
DIGNITY THROUGH DISSENT

MFX Video

'Dignity Through Dissent' is a recording of a Billy Bragg concert in 1985, simply shot with Billy picked out in a single spotlight and therefore very effective. Songs range from the cynical 'Busy Girls Buy Beauty' to the ballad 'St Swithuns Day, and finishing with A13 (better than Route 66 anyway). As the Nation's Conscience Billy shows his support for the Unions and concerns for the people; and his disgust at 'die Fuhrerein's' hypocrisy over the Manchester Airport disaster. All the hits and more.

The tape has been produced by a new Glasgow co-operative called MFX, who are aiming 'to break the rather folksy mould of Scottish video production'. It all came about through a phone call direct to Bragg's management (Sincere), who gave a surprising go-ahead. Facilities were provided by the Video Dept at Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art, and editing took place over a period of one week under the strain of the '85 Liberal Party Conference in Dundee ('we've never seen so much corduroy!'). The members of MFX all come from independent and artist's video backgrounds, and their intention is to offer broadcast quality productions on less than broadcast budgets. They've recently been involved in a DER videowall, several video installations, the production of adverts for cable and a 'constant output of video-art', some of which is currently touring the US as a part of a "Made in Scotland" tape.

They're trying to encourage independent labels in Scotland to put aside some money for productions, which, they say, is difficult when 'everybody has a thing about London postcodes'. It all sounds very exciting: for more details contact:

Doug, Alan or Richard at 62 Kelvingrove St, Glasgow G3 7SA. Tel. 041 332 5818 (daytime) or 041 554 5643 (evening).

PLEASE LEAVE THIS GATE OPEN

Klaas Oversee and Liz Hare

This video illustrates some of the principles and processes of drama work with mentally handicapped people, using material from two projects.

Drama as a means of self-expression can be a social, self educating and therapeutic experience, and although the distinction is not made clear, the video mainly concerns itself with the second, drama for learning. It illustrates the basic pattern of development of the work, in four stages. The first stage is one of relaxation, and allows the participants to get over their self-consciousness and move towards self-expression. The second and third stages involve developing the imagination and building up relationships between the members of the group. The final stage is one where the environment is transformed into a space that encourages the stimulation, development and enactment of ideas.

The practical material shows three different areas of drama work.

1. Volunteers working with leaders for a session with mentally handicapped people.
2. Volunteers and mentally handicapped people working together in drama for the first time.
3. The eighth session of a series where volunteers and mentally handicapped people have developed work together.

Combined with a booklet which expands on the aims of the work the video is useful for drama workers and volunteers wanting to work with mentally handicapped people, and for the trainers of volunteers. It should be said that the video is about the drama workers and the volunteers and does not represent the viewpoints of the mentally handicapped people in the project. I personally would have been interested in hearing what they had to say. Another video perhaps?

For more details contact Liz Hare on 0524 39552

Jackie Shaw

PICTURING DERRY

Faction Films 52 mins For hire on 16mm, U-matic and VHS

'A war isn't fought with only guns, but with words and pictures too'

This tape attempts to show a different view of Derry, by studying the work of a few photographers and analysing the ideas behind their work and the ways in which the pictures are used. Ranging from amateur photographers with their family albums about the hunger strikers to an RUC surveillance photographer, and coupled with



interviews with international photo-journalists, the aim is to show that there is another world to that (mis)represented in the media. Young people question the role of captions above newspaper pictures, and of cropping pictures to support a paper's view or policies.

Yet the tape is more than just an explanation or account of the troubles. There is a positive emphasis on the reawakened interest in Irish culture, and the desire to show the outside world that Derry people are ordinary human beings. The result is a film that is both direct and poignantly understated.

For details contact the Arts Council on 01 629 9495

Helen Deeble