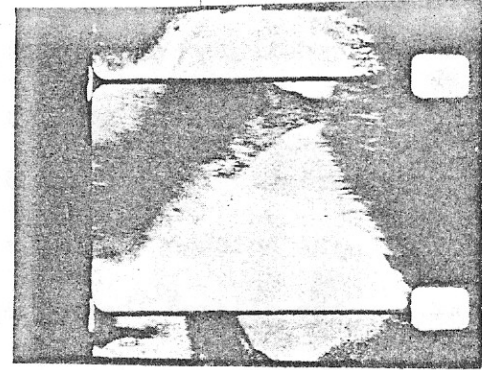


SHEEPMAN GOES WALKABOUT WITH A GREYHOUND - a fifty-eight day tour of North America with Sheepman and the Sheared, a new film by Mike Leggett, in seven parts and of  $2\frac{1}{4}$  hours duration - also the earlier Shepherd's Bush and the videotape, Compilation 1973-4.



The following notes are compiled for three reasons; to assist prospective tour-makers; to provide the screening organisations themselves particularly those responsible for programming with information about one another's activities as seen from the outside - this is a request made by several of them and though slightly unexpected can be realised having travelled around such a vast country where to many, Europe is as close, or as far, as New York itself; and finally to make sense for my own interest and purposes the scramble of notes collected whilst on the road - it goes without saying that there is no particular order within each of the geographical locations though they themselves follow chronologically.

Travelling was by Laker charter Gatwick/Toronto (minimum booking 60 days in advance) an adequate though not always comfortable carrier particularly in the airport waiting areas; Greyhound Ameripass assured buses anywhere, anytime for the two month period, there being a one hundred dollar reduction on the purchase for aliens buying abroad, costing 250 dollars. Hotels and motels in Canada were expensive averaging 20 dollars a night exclusive, about half that in the States - luckily the fabled North American hospitality was not lacking! Internal flights are about twice the price of an individual bus ticket and work like clockwork if you can afford it - the

pilots are ex-taxicab drivers. The gastronomic uniformity of cheaper eating houses coast to coast meant that unless you wanted to die of boredom at the table (though some claim the food bought in such places will make sure of that anyway), it is necessary to shell out more than one may be used to -

6 dollars for a steak, 5 for a fish dish and 4 for a shared Chinese meal. The latter is particularly good value and beats anything found in Europe. Drinking is not as advanced a social custom however unless, apparently, one belongs to the Republican party; this explains to a European why the alleged 'beer', aptly named 'ail', has to be served so cold as to just squeeze out of a bottle. Should it be squeezing out of a can then of course the substance is referred to by its full name, 'pail'. To compensate there is a range of varying liquors of the firewater variety which if 'Old Turkey' is anything to go by will certainly burn a hole in one or both of two places. The careful tending of the metabolism is thoroughly recommended whilst touring; even in the relative comfort of a Greyhound bus the demands being made on the system, particularly on arrival, where invariably a tight schedule of meetings and visits becomes necessary, mean that any attempt to save on the cost of eating returns uneconomic savings.

The itinerary notes refer to the institutions connected directly with the screenings. Small reference is made to related places particularly local colleges and art galleries and the individuals connected with these places - in all the visits a determined effort was made to see the work being produced or engaged in locally. This for one thing involved seeing a lot of films and videotapes from various sources some of which can be listed here together with their makers: 'Walking in O & R' - Peter Dudar; In the Singular, Live Lice, A Conceptographic Reading of Our World Thermometer, WORKS, We Apologise for the Delay, and Concert in Montreal all by Clive Robertson; Everything Everywhere - Keith Locke; Brute Saxes - Eric Metcalfe; The Decadance - Western Front;

Ceremony in the Snow - On-E Yamashiki; tapes by Reindeer Werk; Running - Taki Bluesinger; The Pursuit Machine/1926, The Spanish Tragedy and Van der Graaf all by Don Druick; A Little While More Yet - Jan Martell;

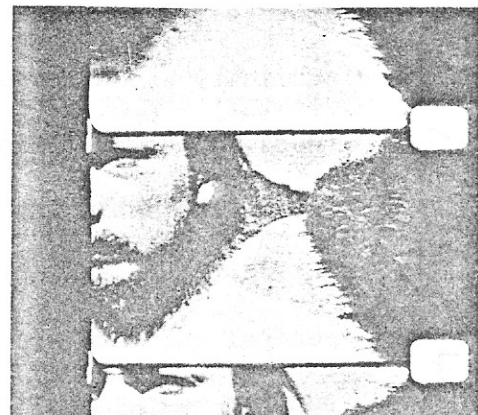
Seashore - David Rimmer; Backbone - Tom Braidwood; tapes by American Indian Movement, Metromedia, Intermedia, Al Razutis, Terry Riley, Sol Levine, General Idea, Lisa Steele, Colin Campbell; 1944 - Wayne Wang; Life with Video and Home Movie - Willie Boy Walker; With Enough Bananas - Philip Makanna; Making Out, Sea Space and Being - William Farley; Mr. Horse, Bat Whispers and Bad Company some early Hollywood sound films; Deep Throat and The Devil and Miss Jones - Damiano; the films of Freude (Bartlett), Ed Jones, Rudi Berkhardt and Robert Breer; videotape - Willoughby Sharpe; Smile - awful; Serence Velocity - Ernie Gehr; Eel - Dave Lee; Nocturne XI - Bob Gaylor; 24 Frames - Taka Iimura; Mein Kampf - Erwin Leiser; videotapes by Woody and Steina Vasulka; installation - Paul Sharits; Eduard Muybridge, Zoopraxographer - Thom Anderson; The Amazing Doctor Tube - Melies; and others.

Though the reader will be able to draw his or her own conclusions from the details of the venues visited a few comments might help to provide a more general framework. Though most of these receive grants of some kind or other, several quite substantial grants even by North American standards, the independent cinema forms only a part of their overall activities. The few who concentrate on this kind of work ironically receive the smallest grant, if at all, and rely largely on volunteer labour and small but regular audiences. To keep these audiences, publicity was often effective and imaginative in spite of the limited funds. It was disappointing to encounter, particularly in the case of those with ample funds, the unimaginative and lackadaisical approach to publicity, so essential when wishing to present work with which a more general audience are less familiar - the wider distribution in more popular media should attract people with less obvious connections with the

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work; the use of the multiplicity of local radio stations seemed neglected; actual paying for space in newspapers was absent - a deal with the paper such as a pre- or follow-up review might help to establish the audience that this work deserves. In some cases a commitment by the programmers to a particular emphasis in an area of independent film so that instead of the regular audience surveying a ragbag of movies, they become involved in the discourse that many of the films are addressing. But these comments are but parentheses to the hospitality and enthusiasm encountered throughout the entire tour!

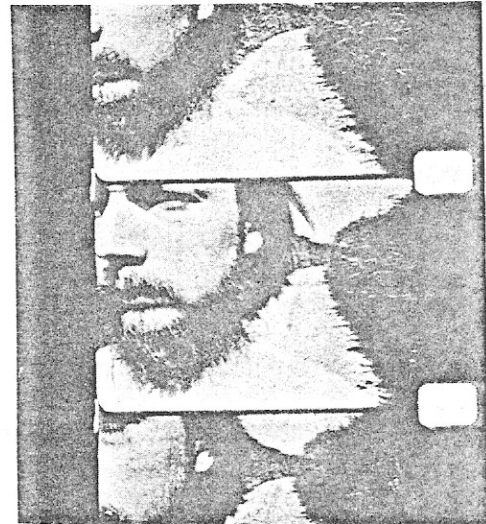
Some of the shows were fixed up at short notice (three hours in one case!), but film-makers are advised to organise dates well in advance. The reasons include: the most efficient use of transport which when spread over this huge continent can amount to a considerable saving on a tour (more movies to be made!); the adequate supply of publicity material which besides verbal descriptions should include stills and if bothered by how this might eventually appear, graphic designs for posters etc. - a cassette tape of an interview might be useful if the venue has a sympathetic local radio station - bookers need to give clear and early indication of what they need, naturally; dates might need to be juggled and time in hand is needed for this to happen; the negotiation of a worthwhile fee or honorarium - a couple of places were not prepared to guarantee even a gate which in the interest of all 'tourers' is a bad deal since the film-makers rarely have any knowledge of arrangements for publicity and without that knowledge cannot even expect a gate; etc.etc.



PARACHUTE Centre for Cultural Affairs, 318, 10th St., NW Calgary; Clive Robertson, Marcella Bienvenue, Eugene Chadbourne, Leila Sujir and others; a workshop/display centre characteristic of several in Canada where state funds pay the rent and nominal salaries to manager and assistant(s) - essentially voluntary and part-time but encountering community (whether social or artistic) interface problems - apathy more to do with total cultural/social/political environment than with the lack of imagination or hard grind these individuals put into initiating some local activity; audience of 15 had not encountered this approach to film though the response was involved and intelligent. ALBERTA COLLEGE OF ART, 1301 16th Ave., NW Calgary; Brian Dyson as assistant to the curator of the college gallery was wanting to introduce film and video to the range of activities covered as first step to encouraging the college to explore the use of these mediums by the students, who were otherwise engaged in a vast new six million dollar building pursuing the mediums employed throughout the previous four centuries; audience of 90 for one hour lunch-time show who, though simultaneously engaged with sandwiches and juice reacted with enthusiastic applause but one only, question. Around the corner Paul Woodrow, late of W.O.R.K.S., at the University campus engaged in similar disentranching activities.

PACIFIC CINEMATEQUE, 1616 W 3rd Ave., Vancouver; Tony Reif, programmer with Kirk Tougas, Judi Kennedy, Mary Jane Cowan and others; originating as a distribution and exhibition facility for independents, ~~has~~ receives state support and now exhibits a broader based repertory programme whilst distributing films made in British Columbia and providing a study service to schools and colleges; show at the National Film Board theatre on West Georgia to 25 received very little pre-publicity; the response was not enthusiastic. Video Inn and the Satellite Video Exchange at 261, Powell St. not far from the New Era Social Club (c.1968)

at 358 provide, uniquely in NA, transfer facilities from European to American standard - unfortunately marred by haphazard arrangement of equipment for optical duplicating - a library of potentially valuable and interesting tapes is similarly marred by sometimes appalling (even by  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch standards) picture quality. Vancouver Art Gallery are with the assistance of Ted Limberg and Nelson Bekker establishing a video gallery and tape library though policy is as yet unclear. David Rimmer's class of 30 in the FACULTY OF FINE ART, University of British Columbia, though only seated on desk tops were most interested in the work and a good discussion took place. The presence of other members of staff indicated that though film activity in the department was on a part-time basis, its inclusion in the course was taken seriously. Don Druick enjoyed the show as well!



The show arranged at Portland Art Museum with Bob Sitton was abandoned - confusion over what had been said in correspondence and mis-judgement of the scale and demands of travelling, together with the late date at which final arrangements were made and the fact that no money could be guaranteed highlighted some of the problems associated with this show - early confirmation of shows is seen as the only solution.

PACIFIC FILM ARCHIVE, University Art Museum, Berkeley; Edith Kramer maintains a weekly showcase for independent work in a 90 seat auditorium providing repertory and study facilities for the local area - provides

great assistance to individual touring film-makers, participating to the utmost in local film-makers activities; the 25 members in the audience indicated there was something lacking in Berkeley itself. No time to visit Bill Farley at Mills College in Oakland the scene of much and increasing inter-disciplinary works in the 'active' arts. Carl Loefflel at La Mabelle Arts Centre just off Orchard had Willoughby Sharp showing some videotapes and xeroxstat work - a (surprisingly) poorer financial cousin to the workshop/display centres in Canada also related to the neo-Fluxus activities of recent years. The department of film at SAN FRANCISCO STATE UNIVERSITY assembled an advanced class of some 35 students from various parts of the campus with some film-makers; Bob Bell (aided by Bruce Conner in residence), encourages careful and detailed film study besides making, with a bias toward the documentary - questions and discussion ~~was~~ <sup>WERE</sup> the most demanding of the tour ending on the meaning of the term 'political film'. Missed out too on visiting the CANYON CO-OP office in Sausalito but not in giving a show for them at the Arts Institute auditorium where the entire film was shown in the safe hands of a most competent projectionist; Carmen Vigil and Susan, Charles Wright, Henry and Diane Kitchen besides being fully involved in the Co-op and the Cinema, the distribution and exhibition wings of Canyon, are attempting to encourage the erstwhile fragmentation of individuals and groups in the Bay area to form a new association with non-profit making charity status; an audience of some 35 people were shown the entire film, a more rare than common experience - 2 $\frac{1}{4}$  hours of demanding film was found to exhaust most audiences, though not this one, resulting in a good discussion, an essential part of the presentation of this kind of work. More often than not four out of the seven parts were shown usually with a break in the middle which permitted the early airing of any problems being encountered by individuals. The seventh section of the film with sound on magnetic stripe presented problems in most places visited - very few magnetic projectors in North America.

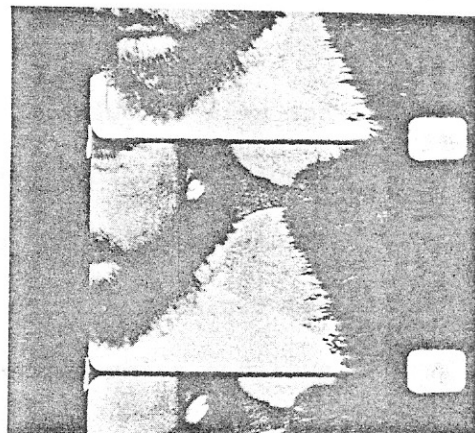
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The University of Colorado campus dominates the town of Boulder close-by to the Rocky Mountains and is home of the ROCKY MOUNTAIN FILM CENTRE; Don Yannacito co-ordinates an energetic weekly programme of independent work besides assisting in the running of other film centre activities related to the university; the womb-like effect on the senses encountered in the Planetarium in which were seated, hidden, some 30 people, meant that the screening of the film was anomalous - each time there happened to be a light shot on the 'screen', the entire dome would light up as if heralding Kubrick's earthrise - there are in fact a large number of planetariums scattered around the country most of which would welcome ideas to do with their domes - it would seem a project worth pursuing by some film-maker, the making of material for that inverted eyeball! The disembodied sound ambience made it difficult to hear people in the ensuing discussion, and to speak.

Sweating Los Angeles, breathing heavily and at 9014 Melrose Avenue is the address of THEATRE VANGUARD, a proscenium staged 250 seater established in the heyday of Hollywood as the centre for 'advanced' theatrical productions - with the emphasis shifting to other lively arts activity such as music, dance and film, Doug Edwards organises a regular series of screenings which normally receive advance notices in the press - the problem arose of making the film available for previewing when it was already being shown 600 miles away; the 20 people in the audience made up for lack of numbers with a good question and answer session and Elfriede Fischinger later enabled me to see some of the archives she and Bill Moritz are compiling of her late husband's work. She later displayed in a lightning tour the sights and legends of the city, including Larry Edmunds bookstore on Hollywood Blvrd, the largest collection of secondhand books related to film that must exist? Morgan Fisher who now teaches photography at Orange Coast College was most hospitable but no time to get down to see Graham Weinbren and the others at The Oasis, the new LA



En route to University of Kansas at LAWRENCE where the friend of a friend Ed Ruhe, included film study as part of his English studies along with the help of the SUA, Steve Schmidt, Chuck, Beau and Robert; 25 people in the audience had rarely encountered this kind of work before, their main concern having been with mainstream narrative auteurist cinema - however the discussion both in the theatre and back at Ed's place closed the gap considerably - 'we'll have to have some more of this work in...'



The name that all New Yorkers appear to find funny, Pittsburgh; the busy city, with the clean air and the clear head, home of the Film-makers Travel Sheet that invaluable document emanating from CARNEGIE INSTITUTE under the energetic direction (Film Section) of Bill Judson aided by Becky Craft and Tricia and in close co-operation with Bob Haller director of the Pittsburgh Film-makers Inc.; the range of activities and interests covered by these institutions together with, in part, the university of Pitt is solidly in the establishment of the notion of independence in the production and exhibition of film and photography; Bob Gaylor and Dave Lee guided me at the Film-makers, being excellently housed and equipped from money raised in grants and donations, giving rise not only to regular classes and exhibitions in photography but a regular series of visiting film-makers work; David Palechko and Mike Chekeris are associated having recently lovingly disinterred an amateur photographer's work c.1905 and exhibited it all at the Carnegie, Museum of Art. The audience of 35 for the show were enthusiastic and the discussion worked well together with reaction from Bruce Goldstein in the university

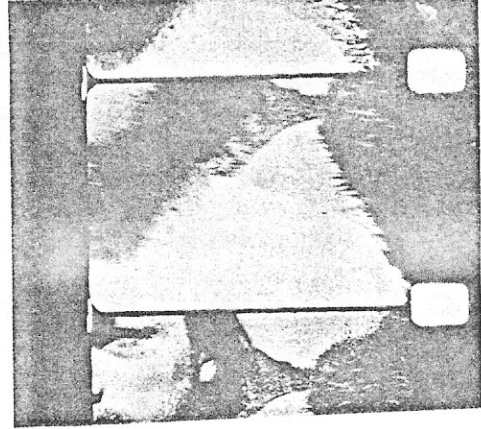
department of psychology, not the first time that people involved with scientific research had responded to the work. The small library that the Film Section has makes possible the careful and repeated study of film, available to the surrounding area as addition to the organised screenings; such as occurred two days later when Erwin Leiser presented his film 'Mein Kampf', the start of a two evening session on the Nazi Cinema. Contact made too with Tina Floyd at the faculty of Studio Arts, University of Pitt.

The well established MILLENNIUM FILM WORKSHOP INC. was the screening venue in New York City, coinciding as it did, unhappily, with four other 'independent' shows on the same evening; director Howard Guttenplan has two cinemas, one being a barn of a place with the projection and audience being placed on separate wooden islands in the middle of the floor space - cutting rooms and further space for expansion complete the facilities together with a programme of classes taken by a group of instructors; the 30 strong audience whittled away to about a dozen and included my good friends and estrangers, Anthony McCall and Carolee Schneeman together with, so it was rumoured, Larry Kardish from MOMA. Tom Chomont was openly enthusiastic. No time to visit the Collective for Living Cinema or the Film Co-op or the Kitchen neither Film Forum or Franklins Furnace - by this time the rigours of the trip were beginning to bite! A quick visit to Anthology on Wooster and the purchase of their recent publication listing The Independent Cinema. Varick St. is the home of Dover Publications, one of the best publishers in the world, and had there been time I would have also visited Donnel Library Film Centre.

A social call on Larry Gottheim in Binghamton resulted in the following day an invitation to show the film at STATE UNIVERSITY NEW YORK (SUNY) to a class of film-making students and one of their instructors, Ken Jacobs; the small group of 20 were an excellent audience particularly in discussion afterwards - the course being roughly divided equally

between film production, with some video with Ralph Hocking, (well equipped in both), and film analysis together with an extra on, comparison of the arts - one of the few discussions that made a rapid and rational progression concluding with a recognition of the space lying between film-making as the end of a process and film-making as the instigator.

It was hard to believe that beautiful New York State was connected to that extraordinary city. Buffalo at the top end was to be the final show in the US before crossing back into Canada; CENTRE FOR MEDIA STUDY at SUNY, Buffalo Annex A-8, NY 14214 (being the correct address!); Gerald O'Grady, together with a distinguished team including Thom Anderson, Tony Conrad, Hollis Frampton, Ron Green, Kathy King, Paul Sharits and Woody and Steiner Vasulka instruct and are involved with a multitude of activities spread between the university department and the Media Study Foundation in downtown Buffalo, an eight story ex-hotel partly converted to use as film, video, sound and photography workshop - the old Arts Lab notion only with substantial financial and administrative backing. The audience of 15 were evidently well used to discussing films because for the most part the talk ranged around the group instead of always coming back to the film-maker, a refreshing change! It's hard to imagine another place where the resident/visitor density is so high - Stratford-on-Avon? But the research and source papers emerging from this centre are worth obtaining. The Albright-Knox Art Gallery was exhibiting some of this; Dream Displacement and Other Projects was a retrospective of the important work of Paul Sharits including a new installation piece, Shutter Interface utilising 4 continuous projectors and prepared film with sound - a show that answered many of the questions raised by his films, particularly through inspection of the films as 'Frozen Frames'. No time to visit Hallwalls at the Ashford Hollows Foundation Gallery.



And so on to Montreal and the MUSEE DES BEAUX ARTS; Chantel Pontbriand late of Vehicule, recently appointed to the museum staff with the assistance of Christiane Charette, to organise 'special events' - extraordinarily enough the museum refused to give any kind of budget towards advertising the special events, insisting that it had to be included in quarterly publicity; a 400 seat brand new auditorium held 7 people for the show, none of them had apparently encountered this kind of work before and were too nonplussed to attempt a dialogue; the most disappointing show of the entire tour! No time to visit Vehicule gallery on O'Ste Catherine nor Claude Chamberlain of the Cooperative des Cineastes Independents nor David Levy at McGill University. Chantel also edits Parachute, a revue d'art contemporain available by subscription from C.P.730-Succursale N.Montreal, Quebec, H2x 3n4.

The final show at Dept. of Film Studies, QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY, Kingston, Ontario, provided the refreshment necessary; Peter Morris, late of the Canadian Film Institute joined Professor Bill Nichols and assistant Nick Kendall, taking responsibility for film study and organising the occasional visit of film-makers to augment the library study programme; the audience of 30 was enthusiastic and mixed in ranges of exposure to the work - it seemed that once the more confident and engaged questions had been flowing the more fundamental problems of viewing this work came out which far from becoming a tiresome liturgy challenges the production of an adequate and complete response on each occasion.

And so back to Toronto, the original starting place and a welcome place to return, stocked as it is by a host of friendly people, some of whom had been met on the first time through; Larry Wallrich owner of Books, 280, Queen Street W; JoAnn Danzker late of Flash Art; Tom and Lynn Urquhart, Tom's with the Canadian Film-makers Distribution Centre along with Tess Taconis the director; Michael Snow who seems to spend a lot of his time at the Music Gallery at 30 St. Patrick St. playin' free with the Canadian Creative Music Collective - the gallery is another state funded enterprise and again is a workshop besides being for concerts; Peter Dudar of Missing Associates a well established performance (art) group - he has recently extended the outlet for such work through the use of video and film - 'Walking in O & R' remains the most interesting film I saw on the tour; Martin Heath who for some time now has been operating a mobile cinema out of a van with the help of an inflatable, touring rural areas; Lily Eng of Missing Associates all of whom had been to Europe on a tour in the time I had circled the North American continent; John Faihey the other Missing Associate; Keith Locke, film-maker of 'Everything, Everywhere'; Amerigo Marras who with the assistance of Don and Bruce direct and administrate the activities of the CENTRE FOR EXPERIMENTAL ART AND COMMUNICATION (CEAC) at 15 Duncan Street; two large floor spaces divided by the Liberal Party of Ontario having various smaller rooms for whatever uses they are needed and which might be video or 8mm workshop or simply reading and conversation - the larger spaces can be used in the same way though the group, which involves many of the younger artists in Toronto, have particular leanings to performance art and the establishment of an 'ideology of context' - the show, the performance, the discourse is continuous, 7 days a week, centred around particular series of events and visitors (festivals), all emerging from the unceasing efforts of Amerigo, Don and the rest of the group - whilst I was there two visitors from Poland, Jan Swidzinski and Anna Kutera were preparing to discuss their recent publication on 'Contextual Art' with invited individuals mostly from New York associated with the Art

and Language collective; Peggy Gale of Art Metropole at 241 Yonge St., the well established 'parallel gallery' who make available artists videotapes and publications besides organising 'display' events - a mine of information about the international scene having recently contributed to Studio International; Ron Gillespie also of CEAC and recently back from Europe; Diane Boadway of CEAC busy with many things; Ian Birnie of the Art Gallery of Ontario who organises film screenings (many, many months in advance!); Robert Handforth of A Space the other 'parallel gallery' in Toronto which includes music in its curriculum - Taki Bluesinger from Vancouver was showing photographs and video before departing on a world tour to photograph gardens and was accompanied by Lin Bennet the dancer; Don McWilliams who organises film screenings somewhere upstate; Joyce Weiland, the film-maker; and others, many of whom were present at a very tightly packed screening at the Distribution Centre the final night - a kind of celebration!

