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## 2 INTRODUCTION: A NEW SHOWCASE

by Marc Glassman

June 27 7:30

## 4 PROGRAM 1: IN THE FIRST PERSON

*Passing Through/Torn Formations, Exclusive Memory, 8 Frames Per Second, Dream Voices/Day Voices, Scars*

June 27 9:30

## 6 PROGRAM 2: CONTEMPLATIONS

*Sirensong, Last Days of Contrition, Comptines, Lining the Blues, Work In Progress from Consolations (Love is an Art of Time)*

June 28 7:30

## 8 PROGRAM 3: SEXUALITY & REPRESENTATION (PART 1)

*Body Fluid, Miss Representation, Cheek to Cheek, Orientation Express, Hot Chicks on TV, Censored: The Business of Frightened Desires, Ads Epidemic, Histoire Infâme*

June 28 9:30

## 10 PROGRAM 4 VOICES OF EXPERIENCE

*Clouds, Buck, Up to Scratch, The Teaching Rocks, Home To Buxton*

June 29 7:30

## 12 PROGRAM 5: SEXUALITY & REPRESENTATION (PART 2)

*Another Man, La La La Human Sex Duo No 1., Ragged Clown, Learning About Female Sexuality, Dorothy, A Little Older, Low Blow, Delivrez-nous du Mal, Demi Portion, Le Plaisir*

June 29 9:30

## 14 PROGRAM 6: WOMEN WORKING THROUGH HISTORY

*Say It, Keep The Home Fires Burning, A Woman's Work Is Always Done, Girls Just Wanna Have Funds, Reportage Bresil, Proud Women, Strong Steps.*

June 30 7:30

## 16 PROGRAM 7: FLUID LANDSCAPES

*Ma, My Father And I Went Fishing, L'Etang, Dedicacion, Waving, Seated Figures*

June 30 9:30

## 18 PROGRAM 8: NEO-NARRATIVES (AND OTHER MELODRAMAS)

*A Pack of Lies, Harriet Loves, What's This All About?, Cop Out, Seventh Winter, Mysterious Moon Men of Canada*

## 20 INDEX

**Images '88** is the result of more than a year's worth of preparation by a Toronto-based collective called **Northern Visions**. The group consists of directors, producers, writers, distributors, critics and academics operating in the fields of video and film. We came together because of a commonly held desire to promote the excellent work being created by filmmakers and video artists across Canada.

Film and video — the time-based media — differ from other arts in that they require a technical apparatus, a prescribed amount of time, and a particular environment for their effects. A painter or sculptor creates an object which can normally be viewed in a variety of different settings, from a choice of angles, and for any length of time. By placing video and film together in a celebratory setting, we are hoping to situate them in as appropriate an atmosphere as a gallery or garden might be for older artistic disciplines.

The time is ripe for an event that brings together artists from across Canada who are working independently in video and film. Production is burgeoning in both formats throughout the country. Every region — indeed almost every province and major metropolitan area — boasts of at least one film co-op and video production facility. The range of material being produced, whether of an educational, commercial, industrial, or experimental nature has never been greater. **Images '88** blends the educational and the artistic, the personal and the political, the commercial and the avant-garde. The works are challenging, both in their range of stylistics and in their subject matter. In an age which treats Tharp, Cage and Rauschenberg as revered figures and teaches Joyce, Faulkner, Picasso, Breton and Giacometti in its schools, the importance of Canada's media-based art works is no longer a matter of conjecture or dispute. It is our belief that by showcasing the best contemporary independent artists' tapes and films, we will help to continue the essential process of discovery that Canadian audiences are gradually making with these exciting works.

Just as this event will connect producers to audiences, we are intending **Images '88** to be a meeting-ground for this country's film and video artists. Despite similarities in artistic styles and professional objectives, the evolutions of film and video art in Canada have progressed on separate paths. This has created a formal "Two Solitudes" which we expect to help bridge. The members of the Northern Visions collective represent the two artistic fields and through the exercise of creating **Images '88**, we have realized that there is much information that we can share with each other. Most of our concerns — to expand audiences, to explore alternative funding sources, to develop critical frameworks and histories, to distribute more widely nationally and internationally — are identical. By getting together and looking at the fine work being done by artists in both media, we expect a fruitful dialogue will be engendered.

As suggested above, the history of the production and dissemination of Canadian video and film art has occurred on parallel, but rarely converging, lines. Video began to be employed by a number of Canadian artists in the early to mid 1970s during a time of reaction to standard art practices. Video was cheap, easy to handle, and accessible for multi-disciplinary artists who were often engaged simultaneously in work involving music, photography, sculpting, installation and per-

formance. Artists such as Colin Campbell, Lisa Steele, John Watt, Helen Doyle and Michael Goldberg emerged during this time. (Merely to cite those few names ignores a host of other artists, but it hopefully evokes an era.)

By the mid to late 1970s, video was being employed as a common tool of expression. Some artists developed a body of work and found a *métier*. A few centres were already distributing work by that point, notably Art Metropole (Toronto), Women In Focus (Vancouver), and Le Vidéographe (Montreal). More recently, they were joined by V/Tape (Toronto), Video Out (Vancouver), Video Pool (Winnipeg) and others, as the pressure to make new and old work available was felt throughout the regions. A number of exciting talents emerged (Geller, Abrams, Rynard, Day, Kibbins, Greyson, Girard, and others) to complement the veteran producers (Randy & Berenicki, Susan Britton, Paul Wong, Kate Craig, Tom Sherman, General Idea, Rodney Werden, Vera Frenkel, et al.). A good deal of this newly distributed work was shown, as has traditionally been the case, in galleries. Lately, the educational market is being explored and some tapes have travelled to international video festivals.

Experimental film, which enjoyed great status in the silent era, declined as an art practice after talkies hit in 1927. It was revived at the end of World War II, thanks to the beautiful films of the American dancer/anthropologist/writer Maya Deren. Her psychological and poetic pieces influenced a generation including the young Stan Brakhage, Sydney Peterson and, to some extent, Kenneth Anger. By the 1960s, this lyrical influence had been transformed by the harder-edged politics and wild generational outcry of the times. "Underground" films began to be made, and were quite popular, especially in New York. Michael Snow and Joyce Wieland, two transplanted Torontonians, began to make films there. Meanwhile, back home, films were being made by young cinéastes who often had little sense, monetarily or aesthetically. Youth was having its day, however, and much work was made, some of which was quite good indeed. A distributor was needed, and so, out of the bowels of the hippie palace called Rochdale College came the Canadian Filmmakers' Distribution Centre (CFMDC). The year was, naturally, 1967.

Over the past two decades, many organizations have joined the CFMDC as distributors of educational, narrative, animated, and experimental work. The Funnel emerged as a co-op and a distributor, particularly of Super-8 work. Film Film (Montreal), the Winnipeg Film Group, the Canadian Filmmakers' Distribution West (Vancouver) and the Canadian Filmmakers' Distribution Atlantic (Halifax), among others, now actively distribute art/experimental/avant-garde films. Many interesting cinéastes are producing exciting work including such **Images '88** contributors as Richard Kerr, Bruce Elder and Phil Hoffman.

One of the prime concerns of Northern Visions as a collective is to create opportunities for more video and film to be screened, or televised, throughout the country. By featuring fine contemporary work in both film and video, by inviting many artists and distributors to the showcase and by creating some new audience members through the event itself, an "open-door" policy might start to encourage great things in Canada. A

united point of view amongst time-based media artists and their informed public should lead to wider possibilities for broadcast and distribution.

The presentation and selection of works for **Images '88** is unusual, and deserves some explanation. Our self-imposed mandate was to seek out as many new videos and films by independent artists as was possible. The main criterion was artistic excellence, but several caveats were added during our selection process. We discovered, as we had expected, that the number of exceptional tapes and films being produced in this country is so high that merely deciding to show work on a chronological basis would not be sufficient. The collective had always intended to feature works from the various regions of the country and, as the over-all quality was excellent throughout Canada, we felt free to do so. It had also been our desire to be egalitarian in our selection regarding gender, region and race. We wanted to represent those voices which through formal concerns or socio-political agendas are often ignored by national showcases. Above all, we wanted to screen film and video works in the same programmes so that audiences and artists could discover the particular similarities and differences between the two media.

It was with all of these factors in mind that we made our final choices. Our provincial representation is about equal from Quebec, British Columbia and Ontario, with the Plains and Atlantic regions strongly, but less quantifiably, represented. We ended up with more tapes than films, but due to the length of the films, there is actually a slightly longer running time for cinema in the programme. In terms of gender production, there is a preponderance of works by women, but the male cineastes have levelled out the disparity by creating longer works. The Northern Visions selection body attempted to represent the various concerns of Blacks, Asians, Native Peoples, gay and lesbian activists and feminists. These concerns have traditionally been ignored by mainstream festivals, yet they truly contribute to what is produced and what we know about Canadian culture. All of these elements are necessary for a true understanding of our country.

After weighing all of these aesthetic, sociological and political factors and making our final choices, we were forced to the question of how we were going to program the showcase. Generally, festivals are programmed simply on the basis of what is new and interesting. The works are then presented in a celebratory fashion, without analytical or thematic context. Curated programmes, conversely, usually take place because someone wants to promulgate a theory and does so by demonstrating a thesis through a variety of works. We found ourselves in a curious position. Drawn more towards a curatorial posture due to our policy decisions, we still had every intention of creating a festive event. Yet we did not want to put the works together with blithe disregard for sensibilities or political viewpoints.

After much discussion, we decided on an anthology format. Reviewing the selected works provided a number of loci around which one could fruitfully programme a thoughtful event. Although videotapes and films from particular regions and by specific races and genders did possess certain similarities in terms of construction and attitude, our focus remained philo-

sophical and national. We had always been curious about what issues might be commonly held throughout the country. Cutting across gender, racial and regional lines we discerned: sexuality and representation; the methods and ethics of portraiture; the construction and de-construction of narrative codes; the Canadian landscape and its effect on us; the reworking through history of feminist, gay activist, and racially oriented concerns; and the contemplation of the filmic and video apparatus with the concurrent consideration of what this time-based media can "say" philosophically. We grouped these issues into eight programmes and created, *a posteriori*, a thematic showcase.

Having done so, the implications of our programming in this manner are potentially contentious. Many questions arise: What about regional aesthetics? Is this programming yet another attempt to smooth over genuine disparities? What about the integrity of individual works? How will they be affected by these thematic imperatives?

To these questions we can only acknowledge that we are suffering from the sin of pride. We certainly realize that the integrity of the work and the artist is paramount. This showcase exists for the artists and their works to be extolled. Our thematic nominations are intended to provoke debate, not closure, and we hope the artists showcased and their audiences will find these categories useful. As to the regions, we cheerfully agree that Winnipeg is Winnipeg and Quebec is Quebec, and "Vive la différence."

We hope that **Images '88**, as a national showcase, will strike some chords for open harmony without collapsing the rich diversities that make up our Canadian imaginary.

## Postscript

**Images '88** is a showcase not only of film and video but also of **Northern Visions'** basic cultural mandates. We are excited by the possibilities inherent in creating annual situations where film and video artists and distributors can convene and be introduced to a broadly based audience. Plans are already afoot for a longer celebration of Canadian film and video to take place in 1989 in Toronto. At that time, we expect to show work of an historical as well as a contemporary nature in a number of venues. Our plan is to create a programme which will display the exciting work being made in every region of Canada along with a number of international films and tapes. It is our opinion that by placing Canadian work in an international context, we will enable audiences, critics and academics, to judge the absolute merits of the pieces.

**Images '89** will be a week-long event. Documentary, animation and narrative forms will jostle with exciting experimental work to make for an event which will represent the great options available in time-based media. Artists, distributors, academics and critics will be invited to curate programmes for this showcase. Technical and academic forums and workshops are probable; they are certainly helpful for extending the impact of such an event and its related concerns. All those interested are invited to contact us with their input into what we expect to be an important forum for media-based work to be seen, enjoyed and discussed.

Marc Glassman

The relationship between image and identity is one that has been central to Canadian culture. Our predilection for the Real, for the quotidian and the biographical is supported by strong experimental and documentary traditions. In an attempt to break down neo-colonial discourses, cultural imperatives have often reflected a desire to record personal and collective experiences: that is, to cultivate and preserve differences. **In the First Person** is comprised of works which are directly aimed at specifying differences — candid exegeses, painful speculations and abstract musings provide meaningful excursions into the personal imaginary.

## **Passing Through/ Torn Formations**

**Philip Hoffman**

1988, film, 42 min.

Ontario

*Canadian Filmmakers*

*Distribution Centre*

## **Exclusive Memory**

**Tom Sherman**

1987, video, 20 min.

Ontario

*V/Tape*

## **8 Frames Per Second**

**Chuck Clarke**

1987, film, 13 min.

Nova Scotia

*Canadian Filmmakers*

*Distribution Centre*

## **Dream Voices, Day Voices**

**John Galloway**

1986, video, 7 min.

Alberta

*Video Pool*

## **Scars**

**Lorna Boschman**

1987, video, 11 min.

British Columbia

*Women in Focus*

*Passing Through/Torn Formations*



*Exclusive Memory*



*Scars*

## Passing Through/Torn Formations

Hoffman's **Passing Through/Torn Formations** mixes formal filmic concerns with intriguing personal issues. Linking these two strands together by a symphonic structure and a lyrical voice-over, he creates an allusive and engaging text. Hoffman employs a battery of devices including superimpositions, non-synchronous sound and split-imaging to express the narrator/filmmaker's complex attitudes towards his journey back to a Czechoslovakian past that his grandmother had abandoned over half a century ago.

Using as his point-of-departure the image of his family's gravely ill grand matriarch, Bacsí, Hoffman weaves an intricate tale involving his uncle, a (female) first cousin, Bacsí's remembrances of her past (as he recollects them) and a sojourn that he takes to central Europe to discover his roots. While the forms that the film takes are undeniably experimental, its underlying emotional content marks this piece ultimately as being a poetic, intimate work.

## Exclusive Memory

*This videotape is excerpted from a longer work by Tom Sherman especially for this festival. **Exclusive Memory** is based on excerpts from a six hour monologue by Sherman. The recipient of the monologue is a computer based, video sensing, robotic entity of the artist's own creation. Sherman explores the relationship between people and machines by providing 'experience transfers' to his robot. An uncomfortable proximity emerges between the viewer and the robot and the audience experiences a powerful but frightening objectification.*

## 8 Frames Per Second

High contrast black and white photography, a subjective camera and a quirky sense of humour contribute to this extraordinary portrait of the filmmaker's neighbour Sophia, a working class woman from Cape Breton with opinions she's not unwilling to (loudly) share. Clarke's highly personal film is at once familiar and dispassionate — an innovative documentary which moves as kinetically as any action film.

## Dream Voices, Day Voices

"In this tape I have tried to realize the following ideas: 1) The way in which we perceive the every day forms and situations of physical reality is often quite different than the environment which appears when we experience visual memories and, thoughts and dreams . . . 2) It is common for us to experience parts of our external and internal worlds concurrently and at varying intensities." *Statement by John Galloway.*

Galloway's videotape is an experimental and fictional approach to the interaction between the sleeping and waking states.

## Scars

**Scars** makes "no big deal" out of the potentially explosive subject of women who slash themselves. Boschman's sensitive framings prohibit any totalizing view of the women who speak candidly about their scars. Tentative questioning and pained recollection are enveloped in a cool ambiguity which does not attempt to explain the wounds away.



8 Frames Per Second

When one contemplates something, the dictionary has it that the viewer is *observing thoughtfully* or looking at an object *with continued attention*. This is clearly what occurs to an engaged spectator of the arts, especially the time-based media ones of video and film. Cultural producers do this all the time in creating their works. From scripting through pre-production to shooting takes uncounted hours of time and the utilization of a goodly number of human resources. After that excitement comes more hours spent in editing and post-production work . . . The process of creating an independent artist's tape or film can take up to three years and the support of many individuals. That, too, is something to contemplate.

The works of the video and film directors included in this programme are marked by yet other areas of contemplation. All of these pieces question the standard modes of presentation expected in video and film. They are unabashedly experimental in that they challenge the viewer to comprehend different manners and methods of creating visually appealing work. Most of the tapes and films presented here are philosophical in implication, and one, Bruce Elder's piece, is implicitly theological. Elder's work in particular deals with the alternative definition of contemplation: *to meditate, or reflect upon, in the religious sense*.

## **Sirensong**

**Jan Peacock**

1987, video, 8 min.

Nova Scotia

Canadian Filmmakers

Distribution Atlantic

## **The Last Days of Contrition**

**Richard Kerr**

1988, film, 35 min.

Saskatchewan/Ontario

Canadian Filmmakers

Distribution Centre

## **Comptines**

**Diane Poitras/**

**Ian Boyd**

Les productions de  
l'impatiente

1986, video, 4 min.

Quebec

Groupe Intervention Video

## **Lining the Blues**

**Guy Glover**

Piano by Joe Sullivan

1939, film, 3.5 min.

Quebec

National Film Board

## **Work In Progress from**

## **Consolations (Love is an Art of Time)**

**R. Bruce Elder**

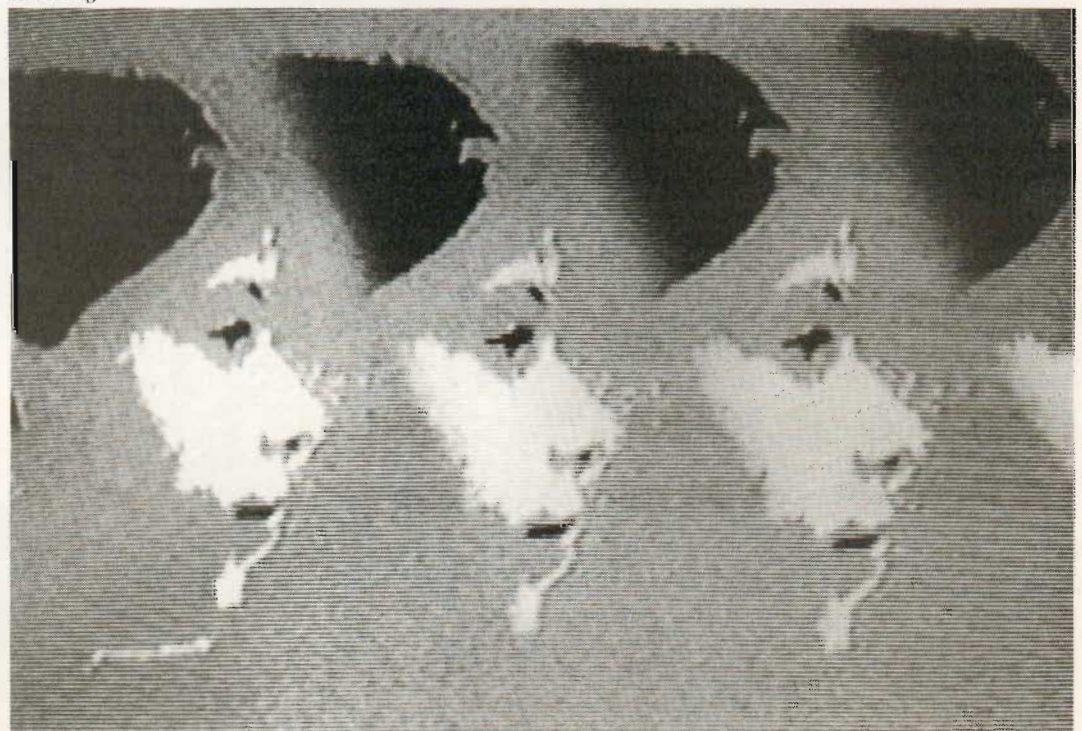
1988, film, approx. 45 min.

Ontario

Artist



*Sirensong*



*Comptines*

## Sirensong

"You are lured into seeing the place, except it's no longer a place — it's a scene, a point of interest."

The Moon and Monument Valley are known to us more as icons of representation than as geographical locations. This beautifully executed tape questions our ability to see beyond clichés, in an age of media saturation.

## Last Days of Contrition

With . . . **Contrition**, Richard Kerr continues to display his unique talents as one of Canada's strongest independent filmmakers. Stunning photography here evokes the concern for light and shadow more often displayed by still photographers. Kerr travels, physically, from Venice, California, through the badlands of Alberta to a baseball stadium in Buffalo and psychically from a mid-sixties, anti-Vietnam perspective to a mid-eighties sense of urban despair. Jingoism and the connection in American culture between games and war are deftly drawn in what is surely Kerr's strongest, most political film to date.

## Comptines

One day in Belfast, women hear that a prisoner has died and they angrily congregate in the street. Armed with garbage can lids, they bang the ground to mark the bleak courage of the ninth hunger striker to die in silence. "With **Comptines**, I wanted to suggest the transition between the daily blunt reality and the inner search for survival when common sense becomes unbearable. Also I had the naive and pretentious goal of making a rock video with something to say." *Diane Poitras from the article, "Committed to Memory," by Lisa Steele.*

## Lining the Blues

In 1939, during the National Film Board's infancy, Guy Glover drew colourful lined images onto 35mm film stock with the intent of creating an abstract animated work called **Lining the Blues**. Inspired by a lovely piano solo called *Andy's Blues*, Glover captured the tone and rhythm of that evocative piece. Regrettably, **Lining the Blues** lay abandoned for over a quarter of a century — for no apparent reason. Now restored onto 16mm stock, this unique film, which pre-dates Norman McLaren's appearance in Canada by two years, is available for our visual and aural delectation.

## Work in Progress from Consolations (Love is an Art of Time)

"This was to have been the penultimate section of my 30 hour long film cycle entitled *The Book of All the Dead*, which I abandoned in 1988.

For behold I will create new heavens and a new earth, and the former things shall not be remembered or come into mind. And now, go, write it before them on a tablet, and inscribe it in a book that it may be for the time to come as a witness forever. *Isaiah 65:17, 30:3*

"This quotation was presented to me as the final paragraph of a review of *Lamentations: A Monument to the Dead World*. I have read it as bidding me how to complete *The Book of All the Dead* and so cite it here as note on **Consolations**." (R. Bruce Elder)

As the film presented in this program is yet incomplete, we include here additional credits:

*Assisted by:* Cindy Gawel, Marilyn Juli, Susan Oxtoby, Alexa-Frances Shaw, Tom Thibault. *Principal Composer:* Bill Gilliam. *Principal Sound Assistant:* Tom Thibault. *Title Photography:* Sue Cormack. *Negative Assembly:* Piroszka Hollo. *In the role of the god-intoxicated philosopher:* James D. Smith (Jim Smith). *In the role of the psychiatrist:* Seth Feldman. *Psychiatrist scene adapted from:* Oliver Sacks' *The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat*. *Latin texts from:* *Tractatus de intellectos emendations*. *Poetry readings from:* Ezra Pound's *The Cantos*. The filmmaker gratefully acknowledges the support of the Canada Council and the Ontario Arts Council in the production of this film.



*Last Days of Contrition*

Over the past twenty years, the investigation and deconstruction of sexuality has led to the understanding that it is both a product and a process of representation. Sexuality is now an integral part of our culture and those who wage its wars must do so in this arena. But the terrain of sexual politics is slippery and dangerous — deciphering the already written from the process of writing is an exercise in futility. Despite these difficulties, the pressing need to write alternative models of desire has led to fruitful results in recent years. In Canada especially, where the problematic of cultural identity is of vital importance, cultural producers continue to work away at the seams that bind us. By exposing oppressive binarisms, by deconstructing hegemonies and by experimenting with representational strategies, new voices are beginning to have a hearing. Under the rubric of **Sexuality and Representation**, this first programme presents a broad sampling of recent work mainly from British Columbia and Ontario. In a general way the works included here address the prison house of sexuality with its glossy emblems of commodified desire. The interpellating power of the image — Capitalism's seductive harness — is their point of departure.

## **Body Fluid**

**Paul Wong**

1987, video, 22 min.  
British Columbia  
*Video Out*

## **Miss Representation**

**Kim Blain**

1987, video, 3 min.  
British Columbia  
*Women in Focus*

## **Cheek to Cheek**

**Michelle Bjornson**

1987, film, 6 min.  
British Columbia  
*Women in Focus*

## **Orientation Express**

**Frances Leeming**

1988, film, 15 min.  
Ontario  
*Canadian Filmmakers  
Distribution Centre*

## **Hot Chicks On T.V.**

**Elizabeth Van der Zaag**

1986, video, 7 min.  
British Columbia  
*Video Out*

## **Censored: The Business of Frightened Desires (or the Making of a Pornographer)**

**Vera Frenkel**

1985-87, video, 28 min.  
Ontario  
*V/Tape*

## **Ads Epidemic**

**John Greyson**

1987, video, 4 min.  
Ontario  
*V/Tape*

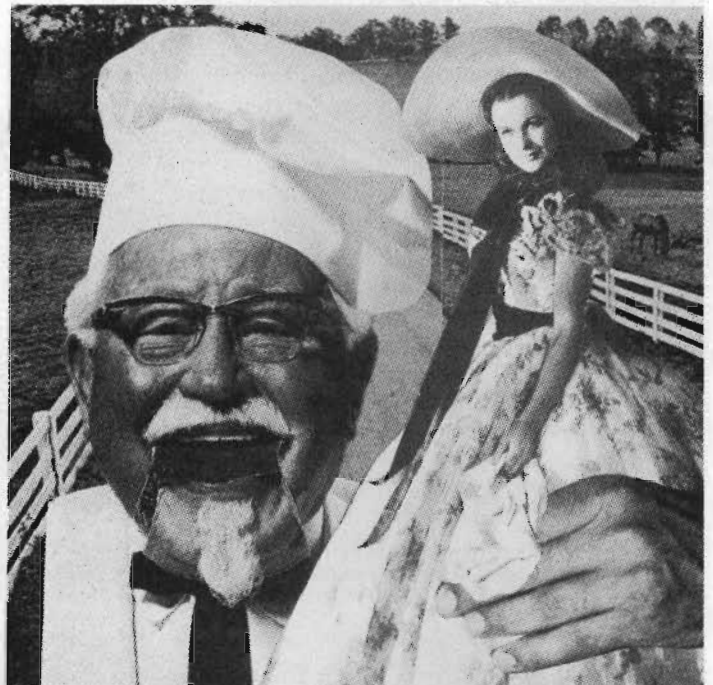
## **Histoire Infâme**

**Nicole Giguère**

1987, video, 8 min.  
Quebec  
*Video Femme*



*Ads Epidemic*



*Orientation Express*



*Miss Representation*

## Body Fluid

**Body Fluid** is a skillful, sensual rendering on tape of an intriguing performance piece orchestrated by Vancouver multi-media artist Paul Wong. Through a fog-laden romantic atmosphere, iconic figures emerge to perform on a huge turntable for an unseen audience. Our look at this garishly lit spectacle is mediated by the gaze of a female Chinese Communist. All flash and brilliance, this tape appears to critique popular culture by robbing it of any ostensible content. Leaving one to consider that beneath the surface of fake tinsel lies, as the Hollywood proverb has it, only the "real tinsel" — the detritus of our times.

## Miss Representation

An ironic re-presentation of a beauty pageant, **Miss Representation** condenses the paragon with a vengeance. Amidst a stream of banal descriptions and senseless rituals, female bodies compete for some inane *Miss* title. Kim Blain's witty sensibility doesn't miss its mark in this bizarre parade of bathing suits — a contest with no contestants.

## Cheek to Cheek

Recreating the lustre of classical Hollywood musicals, **Cheek to Cheek** uncovers the male-female hostility hidden within the dance. Beautifully lit and totally deadpan, it's *Top Hat* gone sinister.

## Orientation Express

Product logos, magazine cut-outs and photographs are animated in this hilarious, acerbic and incisive film that "challenge(s) the arrogance of a culture depicting women's lives as less than a three dimensional experience." *Frances Leeming*

Leeming's postmodernist animation appropriates dominant cultural imagery, turning it on its ear and demonstrating that context is everything, that patriarchal capitalism's desire to induce consumerism can be transformed into a reflexive inducement to laughter and reflection.



Body Fluid

## Hot Chicks on T.V.

The excitement and traumas of two girls turn into 60 seconds of huffing and puffing with computer animated explosions, blithely representing the hectic pace of a woman's middle years. Calmly, a serene white-haired woman emerges from this multi-layered explosion. She chats with her old friend (who is now a bag lady with a cellular phone) about survival and getting older. They repeat the exclamation of their youth; they're still *Hot Chicks on TV*. A hauntingly beautiful song, *Lost in an Azure*, cools this videotape off.

## Censored: The Business of Frightened Desires (or the Making of a Pornographer)

Mapping out the insidious relation between government censorship and pornography, Vera Frenkel's highly acclaimed sense of the ironic is in top form. The primarily graphic images (text, drawings, archival material, charts) are occasionally interspersed with footage (the sex-life of bugs!) from Frenkel's 1985 installation of the same name. Pornography and tourism are the secret regulators of subversive activity in a post-industrial world which feeds on its own contradictions.

## Ads Epidemic

"This is not a Death in Venice . . .", Ascenbach, once a *liberal fellow*, succumbs to an attack of ADS (Aquired Dread of Sex) while Tadzio learns that SAFE SEX IS FUN and various other characters warn us that ADS can happen to anybody. A catchy, upbeat musical look at the media-induced paranoia about AIDS. This videotape features an original soundtrack by Glenn Schellenberg.

## Histoire Infâme

A song by Louise Portal is the backdrop for this short musical. Fiction, archival footage and visual effects combine to provide an insightful history of women's experiences through the ages.



Cheek to Cheek

Contemporary Canadian cultural thought is being transformed by new voices that speak of different lives and concerns than those that have previously dominated our political discourse. The official history of Canada in its first one hundred years rarely allowed for the inclusion, in any meaningful way, of the experiences of immigrants, labour activists, feminists, people of colour or native peoples. Less exclusive immigration policies, and the concurrent strengthening of the Asian and Black communities in Canada, have combined with a liberal desire to accommodate the substantive claims of Native People to change the critical atmosphere here. It is now possible for these groups, and other socially disenfranchised people, to present their agendas (on some level) and engage in highly charged political debates. The videos and films in this programme are grouped together by these radical imperatives.

These works also function as personal critiques, with the dignity of the individual being accorded the highest possible respect. **Buck** and **Clouds** are primarily portraits; only secondarily are they "about" cowboys or Asian-Canadians. **The Teaching Rocks** and **Up to Scratch** are poetic accounts of the Ojibwa and labour histories in Canada while **Home to Buxton** is both personal and political in its rendering of a black community's annual celebration in rural Ontario.

## **Clouds**

**Fumiko Kiyooka/  
Scott Haynes**

1985, film, 26 min.  
British Columbia  
Canadian Filmmakers  
Distribution West and Canadian  
Filmmakers Distribution Centre

## **Buck**

**Vern Hume/Leila Sujir**

1986, video, 25 min.  
Alberta  
Video Pool

## **Up to Scratch**

**Craig Condry-Berggold**  
Music by Clive Robertson

1988, film, 7 min.  
British Columbia  
Canadian Filmmakers  
Distribution West and Canadian  
Filmmakers Distribution Centre

## **The Teaching Rocks**

**Lloyd Walton**

1987, film, 20 min.  
Ontario  
Sullivan Films

## **Home to Buxton**

**Claire Prieto/  
Roger McTair**

1987, film, 30 min.  
McNabb and Connolly  
Distributors



*The Teaching Rocks*

This second program includes an interesting blend of work from both French and English Canada. In very different ways these works celebrate the emergence of alternative representations of sexuality. Although never completely free of history's strangle-hold, these films and videotapes present bold attempts at its re-writing.

## **Another Man**

**Music:** Mr. Tim

**Collective**

**Video:** Youth Against

**Monsterz**

1988, video, 3 min.

Ontario

*Artists*

## **La La La Human Sex Duo No. 1**

**Bernar Hébert**

**Produced by Michel**

**Ouellette, Agent Orange**

1987, video, 6 min.

Quebec

*Antenna*

## **Ragged Clown**

**Claude Ouellet**

1986, film, 25 min.

Quebec

*Canadian Filmmakers*

*Distribution Centre*

## **Learning About Female Sexuality**

**Wendy Geller**

1987, video, 5 min.

Manitoba

*Video Pool and V/Tape*

## **Dorothy**

**Troy Beuys**

1987, video, 3 min.

Ontario

*V/Tape*

## **A Little Older**

**Marsha Herle**

1988, film, 2 min.

Saskatchewan

*Canadian Filmmakers*

*Distribution Centre*

## **Low Blow**

**Denise Tremblay**

1987, film, 4 min.

Quebec

*Artist*

## **Delivrez-nous du Mal**

**Marc Paradis**

1987, video, 9 min.

Quebec

*Le Videographe Inc.*

## **Demi-Portion**

**Maurice Van Themsche**

1987, video, 5 min.

Quebec

*Le Videographe Inc.*

## **Le Plaisir**

**Lynda Peers**

1987, video, 28 min.

Quebec

*Groupe Intervention Video*



*A Little Older*



*La La La Human Sex*

## Another Man

T.V. evangelist Jerry Falwell is silenced by a condom applied to his head. Customs censorship, safe sex and gender-fuck dancers make guest appearances in this energetic romp of a music video.

## La La La Human Sex Duo No. 1

Both the dancers, Marc Beland and Louise Lecavalier, and the choreographer, Edouard Lock, featured in this videotape are fantastic. There's no other way to state it. Original music by David Van Tieghen punctuates the breathtaking movement of the dancers as they draw us into the dialogue that can only be described as La La La Human Sex. Bernar Hébert has directed this beautifully crafted document.

## Ragged Clown

Infamous street musician Windi Earthworm has worked Montreal's main drag for over ten years. Familiar to many, Windi's performances blend the personal and the political into a web of provocative orations. Class structure, racism, sexuality and American Imperialism provide the mainstay for Windi's work, which the film explores with an appropriate edge. As we enter the private world of a public performer, Claude Ouellet's refreshingly rough aesthetic captures the political vicissitudes of street activism in the eighties.

## Learning About Female Sexuality

Performance artist Wendy Geller offers a flip response to feminist readings of Freudian theory. Sitting in what can only be construed as her analyst's office, Geller parodies a number of psychoanalytic maxims. Vulgar Freudianism at its best!

## Dorothy

This videotape opens with an enigma: Dorothy. The question is not who she is (although that's the real topic) but who, among her many friends interviewed, is her lover. As the viewer chooses the most likely scenario of seduction, this "whodunit" teaser playfully deconstructs the yarn of its own construction.

## A Little Older

A staccato series of black and white images of women attempting to convey their feelings on truth, deception and getting older. "Let's not mince words here . . . 2 minutes and 17 seconds of 0% subtlety." *Marsha Herle*

## Low Blow

**Low Blow** is a humorous animation which traces the obsessive reproduction of phallic shapes through the ages. Taking this one step further, Denise Tremblay relates the shaping of history to the propellant tendencies of phallic forms — thrusting unilaterally, ever forward, through space and time.

## Delivrez-nous du Mal

Languishing male couples caress, naked hunks strike sculptural poses as a handsome man comments on the "trivial nature of the orgasm." This piece looks at the hype around sex and the resulting differences between our expectations and the reality of the experience.

## Demi-Portion

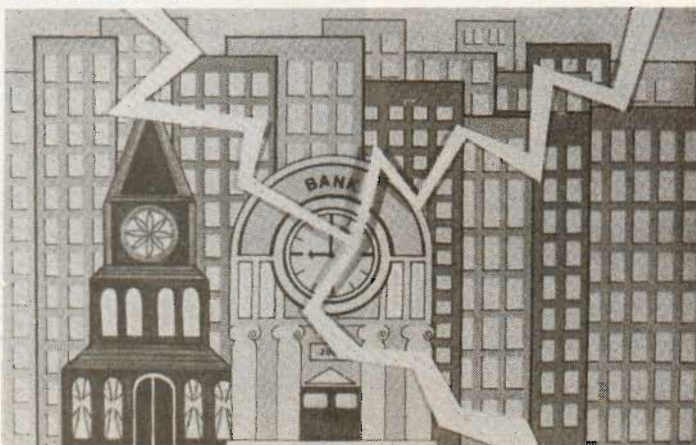
It's not that he's only half a man, but he's a man who can only live in profile. Unable to show his other side, incapable of confronting life or turning away from it, Jack Video must face the moral, political, and practical consequences of his position. This metaphorical tale about taking stances is profoundly one-sided and perniciously double-edged.

## Le Plaisir

Filled with treacherous contradictions, the representation of women's sexual fantasies is a difficult undertaking. Lynda Peers addresses this difficulty by exploring alternative expressions of female sexuality. In search of pleasure, two young women examine their own fantasies in relation to patriarchal models of desire. They are soon lost in a circuit of confusion, guilt and unpleasure: to what extent are women's desires constructed by dominant representations? How can women begin defining their own sexual identities? With a combination of innocence and cynicism, **Le Plaisir** reflects upon this problematic without resolving it.



*Delivre-nous du Mal*



*Low Blow*

**Women Working Through History** invokes several processes. The most fundamental of these is simply paid and unpaid labour: women's contributions to an entire sphere of production — conspicuously unwritten. Much of the work presented in this programme is informed by the kind of revisionism so essential to Western feminist thought. More than any other political movement in history, Western feminism has steadfastly insisted on the *personal*, bringing to the forefront areas of life previously considered irrelevant to 'real' political struggle. As a result, entirely new realms of investigation have emerged: division of labour in the domestic sphere, socio-economic conditions of women's labour, theologies of sacrifice, ideologies of representation, legislation of women's bodies, sexuality, the Unconscious — to name but a few. New epistemologies are in the making as history's oversights, its safely guarded borders, are being traversed and *worked over*.

## **Say It**

**Sherry Moses/  
Colleen Finlayson**

1987, video, 8 min.

Alberta

*Video Pool*

## **Keep the Home Fires Burning**

**Sara Diamond**

1988, video, 45 min.

British Columbia

*Video Out*

## **A Woman's Work is Always Done**

**Tamithy Basaraba/  
Jennifer Babcock**

1987, video, 2 min.

British Columbia

*Artist*

## **Girls Just Wanna Have Funds**

**Cathy Busby/  
Melodie Calvert**

1987, video, 11 min.

Nova Scotia

*Canadian Filmmakers*

*Distribution Atlantic*

## **Reportage Bresil**

**Nancy Marcotte/  
Collette Loumede**

1987, video, 16 min.

Quebec

*Groupe Intervention Vidéo*

## **Proud Women, Strong Steps**

**Producers: Skyworks for  
Women Working With  
Immigrant Women**

1988, film, 35 min.

Ontario

*DEC Films*



*Girls Just Wanna Have Funds*

## Say It

A war of attrition is waged against an immigrant woman by a chorus of off-screen voices which assure "once you've said it right, it will just come naturally." **Say It** is a metaphorical rendering of the way racial and sexual differences are managed by Imperialism's forceful discourses.

## Keep the Home Fires Burning

From welders to waitresses, Diamond has found and pieced together part of the absent history of working women in Canada. While images of working women could be found, little information about how women lived their lives — their attitudes about home and job — were available from the 30s and 40s. This videotape provides that information. Oral histories have become video histories. Diamond has used historical and archival material when possible and dramatic reconstruction when necessary.

## A Woman's Work is Always Done

Shot entirely on location in a kitchen, this tape is an ironic reworking of the popular proverb. Using fast cutting, the pots and pans "pixilate" into rapid-fire activity, transforming the housewife's traditionally quiet work place into a sonically cacophonous, anarchically nightmarish vision.



Reportage Bresil

## Girls Just Wanna Have Funds

This ironic tape contrasts the life of a contemporary arts administrator with the vision of a Hollywood heroine operating a saloon in the Wild West. Wanda runs an art gallery which means that she faces long hours, poor pay, and a mundane social life. Her troubles are intercut with Joan Crawford in Nicholas Ray's deliriously pre-feminist Western, *Johnny Guitar*, in this clever look at an often romanticized profession.

## Reportage Bresil

After extensive lobbying by local women's groups, Sao Paulo, Brazil became the site of the first women's police station in South America. Staffed exclusively by female officers, the station responds to charges of rape, assault, death threats and kidnappings. Besides crime control, the officers see a major goal in communicating to women that *violence is not their fate*. This tape, by two Quebecoise documentarians, is an interesting example of cross-cultural communications between disparate branches of the feminist movement.

## Proud Women, Strong Steps

The lives of immigrant women are rarely treated in an empowering manner by Canadian mass media. **Proud Women, Strong Steps** attempts to redress this imbalance. Two women, Ana and Tania, are allowed the freedom to express themselves and relate their tales in relatively unmediated conditions to the audience. Ana, a daughter of Italian immigrants, speaks movingly of her mother's tribulations as a factory worker and primary family caregiver. Tania, a South Asian Women's Group activist, expounds on the possible group strategies that women of colour — and all immigrant peoples — can employ in order to gain more power in their lives. This engaging documentary is a step in the right direction for Tania and all other people who desire to express themselves and improve their conditions in Canada.



Keep the Home Fires Burning

The relationship of the artist to the land has been a constant element in Canadian cultural history. From the novels of Frederick Philip Grove to the paintings of Emily Carr and the Group of Seven, a paramount concern in Canada's aesthetic thought has been the problem of gauging the influence of our environment on the evolution of individual expression in this society. The landscape of Canada is harsh, bright, and treacherously evocative. Artists who have decided to reflect upon this terrain, with its glacial lakes, sun-dappled wheat fields and cold clear morning light, find that their work gradually becomes more expressive on a mythological/iconographical level of comprehension. The notion of a human's ability to transform society tends to recede as the unwavering contemplation of the land begins to predominate. The time-based media artists in this program have chosen to join this discourse with all of its philosophical and sociological resonances.

While Michael Snow's film predominantly deals with the use of the trucking shot in recording a vision of the road, it does at one point move on to a lake. Curiously, the majority of tapes and films in this section focus on water and on its primary inhabitant, the fish. From ponds and lakes to oceans, this nation's visual artists seem to be eager to include ichthyology in Canadian mythology. A fishy tale?

Perhaps — but one should also consider the roles that fish have played in popular culture as metaphors for sexuality and in the Bible as the site of much Christian imagery. The fish could well emerge as a potent symbol for both mystical and corporeal allegories in the fluid landscape of Canadian aesthetic practice.

## Ma

**Kate Craig**

1986, video, 17 min.

British Columbia

*Video Out*

## My Father and I Went Fishing

**Karen Hoeberg**

1986, video, 2 min.

Manitoba

*Video Pool*

## L'Etang

**Michele Waquant**

1987, video, 22 min.

Quebec

*Le Videographe Inc.*

## Deadication

**Elaine Pain**

1987, film, 6 min.

Saskatchewan

*Saskatchewan Film Pool*

## Waving

**Ann Marie Fleming**

1987, film, 5 min.

British Columbia

*Canadian Filmmakers*

*Distribution West*

## Seated Figures

**Michael Snow**

1988, film, 41 min.

Ontario

*Canadian Filmmakers Distribution*

*Centre*



*Seated Figures*

## Ma

The three principal images in Craig's videotape **Ma** are the rocks of the ancient temple site at Mamalapuram in south east India, the Tibetan prayer flags at Rumtek Monastery in Sikkim and the Tibetan prayer wheels surrounding the ancient stupa at Swayambhu Hill in Nepal. Craig's videotape poses the following question: are these images an indication that man's rituals, both ancient and modern, serve to keep the universe infinitely alive and turning?

## My Father and I Went Fishing

Karen Hoeberg's portrait of her father is relayed through an intimate meditation on a family tradition. With wonderful simplicity, Hoeberg creates gentle rhythms out of her father's recollections, her own voice, the ice, the water, the fishing. A poetics of winter.

## L'Etang

This tape beautifully documents one autumn day around a pond — *l'etang* of the title. Yet Waquant carefully orchestrates all the devices of the medium — framing, editing, evocative music — to squeeze every ounce of the dramatic potential from this everyday scene. As a result, the fish, the ducks, casual strollers, the pond itself are turned into actors and the tape as a whole becomes a meditation on the abstraction of art from reality.

## Deadication

A product of the Saskatchewan Film Pool, **Deadication** approaches the natural world (fish, specifically) with a fully developed aesthetic sense. You may never go ice fishing again.

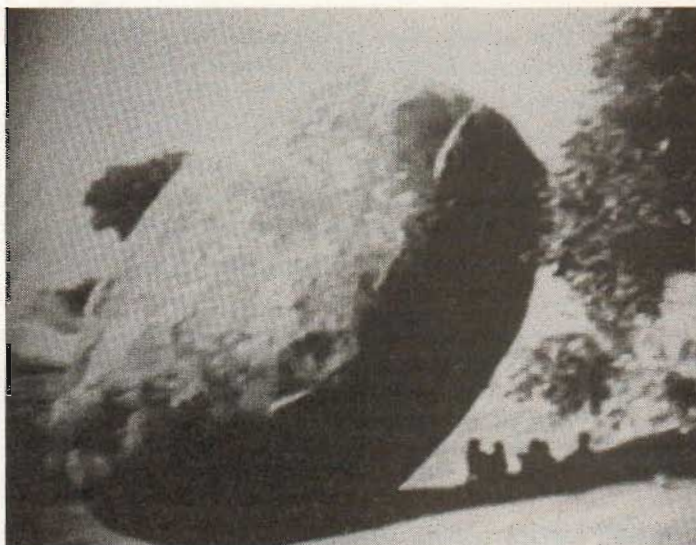
## Waving

A film about family, life and death. The filmmaker speaks of her relationship with her grandmother on the soundtrack, while optically manipulating a single image of a woman under water, creating a unique metaphor for the overwhelming power of grief.

## Seated Figures

**Seated Figures** represents a continuation of Michael Snow's project for the cinema, the exploration of the syntactical construction of filmic language through an exhaustive cataloguing of the possibilities inherent in any particular cinematic movement or device.

The film is an exploration of the trucking shot, a movement in which the camera travels alongside a moving object in order to follow its action. The activities we perceive are as much the shots themselves as they are the items viewed; in fact, the longevity of the shots, the relatively sparse sound track and the subject chosen (a highway and its environs) contribute equally to this discrete cinematic experience. What one sees here are the elements of a genuine road movie, with a gentle and lyrical progression from concrete to sand to water to a beautiful row of mountain flowers.



Ma



My Father and I Went Fishing



L'Etang

Video and film artists who feel the impulse to create fictional worlds in order to express themselves often find that their work exists in a problematic state. What is dredged up from the psyche in order to fashion something new is often just a recapitulation of old narrative vices. No truly contemporary artist wants to make another "June/Moon/Swoon" tape or a re-hash of *The Big Sleep*. And yet these traditional forms are part and parcel of our common heritage — they are what we understand. Deconstructed by a host of theorists for the very generation now making films and videotapes, classical narrative models have come to provide the basis for new hybrid forms. In this vein, **Neo-Narratives (and Other Melodramas)** groups together works which experiment with the parameters of traditional narration. Through a variety of strategies (parody, deconstruction), a range of architectonics are reconstituted and new possibilities emerge from the old.

## **A Pack of Lies**

**Colleen Kerr**

1986, video, 5 min.

Manitoba

*Video Pool*

## **Harriet Loves**

**Alexandra Gill**

1988, film, 25 min.

Ontario

*Canadian Filmmakers*

*Distribution Centre*

## **What's This All About?**

**Chris Hawkes/**

**Gerhard Gehrmann**

1987, video, 8 min.

Manitoba

*Video Pool*

## **Cop Out**

**Gary Kibbins**

1988, video, 18 min.

Ontario

*V/Tape*

## **Seventh Winter**

**Ray Hegel/**

**Rob Thompson**

1988, video, 12 min.

Ontario

*S.A.W. Video*

## **Mysterious Moon Men of Canada**

**Colin Brunton**

1988, film, 26 min.

Ontario

*Canadian Filmmakers*

*Distribution Centre*



*Cop Out*



*Seventh Winter*

## A Pack of Lies

What to do with an unreliable narrator? Colleen Kerr faces the camera and tells her life-story over and over again. Each time though, her name, her father and her occupation are drastically different. Soon the viewer is confronted with an array of printed facts, hand written biographies and split screens: a cacophony of contradictory statements. "Each of these facts," insists the author, "is absolutely true."

## Harriet Loves

"*Harriet Loves* is a sensual exploration of two dispossessed women . . . a cinematic poem that occurs in the haunted imagination of Samantha as she journeys down the long hot road to the industrial beach where she discovers her vital young sister . . . for the last time." *Alexandra Gill*

This meditative account of the slow descent into madness of one woman, and her sister's reaction, is sensitive and caring. The director allows her main protagonists to inhabit their parts in a free and intimate manner. What results is a well thought-out piece, created from a woman's perspective, that is gracefully and subtly political in its feminist implications.

## What's This All About?

It's about a conversation between a woman, her mother and a day-time soap opera. Over the phone, a woman tells her mother about the recent break-up of her marriage. Slowly and strangely a day-time soap opera begins to parallel her conversation and it is not long before her psychic anguish is completely dictated by the tube. Drawing her into a labyrinth of melodramatic gestures and clichéd testimonials, *What's This All About?* is *Videodrome* revisited.

## Cop Out

There have been many postmodern thrillers, but Kibbins' *Cop Out* may be the first to actually quote French theorist Jean Baudrillard. By turns breezy and complex, *Cop Out* fast-forwards through crime thrillers and postmodern thought, all the while taking the pants off male posturing.

## Seventh Winter

Posing as German performance artists, Ray Hegel and Rob Thompson provide a clever rendering of the worst in angst-ridden theatrics. Across anguished cries of despair and obscene self-mutilation, the pair take time to critique each other's work and cast an occasional wave to their friends in "Kanada." Operating within the rigorous constraints of parody, *The Seventh Winter* manages to blend dead-pan humour with striking stylizations.

## Mysterious Moon Men of Canada

Brunton continues his collaboration with writer David McFadden in this low key, funny 'mocumentary' about Brownie, a filmmaker who sets off in search of the author of a letter describing the first Canadian moon trip in 1959.

The music by Toronto's *Shadowy Men From A Shadowy Planet*, a group which specializes in post-punk Ventures/Duane Eddy style garage-rock, is perfectly in keeping with the naive docu-journalist's absurd quest. A send-up of the investigative reporter genre and romantic road films, *Mysterious Moon Men* is an episodic melodrama gone — quite happily — wild.



*Harriet Loves*

Babcock, Tamithy	<i>A Woman's Work Is Always Done</i>	14	Hoeborg, Karen	<i>My Father And I Went Fishing</i>	18
Basaraba, Jennifer	<i>A Woman's Work Is Always Done</i>	14	Hoffman, Phil	<i>Passing Through/Torn Formations</i>	4
Beuys, Troy	<i>Dorothy</i>	12	Hume, Vern	<i>Buck</i>	10
Bjornson, Michelle	<i>Cheek to Cheek</i>	8	Kerr, Colleen	<i>A Pack of Lies</i>	18
Blain, Kim	<i>Miss Representation</i>	8	Kerr, Richard	<i>Last Days of Contrition</i>	8
Boschman, Lorna	<i>Scars</i>	4	Kibbins, Gary	<i>Cop Out</i>	18
Boyd, Ian	<i>Comptines</i>	8	Kiyooka, Fumiko	<i>Clouds</i>	10
Brunton, Colin	<i>Mysterious Moon Men of Canada</i>	18	Leeming, Frances	<i>Orientation Express</i>	8
Busby, Cathy	<i>Girls Just Wanna Have Funds</i>	14	Loumede, Colette	<i>Reportage Bresil</i>	14
Calvert, Melodie	<i>Girls Just Wanna Have Funds</i>	14	Marcotte, Nancy	<i>Reportage Bresil</i>	14
Clarke, Chuck	<i>8 Frames Per Second</i>	4	McTair, Roger	<i>Home to Buxton</i>	10
Condy-Berggold, Craig	<i>Up To Scratch</i>	10	Moses, Sherry	<i>Say It</i>	14
Craig, Kate	<i>Ma</i>	18	Ouellet, Claude	<i>Ragged Clown</i>	12
Diamond, Sara	<i>Keep The Homefires Burning</i>	14	Pain, Elaine	<i>Deadication</i>	18
Elder, R. Bruce	<i>Work in Progress</i>	8	Paradis, Marc	<i>Delivrez nous du Mal</i>	12
	<i>from Consolations (Love is an Art of Time)</i>	14	Peacock, Jan	<i>Sirensong</i>	8
Finlayson, Colleen	<i>Say It</i>	18	Peers, Lynda	<i>Le Plaisir</i>	12
Fleming, Anne Marie	<i>Waving</i>	8	Poitras, Diane	<i>Comptines</i>	8
Frenkel, Vera	<i>Censored: The Business of Frightened Desires</i>	8	Prieto, Claire	<i>Home to Buxton</i>	10
Galloway, John	<i>Dream Voices/Day Voices</i>	4	Sherman, Tom	<i>Exclusive Memory</i>	4
Gehrmann, Gerhard	<i>What's This All About?</i>	18	Skyworks	<i>Proud Women, Strong Steps</i>	14
Geller, Wendy	<i>Learning About Female Sexuality</i>	12	Snow, Michael	<i>Seated Figures</i>	18
Giguère, Nicole	<i>Histoire Infâme</i>	8	Sujir, Leila	<i>Buck</i>	10
Gill, Alexandra	<i>Harriet Loves</i>	18	Thompson, Rob	<i>Seventh Winter</i>	18
Glover, Guy	<i>Lining the Blues</i>	8	Tremblay, Denise	<i>Low Blow</i>	12
Greyson, John	<i>Ads Epidemic</i>	8	Van der Zaag, Elizabeth	<i>Hot Chicks on TV</i>	8
Hawkes, Chris	<i>What's This All About?</i>	18	Van Themsche, Maurice	<i>Demi-Portion</i>	12
Haynes, Scott	<i>Clouds</i>	10	Walton, Lloyd	<i>The Teaching Rocks</i>	10
Hébert, Benar	<i>La La La Human Sex Duo No. 1</i>	12	Waquant, Michele	<i>L'Etang</i>	18
Hegel, Ray	<i>Seventh Winter</i>	18	Wong, Paul	<i>Body Fluid</i>	8
Herle, Marsha	<i>A Little Older</i>	12	Youth Against Monsterz	<i>Another Man</i>	12

## HATS OFF TO CANADIAN TALENT.

Warm congratulations to all participants in IMAGES '88 — and hats off to Northern Visions for its ongoing support for new Canadian talent.

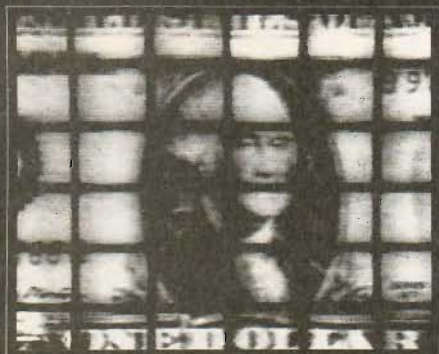
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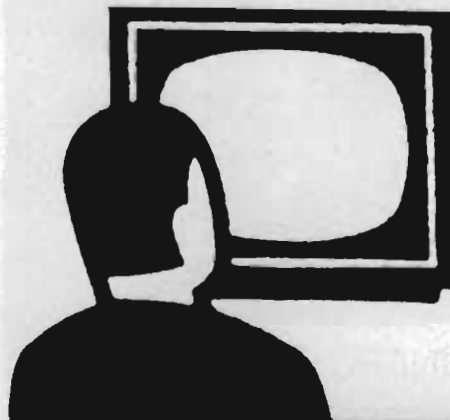
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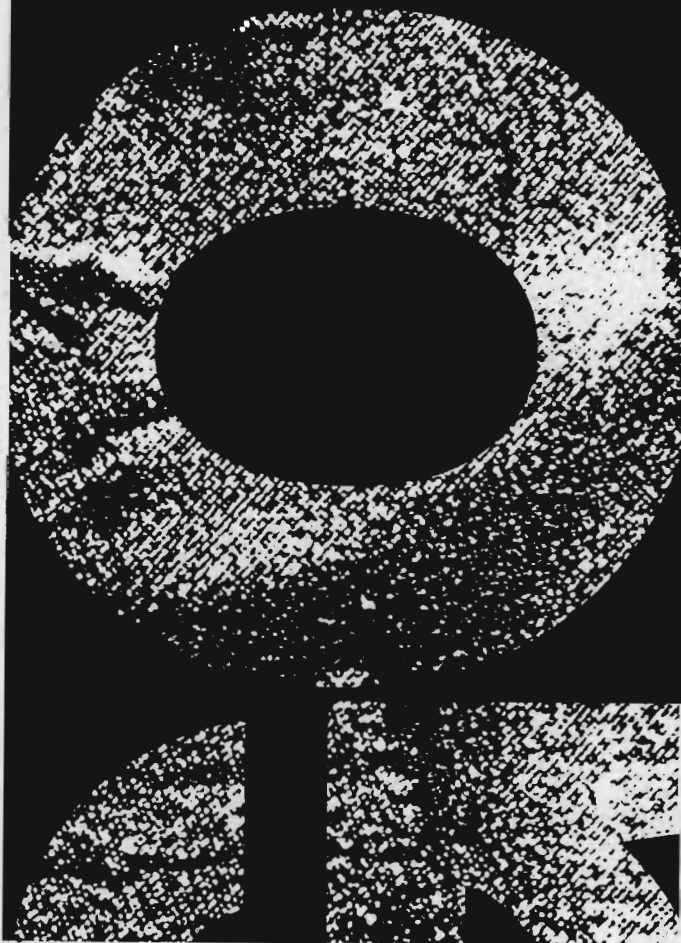
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# NOTES

**IMAGES 89 WATCH FOR IT!**

