shabat is quoted as saying it will be on the air in late-1982 with a station devoted to broadcasting videotapes of education courses. Practically no local production is included in the announced plans. The transfer of the license will require FCC approval.

NOTES. **Carole Nolan** has been named acting chairperson of the Chicago Educational and Cultural Consortium for Cable Television replacing **Don Sager**, former Commissioner of the Chicago Public Library. Nolan is general manager of WBEZ, public radio in Chicago, and director of the Bureau of Telecommunications of the Chicago public schools. Her first task: work out an agreement with dissident minority representatives concerned about what they view as low levels of minority participation on the board of directors.... The first Sony 5850's in town were scored by the new Independent Programming Associates formed by **Scott Jacobs, Tom Shea, Starr Sutherland, Ted Hearne** and **Ginny Robinson**. The firm plans to start work in January producing videotapes for the new markets and has a well-equipped production and post-production facility.... **Cindy Neal** has begun test shooting in the "Deep Tunnel" for her video art tape funded by the Illinois Arts Council.... And **Mary Roll**, formerly of Bell and Howell's video group, has become an account executive with The Producers, a firm specializing in industrial media projects.

SAY YOUR PIECE. SCAN will print **free** personal classifieds. Send information, news, gossip, or gripes... Limit 20 words. (Like this.)



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Image
Union

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usually see on T.V.*

**Saturdays at 10 P.M.
(and Sundays at midnight)**

**WTTW/Channel 11
Chicago**

INTERACTIVE MODELS: EXPERIMENTS IN TWO-WAY TV

by Joyce Bolinger

Chicago is likely to have an interactive system when cable television finally becomes a reality here.

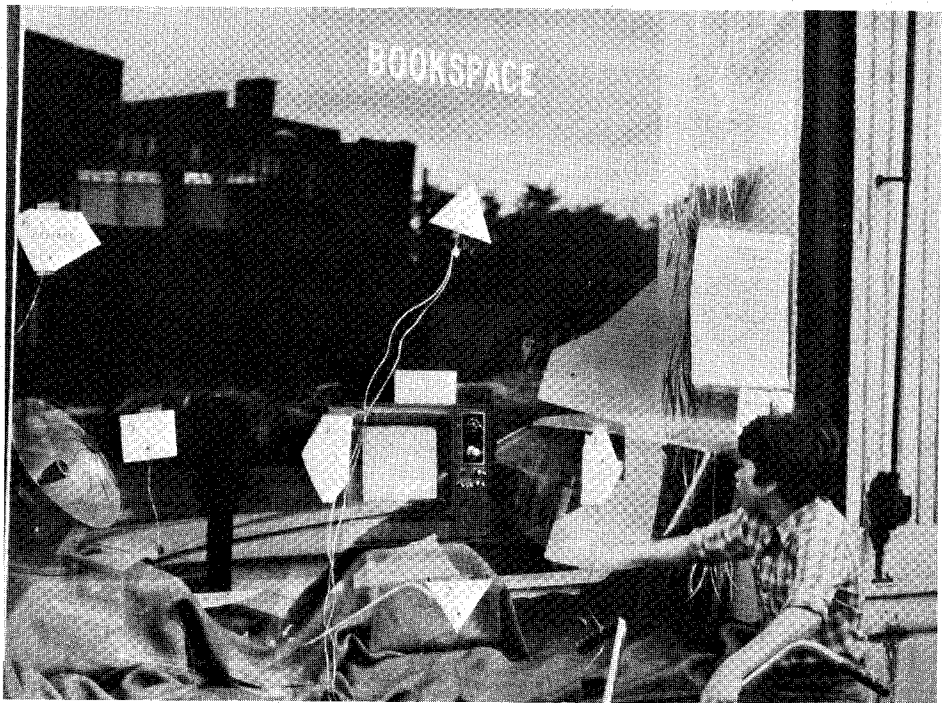
The question is, will the innovative technology be accompanied by equally innovative programming ideas? In most cities, two-way television has brought only more opinion polls and game shows. So, it's not too early for independents and others to begin generating ideas for projects that truly explore new ground.

It's not programming opportunities that have made interactive television attractive to the cable companies who might bid for the contract to wire Chicago.

After all, two-way communications costs at least 15% more than conventional systems.

But interactive TV has proved to be a commercially viable product: it is a great market research tool and fire and security alarm device, and, interfaced with home computers, can allow you to do your banking, order books from the library, call up (and be invoiced for) movies and sports events and transact business with the stock market.

Critics have called for legislative and regulatory safeguards to protect the privacy of individuals utilizing cable systems in these ways. The idea of Big Brother watching you



Chicago artist **Steve Wilson** created an interactive store window to allow passersby to generate video graphics and conduct a "community symphony."

project has been based on the idea that "in the application of technology to the problems of education, there has been too much big brain/little brain thinking," according to Stan Corey, Superintendent of Irvine schools. "In this mentality, the big brain decides what the little brain needs and then uses technology to feed it out to the little brain."

Irvine's system has incorporated PLATO,

to receiving sites equipped with dish antenna and down converters. Business telephone lines allow four sites to participate in a discussion at any one time.

Perhaps the most famous experiment with the uses of two-way TV for political and entertaining purposes, is QUBE which was pioneered in 1974 by Warner Amex Cable Communication, Inc., in Columbus, Ohio; the company is now installing similar systems in Houston, Cincinnati, Pittsburgh and Dallas. QUBE in Columbus, Ohio is a 30-channel system of a range of programming — the usual news, sports, movies and educational mix. But, QUBE gives its viewers a chance to interact with their television sets by means of a row of five buttons on a console attached to their television (you can punch, yes, no and three other choices).

One of QUBE's most popular programs has been "Screen Test," a movie/TV trivia game show through which viewers could compete for prizes) including a bit part in a Warner Bros. movie or TV program).

Viewers have also "gonged" off the air local talent, rated Presidential speeches and called the plays for a hometown football team.

The quality of the programming has been criticized as not being innovative, possibly a function of the process of educating both viewers and programmers to the potential of the interactive system.

As one step towards training technicians and producers equipped with the skills and concepts to design new programming and other applications of interactive television, the first graduate study program in the

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behind the bland exterior of a TV monitor and a security camera may seem very real in 1984 in Chicago.

From 1972 to 1980, the Federal Communications Commission required cable operators given big city franchises to build interactive capability into the cable system largely because of the educational and public service potential.

This has not been explored with nearly the same passion as have those applications with a more visible economic return.

But there are some models that Chicago can look to for ways to stimulate audiences trained to be passive in front of TV sets to see video as an active medium, demanding participation.

In Irvine, California, a two-way cable system links the public schools, the public library, City Hall and the University of California at Irvine.

Since its inception in 1973, the Irvine

the sophisticated central based computer educational system of the Control Data Corporation, so students can teach themselves at their own paces.

Chicago has its own interactive educational loop, operated by the Center for Educational Development of the Illinois Institute of Technology.

It offers 58 to 65 courses for college credit—primarily in engineering, computer science and business—at 24 receiving sites at corporate offices equipped with special telephone lines so that students can quiz the professor or participate in class discussions.

The system, known as an Instructional Television Fixed Service, has about 625 students enrolled each semester; typically a student receives tuition reimbursement and leave time from the company to take advanced instruction at the job site.

Signals are transmitted from IIT classrooms to the Sears Tower from which they go

FROM THE CENTER

THE CHICAGO EDITING CENTER

The indomitable **Lilly Ollinger** has resigned from the Center's staff to better pursue independent production and Thai food. For the past four years, Lilly coordinated many of the Center's shows and special events, including last year's "Local Origination" show at the Chicago Public Library Cultural Center. As editor of *Scan*, she built this publication from a simple internal newsletter to a magazine with a national circulation and reputation for excellence. Fortunately, she will continue to serve the Editing Center as a curator—she organized a women's show November 22 and will curate a new "Local Origination" exhibit to be February 26, 1982—and workshop instructor. Her first week out as an independent, she was chosen for a \$3,000 Artist-initiated project grant by the Chicago Council on Fine Arts for an Uptown video project. The Editing Center owes Lilly a special debt for her contributions to the growth of the Center.

Laura Litten, a video producer for Communications for Change, will serve as a part-time coordinator for special events and workshops. She will be managing the arrangements for an exhibit of the work of **Steina Vasulka** at 7:30 p.m. on December 11. A co-founder of The Kitchen, a media arts center in New York City, Vasulka is a well-known explorer of the electronic arts utilizing image processing equipment and computer graphics systems.

At the members' meeting, October 29, **Drew Browning** demonstrated the Editing Center's new Image Processor which will rent for twelve hour periods at \$50. Drew will begin workshops on the IP in November.

Also, at the Members' Meeting, **Helen Roberts** announced plans for a monthly "clinic" where experienced producers will meet with those just beginning video production to share skills and experiences.

MEMBERS NOTES

Eleanor Boyer has completed a tape for the Midwest Women's Center called "Women Working: Pioneers in Carpentry." The tape will be used primarily for seminars for women going into the trades. **Robert Phelan's** most recent tape on classical ballet will be used on cable outlets along the North Shore to promote the Evanston Concert Ballet. Another dance tape is in progress at the Editing Center: **Annette Barbier** is completing a documentary on dance and the hearing impaired for the Chicago Council on Fine Arts and the National Committee on Arts and the Handicapped. **Frank Bonilla** and **Helen Roberts** recently taped an address by psychologist Jean Houston. The project was commissioned by Quest, a psychological organization. **Dennis O'Shea's** and **Naomi Vine's** most recent tape, "Kick out the Jams," was featured in the exhibit of the same name at the Museum of Contemporary Art. The show was on the work of seven Detroit painters, sculptors, gallery owners and critics. Current project: an interview with sculptor Charles Simonds, also for the MCA. **Thomas Shriver** and **John P. Koval** of DePaul University have just wrapped up a tape on threshing festivals, part of a series of tapes on Illinois festivals funded by DePaul and the Illinois Humanities Council.

As of October 15, we had 36 individual and seven institutional producer members plus 31 individual and three institutional annual members.

PRODUCERS INITIATIVE

During the summer The Producers Initiative published a series of requests for proposals for several types of programs that seem especially salable and received 83 proposals. Awards will be announced in the next issue of *Scan*.

Sherri White has joined The Producers Initiative as secretary. She has a background in video art from the University of Illinois Chicago Circle plus work experience at both WLS-TV and Editel.

Eric Thurman, Executive Director of The Producers Initiative, spent a week in late September on the East Coast meeting with prospective buyers of programming. He also traveled to New Orleans in early October for the NCTA/CTAM Cable Software Symposium and Exposition to make additional contacts.

Recently The Producers Initiative has contracted for the creation of two opening titles for industrial television training programs. As of this writing three news features have been sold and a client has given the go ahead for several more news features to be produced. Also, a loan has been granted for a half hour children's program that was shot during the America's Marathon in Chicago on September 27th. It tells the story of a 10 year old girl who finished the race first in her division.



Lilly Ollinger at her beloved Cezar.

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CONT. FROM P. 3

INTERACTIVE

subject has been established. It is at New York University's Alternate Media Center where students can now study towards master's degrees in interactive telecommunications.

Some artists have explored the interactive video medium — in Columbus, SoHo Television of New York put on a 14-week series of artist programming on QUBE.

In Chicago, Steve Wilson has been developing experiments designed to induce people to interact with video monitors and computers.

At Bookspace, an artists book store, Wilson put in place an interactive shop window. Sensors on the glass allowed passersby to generate video graphics, direct the plot lines of stories, make sounds adding up to a "community symphony" and respond to quizzes about the neighborhood environment.

Recently, at the University of Illinois, Chicago Circle, Wilson achieved similar effects with an interactive escalator.

"I want people to be conscious of other people's choices and how even strangers' decisions can affect them," Wilson comments. "I am trying to say that the new technology can increase the number of choices that we have to affect the media but that is not necessarily going to happen. People in Chicago should fight for two-way cable."

TWO-WAY TV

CONT. FROM COVER

The people fortunate enough to be employed in broadcasting have been called "gatekeepers." They can either shut off the public by only listening to them while the ratings are being taken. Or they can open the gates and let the folks have access to the media.

I think the gates should be open as wide as possible, but with some controls, such as giving short shrift to the certifiable lunatics in our midst.

The two-way communication must also be technologically superb and entertaining.

Probably the most important consideration ought to be the entertainment value. I tend to think that boring folks ought to be shot immediately. At the very least, they should be sent into oblivion with a speedy, polite, "Thank you...next."

How many times have you watched someone embarrass himself or herself giving a blundering editorial reply on some television station? The woman wears a ridiculous flowered hat which detracts from the message. Or the man is obviously petrified and he never takes his eyes off his script.

To me, those replies are prime examples of the broadcaster abrogating his responsibilities. Instead of coaching the replier,

"I tend to think that boring folks ought to be shot immediately."

instead of suggesting that the reply be done ad lib to someone sitting off camera, the replier is treated as if he or she is the enemy, to be processed quickly through TV's maw and tossed out to the public as proof that only professionals belong on TV.

And do not forget technological excellence. Just listen to Wally Phillips on WGN-AM every morning. You never hear Wally say, "And now up to our traffic helicopter...oops, they aren't there." The Phillips show, whatever you might think of the content, is perfection day after day when it comes to having the right segment on at the right time.

As to his content, Wally is there for us. He doesn't solve problems or claim to know everything. His audience calls in to tell us where to find Army jackets or the fastest way to Springfield by bus.

Some day, when the cable owners realize its vast potential, two-way communication will come to television.

It is easy to predict that at first it will be clumsy, awful and stupid—a host sitting in a chair, looking upward as a disembodied voice wafts in from the middle of the ceiling lights. (Note how slow even Phil Donahue's show

seems when he takes phone calls.)

Then, later, it will get better. Instant polls. Shopping by cable. Cameras spotted throughout the community so people can be seen by the politician they want to grill.

But it must be done right. With technological expertise. With a strong commitment to eliminate the dull and repetitious. And with a desire to listen and respond.

It may be that if broadcasters give up some control they might gain their birthright. They

are, after all, allegedly servants of the audience, aren't they?

Norman Mark, the former radio-TV columnist for the Chicago Daily News, has been a two-way communicator on WIND-AM for more than three years. He was heard on weekends, on the overnight show and during the afternoons. He's now heard 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays on WIND-AM and he's seen at 8:30 a.m. Saturdays and 10:30 p.m. Sundays on Channel 32 (WFLD).

WINDOW WATCH

Independent producers continue the momentum to set up a new satellite-delivered television service.

What has come to be known as "WINDOW" will have surfaced twice more when this issue of SCAN reaches you...once in New York on September 27 and again over Halloween in San Francisco.

The New York session involved two days of meetings and the production of a two hour program. The West coast version included more meetings—steering committee and local producers—as well as a special on TV.

"WINDOW" began as a shared vision of independent producers who met in Boulder, Colorado in August. The interim goal is to launch a regular weekly program followed shortly by a daily service, most likely a mini-pay tier aimed at a market that is not served via existing services.

In New York, meetings were held at the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF) and more than 100 enthusiastic locals participated. Two new steering committee members, Karen Ranucci

of Downtown Community Television, and Wendy Lidell of AIVF were elected to steering committee positions.

The original committee of John Schwartz and Ted Krichels of Boulder, Dana Atchley, Crested Butte, CO., Richard Wyde, Los Angeles, Jeffrey Nemerovski and Fabrice Florin, San Francisco, Kim Spencer of Washington, D.C. and Tom Weinberg of Chicago all participated in the planning sessions in San Francisco Halloween weekend. The meetings coincided with the San Francisco Video Festival.

The three-hour Halloween program was broadcast via non-commercial KQEC, Channel 32 (with portions on KQED, Channel 9) in San Francisco. The two-hour New York program, "This Is A Test," was shown on Manhattan Cable. The Halloween special was sent out nationally via Westar to more than 200 public stations. About a dozen had plans to broadcast the one-hour edited version. It was the first WINDOW programming to be sent via satellite.

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Consumers' Guide to Field Production

PACKAGES

Company	Equipment			3/4" Recorder plus Camera		
	3/4 Inch Recorder	1 Inch Recorder	Camera (3 tube only)	unit	with operator	with operator & baseman
Advanced Video Communications 49 S. Washington St. Hinsdale, IL 60521 Phone: 323-7464	Sony VO-4800 per day: \$90 per week: \$270	Hitachi HR-100 per day: \$350 per week: \$1400 Sony BVH-500 day: \$350; week: \$1400	Hitachi SK-91 per day: \$350 per week: \$1400 Ikegami HL-79 day: \$350; week: \$1400	\$400	\$575	\$650
Catholic Television Network One N. Wacker Dr. Chicago, IL 60606 Phone: 332-3860	Sony BVU-100 Camera/VTR package only		RCA-TK76 Camera/VTR package only	\$1000 7 days: \$6300 5 days: \$4850		
Center Video Center 5800 W. Fullerton Chicago, IL 60639 Phone: 637-1600	Panasonic NV-9400 per day: \$125 per week: \$375		JVC KY-1900 per day: \$200 per week: \$750	\$325	\$485	\$645
Communications for Change 11 East Hubbard Chicago, IL 60611 Phone: 565-1785	Sony BVU-100 Camera/VTR package only		JVC KY-2000 Camera/VTR package only		\$450, per five day week	
Victor Duncan, Inc. 661 N. LaSalle Chicago, IL 60610 Phone: 943-7300	Sony BVU 110 day: \$175; week: \$700 Sony VO 4800 day: \$110; Week: \$440	Ampex VPR C day: \$500; week: \$2000 Bosch BCN 20B day: \$500; week: \$2000	Thompson 701 day: \$550; week: \$2200 Ikegami HL 79A day: \$550; week: \$2200 N.E.C. MNC 71CP day: \$350; week: \$1400 JVC KY2700 day: \$220; week: \$880 JVC KY1900 day: \$150; week: \$600	\$725	will train	
E & C Media 1831 South Halsted Chicago, IL 60608 Phone: 829-0997	Sony VO4800 VTR Camera/Recorder Package only		JVC KY2000 Camera/Recorder Package only			\$950, 2-3 person
Electronic Field Productions, Inc. 1165 Tower Road Schaumburg, IL 60195 Phone: 843-2740	Sony BVU 110 per day: \$175	RCA TH 50 per day: \$500	RCA TK 76C per day: \$550		\$1100	
Mike Fayette 161 East Grand Chicago, IL 60641 Phone: 321-0880	Sony BVU 110 day: \$150; week: \$800 w/Faroudja Record Booster day: \$200; week: \$850	Sony BVH 500 per day: \$500 per week: \$2000	Ikegami HL79D per day: \$500 per week: \$2000	\$1000 per 10 hr. day	\$185 extra	
Del Hall 1920 N. Clark Chicago, IL 60614 Phone: 337-0122	Sony BVU 50, BVU 110 Camera/VTR package only		Sony BVP 300 Camera/VTR package only			\$1200 2-3 person
Golden Pictures 125 S. Racine Chicago, IL 60607 Phone: 226-8240	JVC 4400CU per day: \$100 per week: \$500	Bosch BCN 20 per day: \$500 per week: \$2500	RCA-76 per day: \$400 per week: \$2000	\$650	\$850	\$1000
H.S. Productions 137 Kingston Bolingbrook, IL 60439 Phone: 972-0078	Camera/VTR package only	2" System RCA TR 60 VTR	Phillips LDK 11 Color Cam. JVC KY 2000 Camera/VTR package only	\$650 \$450	\$100 extra	\$750 \$550
Independent Programming Assc. 1208 W. Webster Chicago, IL 60614 Phone: 871-6033	Sony BVU-50 Camera/VTR package only		KY-2000 (JVC) Camera/VTR package only			\$850
Luron Inc. 233 N. Michigan, or 2 Illinois Center, Ste. 2022 Chicago, IL 60601 Phone: 565-2700	Sony BVU-200 Camera/VTR package only		Ikegami HL79A Camera/VTR package only			\$1250
Midwest Teleproductions, Inc. 18 N. Center Bensenville, IL 60106 Phone: 595-2060	BVU-100 per day: \$145 per week: \$435		Sony BVP-300 per day: \$450 per week: \$1350			\$795
Optimus 161 East Grand Chicago, IL 60641 Phone: 321-0880	Sony BVU 110 day: \$150; week: \$800 w/Faroudja Record Booster day: \$200; week: \$850	Sony BVH 500 per day: \$500 per week: \$2000	Ikegami HL79D per day: \$500 per week: \$2000	\$1000 per 10 hr. day	\$185 extra	
Panos Productions 168 N. Michigan Chicago, IL 60601 Phone: 236-5535	Sony BVU 100-200		Ikegami HL-79A per day: \$500 per week: \$2000	\$700 ENG/ per day: \$500 8 hr. day		
Polycorn Productions 201 E. Erie Chicago, IL 60611 Phone: 337-6000	JVC CR4400 per day: \$95 per week: \$285	RCA-Sony TCH-50 per day: \$475 per week: \$2000	RCA TK-76 day: \$450; week: \$1950 JVC KY-2700 day: \$225; week: \$675	10% off		
Projection Room/Eye & Ear Telecommunications Division P.O. Box 51 West Dundee, IL Phone: 426-3400	Sony VO 4800 per day: \$70 per week: \$250	RCA TH50A per day: \$425 per week: \$1500	RCA TK76-B day: \$425; week: \$1500 Hitachi 3 Tube Saticon day: \$175; week: \$600	\$225	\$325	\$425
Roscor 6160 W. Oakton Morton Grove, IL 60053 Phone: 539-7700 or 996-3010	Sony BVU 200 day: \$200; week: \$600 BVU 110 day: \$150; week: \$450	BVU 500 day: \$500; week: \$2000 w/color playback adapter day: \$550; week: \$2200	Ikegami HL 79D day: \$500; week: \$2000 ITL 350 day: \$300; week: \$900	rates upon request		
Telemation Productions 3210 W. Westlake Glenview, IL 60025 Phone: 729-5215	JVC 4400 Camera/VTR package only	Sony BVH 500	RCA TKP-46 Camera/VTR package only			\$1000
Video Replay 441 N. Clark Chicago, IL 60610 Phone: 467-0425	Sony VO 4800 per day: \$125		KY 2000 per day: \$225 KY 1900 \$175	\$325	\$15 extra	

Auxiliaries (cost per day)

1" Recorder plus Camera unit	with operator	with operator & baseman	Lights (kit)	Radio Mic	Field Monitor	Hand Mics	Shotgun Mic	Scope	Fluidhead Tripod	Sungun	Vehicle	Special Notes	Half Day Rates	Discounts to Independents	Special Features	Contact	
\$650	\$825	\$900	\$40	\$40	\$35	\$15	\$40	\$45	\$40		\$100		X	X	Three mobile vehicles available. Call for complete information.	Michael A. Vergauwen	
			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X		Jan Lowden	
			\$10	\$50	\$35	\$10	\$45	\$75	\$75	\$20		1 day rates for weekend rentals			3/4" studio editing & post production available. Tape duplicating and film transfers	Rick Schultz	
			\$15		X	X	X		X					X	Work for not-for-profit agencies	Tedwilliam Theodore	
\$1050	will train		\$30-44	\$48	\$21-150	\$9	\$30	\$40-55	\$25	\$30	X				Portable switchers. Timecode reader. Intercom. 3 & 7 package.	Scott Keiffer	
			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			\$525	X	Computer graphics. Character generator.	Raul Zaritsky
	\$1400		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X	EFP/up to five cameras/25-foot full-production mobile vehicle with Zhyron character generator, 12 X 4 audio console, slow-motion and freeze frame capability. Editing. Post production.	Gary Huett/ Bill Kloock
\$1250	\$185 extra		X		X	X	X	X	X	X				X	*		Mike Fayette
\$1000	\$1200	\$1200	X	\$30	X	X	X	X	X	X	X				*	Sound stage.	Laura Frankina
			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X					Shoots film-style.	Del Hall
			X		X	X	X			X	\$650 with truck	with vehicle includes cameraman or engineer				Complete "on board" facilities, remote production van. 2" quad system	R.G. Billman
			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X				X	X		Scott Jacobs
			X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Time code generator		X	*	Creative consulting	Don Winter/ Hector Perez
			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	SMPTE time code included		X	X	Sound stage. Post production	David Rosen
\$1250	\$185 extra		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X				X	*		Ron Klyber
			X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X	EFP includes lights, microponers, mixer, camera support equip't. SMPTE Time Code Generator on BVU-100. Camera Prompter, \$200 per 8 hrs., \$125 per 4 hrs.	David Freer
			X		\$35	\$25-\$75	\$10-\$30	\$75		X	on order			*		Time base corrector, frame storer	Bill Glesner
\$800	\$900	\$1000	X	X	\$25	X	X	\$50	\$25	X	\$750	mobile truck cost includes scope, field monitors, etc.	†	X		Free delivery to established accounts. New office in L.A. (213) 462-4031	Ron Hilbe or Michael Zogin
			\$10	\$75	\$30	X	\$12	\$40	X	\$65	\$50	all equipment		X		Multiplexer	Bennett Grossman or Jim Anderson
		\$2500	X	\$75	X	X		X	X		X			X			Dave Roberts
			\$18		\$20	\$15	\$15	\$40	\$25			Will deliver free in Loop area.		X		Editing and duplicating, VHS/BETA/ 3/4". VHS/BETA viewing systems/ portable.	Jack Waitkus

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ART NOTES

by Christine Tamblyn

TONY OURSLER

"One Sunday, on their way to the park, it began to drizzle, so he sped up, without thinking. She noticed the matted animals on the pavement. He chose to ignore them. They seemed to have lost their way, so they took a turn for the worse. It was the scenic route, so they took their last (rite) (right), and those few seconds seemed to stretch into an hour."

Tony Oursler's most recent tape, *Grand Mal*, begins with an offscreen voice narrating these words. Oursler showed *Grand Mal*, along with an earlier piece, *The Loner*, as part of the School of the Art Institute Data Bank's series of video presentations by visiting artists, on October 20.

The rhetorical devices employed in the excerpt I quoted above are typical of Oursler's work. He piles narrative chiches in giddy, helter-skelter heaps which manage to be humorous on several different levels. He evokes the humor of irony by taking a detached, deconstructive stance toward the heated emotion of the phraseology. Yet, a certain pathos leaks through, as in the remark about the matted animals, which generates empathetic humor from the exorcism of awkwardness and discomfort. Nor does he eschew the primitive humor of puns, with his play on the words "rite" and "right".

The visual aspects of Oursler's work also features layers of complexity masked by a facade of ostensible simplicity. Oursler constructs elaborate miniature sets out of cardboard and paint. These microcosms are then animated with hand puppets and objects dangled on strings.

Oursler's style of rendering is deliberately crude and raw, in the manner of most "new wave" influenced art. The space he evokes is flat and painterly; it is the space of dream and reverie. Analogies might be drawn between his work and German expressionist painting. Technical eccentricity functions as a trope for disorientation and alienation. However, Oursler is less straightforward in his presentation of emotion than his expressionist forebears. He employs a deadpan matter-of-factness which is reminiscent of American "film noirs" of the 1940's.

Oursler's thematic concerns betray a classically Freudian anxiety about sex and death. In *Grand Mal*, the hero undergoes a convoluted odyssey through a landscape of disturbing experiences. The tape's free associative structure includes digressions about the difference between salt and sugar and a version of the creation myth which is both banal and terrifying.

Although it is tempting to interpret Oursler's tapes as autobiography because of their prevalent subjective modalities, it is actually more relevant to view them as sociological indictments. They reflect the ecologically destructive, dehumanizing qualities of technology in general and electronic media in particular. At one point in *Grand Mal*, a parable is told about television originating as a consequence of one of those grisly miracles of the sort that are often depicted in *The National Enquirer*. A painting of a voyeuristic eye begins to drip blood or tears, and when the liquid reaches a knothole on the wall, "they watch TV". Through the device of displacement, the contemporary workplace also becomes a target for Oursler's oblique commentary. The workplace metamorphasizes into a hell in which people have to stand on their heads in mounds of excrement, but are allowed to have coffee breaks.

The stance that Oursler takes toward society is similar to the role that the mythological Trickster figure played in primitive cultures. The Trickster was allowed to lampoon social conventions and indulge in tabooed behavior. By exposing the double binds and conflicting sanctions levied by society, the Trickster reduced tension and provided comic relief. Oursler's Trickster-like black humor in *Grand Mal* and *The Loner* is both entertaining and incisive.

WENDY CLARKE

Wendy Clarke, the New York-based artist whose most well-known work is titled "The Love Tapes" was the October artist-in-residence at the Chicago Editing Center. Even within the quirky world of independent video, "The Love Tapes" stands out as an unusual project. Since 1977, Clarke has been asking people from all walks of life to record their feelings about love on videotape.

The recording is done according to a structured format. Clarke arrives at a particular environment and sets up an enclosed space where people can be alone in front of the camera. When a group of people has gathered (who are sometimes random passersby and sometimes specifically meeting to participate in the project), she shows them some previously done "Love Tapes" and invites them to make a statement about love. Each person is allowed to choose their own music to play in the background. When the music is over, about three minutes later, the taping stops. The tape-maker can then choose whether or not to allow his tape to be played. If his decision is affirmative, the tape is shown to the rest of the group immediately, and preserved for future use.

In Chicago, the Chicago Editing Center equipped a video van hoping that "Love Tapes" could be made all over the city. Unfortunately, rain thwarted those plans, and the University of Illinois Circle Campus was the only site where tapes were collected. Clarke showed these

CONT. P. 10

FREE

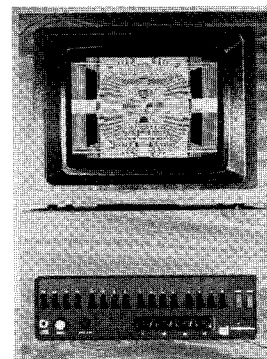
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TECH

FILM TO TAPE

by Charles Langrall

No matter how sophisticated the transfer system is, there is always a fundamental problem to solve in transferring film to tape in the US; that is, we project film at 24 frames per second while our television system is based on 30 frames per second.

Because the frame frequency of the video camera is different from the frame rate of the projector, closed-shutter time will coincide occasionally with vertical blanking and fall variously within the video picture itself the rest of the time. This irregularity in the content of each video frame amounts to brightness variations, and the resulting tape looks vaguely flickery.

One solution to the problem is a TV projector. These are made for super-8 and 16mm and project the film at the usual 24 frames per second through a multiblade shutter—typically five blades. A five blade shutter multiplies the closed-shutter rate by five. A video camera recording this will see an even four projector blanks per video frame, thus eliminating brightness variations from frame to frame.

THE SHOESTRING DO-IT-YOURSELF SUPER-8 TO VIDEO TRANSFER:

If you don't have access to a TV projector, here is an alternate method which works surprisingly well. Get a Super-8 projector with a variable speed control on it. They are pretty common, and projectors designed to take both straight-8 and Super-8 will almost always have variable speed. Point the projector at a screen or a clean white wall. Set yourself up close so that the projected image is small, bright and clean. Set the video camera on a tripod next to the projector and zoom in on the projected image, focus, and pull back out past the edges of the image. Check for keystoneing, i.e. the picture looks trapezoidal. If there is keystoneing, move the camera and projector away from the screen a bit and check again. When you are satisfied zoom in a little bit past the edges of the picture. This will allow some leeway in case your camera viewfinder does not frame precisely. Now watch through the camera as you gradually speed up the projector. You'll find a speed at which the flickering disappears or is minimized. You are now projecting at thirty frames per second. Finally adjust the F-stop on the camera for the best exposure. It's handy to have a monitor around to play back a couple of test exposures. Once you've picked an F-setting you can shoot away. Believe it or don't: in most cases the difference in film projection speed is barely noticable.

FILM CHAINS:

You many choose to take your footage to a commercial house and pay them to do the transfer for you on a film chain. Film chains

are usually set up to transfer several film formats to tape, eg. 16mm, Super-8, and 35mm slides. The S-8 and 16mm projectors are of course standard speed, multiblade type, and the camera in most cases is a three-tube broadcast Ikegami, RCA or the like. The projectors and the camera are mounted onto a steady table or lathe bed and aimed into a central mirroring system called a multiplexer. The multiplexer is arranged to reflect light from any one of the projectors into the lens of the camera. The output of the camera is then recorded onto whatever tape format you choose. The price is usually in the neighborhood of \$50/hour.

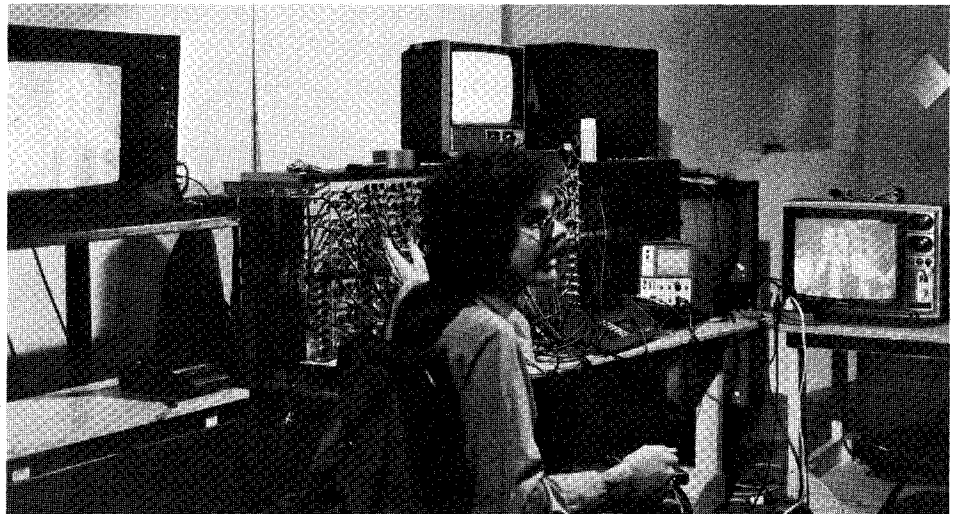
The advantages that you pay for in a film chain transfer are quality projection, precise image alignment, precision optics and high quality video recording. An additional advantage is the adjustability of the camera: The contrast of your copy can be controlled by manipulating the white level, black level and gamma circuits in the camera itself. Framing adjustments can be made to accommodate widescreen films or multi-slide presentations. For a slightly higher hourly fee many houses will let the client supervise the transfer session as the technician makes

these adjustments. If you want to transfer interlock or 16mm with magnetic sound make sure the house you plan to work with can accomodate.

FLYING SPOT AND BEYOND:

For between \$250-350 16mm and 35mm filmmakers can rent various projectorless, cameraless film-tape transfer systems offering computerized scene by scene color correction, freeze frames, titling, special effects and more. Competition between film to tape transfer systems on this level bears directly on big budget producers and is for the time being of only academic interest to the independent. What is worth noting is that transfer technology has developed to the point today where film can interface very successfully with video, and this in turn opens up options for producers in both mediums. Some filmmakers are now shooting negative and transferring directly to tape for post production. Many others need to be able to package their work in either form. Here's to a long and productive coexistence.

Thanks to Dana Hodgdon, Editel, Roscor and Edit Chicago.



The Chicago Editing Center is happy to announce a new acquisition, The Image Processor. Members, and the public were invited to an evening demonstration of the I.P. November 24, 7-10 p.m. at the Center. Drew Browning ran through some basic I.P. functions, and showed a variety of processed tape styles for both art and commercial uses. (Above, Drew Browning demonstrates the Image Processor at a members' meeting.)

	TOTAL		INDIVIDUAL		INSTITUTIONAL	
	Hours	Daily Average	Hours	Daily Average	Hours	Daily Average
1/2" Edit	7	.2	6	.2	1	-0-
3/4" Edit	106	3.4	99	3.2	7	.2
430 Edit	151	4.9	143.5	4.6	7.5	.3
3/4" View	192	6.2	181	5.8	11	.4
1/2" VHS View	104	3.3	85	2.7	19	.6
1/2" View	8	.2	5	.1	3	.1
Gallery	64	2.0	57	1.8	7	.2
		Total Days		Total Days		Total Days
Deck		10		10		-0-
Camera		9		9		-0-

ART NOTES CONT. FROM P. 8

newly generated tapes, along with some others chosen from the collection of 800 she had amassed at a public screening, at the Editing Center.

During the question and answer period following this screening, some members of the audience challenged Clarke about how she qualified as an artist, since the content of the "Love Tapes" is determined by others. When I had asked her a similar question early that day, she replied:

"To me, art is something that's a very essential and natural part of life. Everybody has all the ability in the world to make art. In our culture, we tend to separate artists from plumbers. In other cultures, such as primitive cultures, everybody is an artist. I feel that what I'm doing is showing people that they can make art, and that they have wonderful creative abilities. . . The work that I do is designed to reach people and not to be special and esoteric."

Since this is Clarke's intention, perhaps the most appropriate way to evaluate her artistry is to regard the essence of it as being the creation of a context in which other people can be artists. Judged from this perspective, she seems quite successful. The tapes are filled with vulnerability, loneliness, romance, projection, self-consciousness, and a surprising lack of humor.

It is evident that the video medium is useful in inspiring peoples' trust. The tape-maker can see his image as it is recorded, and thus he or she feels in control of it. For the overwhelming majority of participants, the process has a positive effect. Less than one per cent choose to erase their tapes. The idea for the project occurred to Clarke as a result of her own participation in group therapy, and there seems to be an intrinsically therapeutic element in the experience.

An additional by-product of the project is that it introduces people to the possibility of having an active relationship to television. This provides a marked contrast to the usual passive roles that the viewer of broadcast television assumes.

Clarke's ultimate goal concerning the "Love Tapes" is to have everyone on earth do one. Thus, she is now seeking ways to carry out the project in Europe and China. But, she feels no need to retain exclusive direction of the activity. Rather, she feels no need to retain exclusive direction of the activity. Rather, she would like people who have been introduced to the procedure to make "Love Tapes" on their own. Her refreshing lack of possessiveness is symptomatic of the egalitarianism and dedication with which she approaches art-making.

Calendar

Dec 10 **Workshop** on the new technology by Artist-in-Residence Steina Vasulka, the Chicago Editing Center, 11 East Hubbard St. Free to members; \$5 for non-members.

Dec 11 **Digital Video:** Recent work by Steina, the Chicago Editing Center, 11 East Hubbard St. 7:30 p.m., free to members; \$3 admission for non-members.

Deadlines

Jan 6 **Independent Cinema Artists and Producers (ICAP)** seeks independently produced films/tapes for a videodisc project funded by the National Endowment for the Arts and the New York State Council on the Arts. For information, contact: ICAP Videodisc Project, Attn: Kitty Morgan, 625 Broadway, New York, N.Y. 10012.

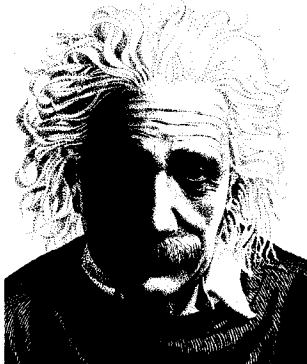
Jan 15 **Permanent Collection Purchase Program** of the Illinois Arts Council provides grants of up to \$3000 to non-profit institutions for purchase of art works by living Illinois visual artists, including video and film artists. Illinois Arts Council, 111 N. Wabash Ave., Chicago, IL 60602 (312)793-6750.

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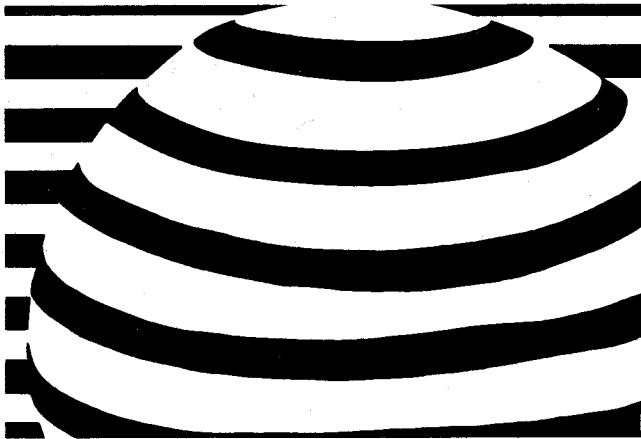
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WORKSHOP

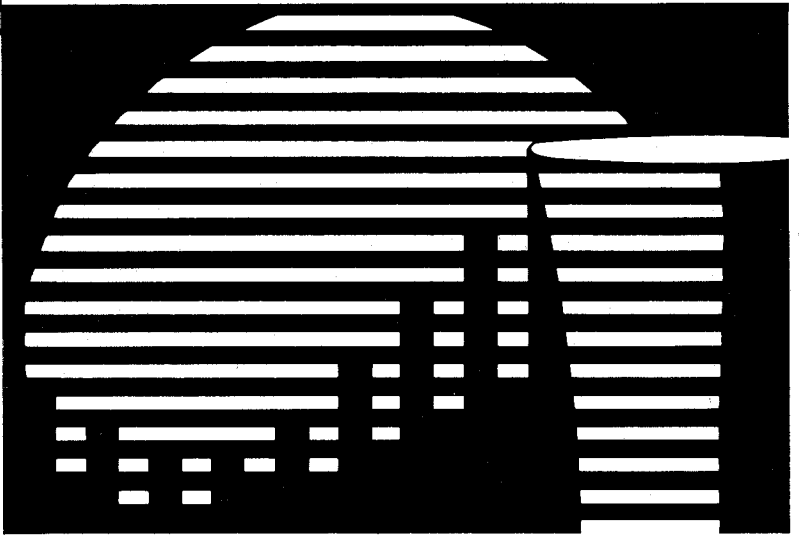
Problems in Video: Hardware and Software

December 10 2 p.m.

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