

Reflections on the Design of BAVC :

Bay Area Video Circuit

- 1- In general the circuit might contain: accessible video tools; means through which funding could be obtained by videomakers; source of informational publication/ newsletter on Bay Area Video events; operation of an exhibition space for video tapes; formation of a western area video archive;
- 2- Specifically, BAVC should presently focus on creating a video access facility, operated on a subscription basis to serve the largest number of videomakers possible, without prejudice based on race, creed, color, sex, or video aesthetic. Recognize at first that not everyone will be satisfied by the facility, but that in due time one facility can lead to others.
- 3- The existing photographic cooperatives suggest a model, I believe, for a video access facility. Just as the photo labs have enlargers, chemicals, driers, in short, film processors, the video access facility could at first concentrate on processing such as tape-editing, assuming that the users will have means for originating material. If later demand exists for originating equipment like cameras, synthesizers, or switchers, these can be obtained. But by leaving the origination of material to the user, many problems of a facility could be avoided.
- 4- Time in the facility should be on a rate basis, both to encourage swift working and allow more people to use the facility, as well as to help offset operating costs. Also, an initial subscription fee could also be charged. This method of operation will look good to certain potential sources of funding, and will avoid the negligence which free facilities often attract.
- 5- In the larger picture, BAVC at large could serve the video makers of the Bay Area in whatever way they wished. In particular, if it could be structured so as to allow individual seekers of funds to operate through it, rather than have BAVC itself attempt to raise funds for individual projects (though this may also occur) many frictions could be avoided, no one person would shoulder the burden of fundraising, and no one would have the feeling of being "ripped off" by so and so. Videomaker A would be responsible for finding funds to work with, part of which would be spent using time in the video facility perhaps. But, BAVC itself would help videomakers to meet funding sources, exchange information, and generally facilitate the funding process.
- 6- BAVC should not restrain its efforts to contact and associate with private, federal, local, and corporate resources. But all members and users of BAVC facilities will themselves make small contributions to its operating expenses in the form of subscriptions and hourly rental fees.

- 7- BAVC should maintain an active relationship with educational institutions in the area, whether friend or foe, and promote active and diverse presentation of video works to the general public. To this end, broadcast of videoworks over local TV stations and cable TV should be secured. Also, shows in local museums, and ultimately establishment of a full time video theatre in an accessible, attractive location would be ideal. Perhaps such space could be donated from a local source. It would be appropriate to establish a west coast equivalent of the Anthology Film Archives in New York, where regular shows of video and film works, and guest visits by makers are funded by National Endowment for the Arts.
- 8- If BAVC is destined to succeed, those videomakers who have not yet attended the formative meetings and others will certainly not be excluded on any basis. I say this to allay the issues which several have mentioned to me at various times. BAVC is open to all videomakers at any time, on a subscription basis.
- 9- In conclusion, I submit these reflections as nothing but, resulting from participation in the two preliminary meetings. They are offered solely as inputs to the definitive process, to be rejected or synthesized into the structure as it may unfold.
- 10- Clearly, an organization is possible here. I am impressed with the way videomakers have matured, and have laid aside aesthetic differences and are actually communicating in order to achieve common needs. Good luck!

Submitted January 30, 1976 by Stephen Beck

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