



A small store in the Japantown area of Vancouver shows tapes recorded off T.V. in Japan for \$1.25. They started with CV, and now use cassettes and a 26" color T.V.. It is pure entertainment (culture?) - gets good crowds of middle-aged Japanese and Nisei.

The best way for me remains to show the tapes myself in a living-room to a small group of people, passing the camera around after. And to show the tape right after recording, to the people involved.

"Room On Its Side" - Although it was not a video showing per se, this remains my favorite video project. I constructed a very ordinary room, sideways, with furniture, pictures, rug, cat-food, etc. that friends brought in response to my request for "something in your house that belongs in a room". I suspended a color T.V. with cablevision (Vancouver has 80% cable penetration, highest percapita in the world) from the ceiling, put a connected wall-phone on the floor. As a personal sub-project, I lay in the chesterfield watching T.V., and friends replaced me, as did many visitors to the show (January 1971, at the Vancouver Art Gallery).

At the exit was a closed-circuit monitor, with a long loop video delay. As the hidden camera was on its side too, on the monitor the room seemed normal, with visitors walking on the walls. It took a little while to realize that one of those people is you, reacting to the environment 30 second before. Even those who didn't get into it the first time invariably returned to the room, then came out again to watch it.

As much as possible, I prefer not to charge for video showings, making bread to live off from other activity.

This winter we are initiating a European (optical) video transfer centre, free of charge for non-commercial, parallel-information users. We will keep a copy of tapes transferred, and make them available in local action groups through a community video cassette library. We will show recent tapes passing through the centre of a couple of nights a week, and possibly on cablevision. Some of the tapes we produce are going on broadcast news, shot off a monitor.

Videotheatres are one outlet for information on video, but a necessary one, for it sets its own context. In times of information restriction, voluntary or otherwise, of the mass-media, self-determining sources of info will be of dire importance.

So far, all the situation (which I described above) were aimed at a special audience, minimum costs in the smaller settings, with a variety of content. Sure would like to learn more about videotheatres catering to a wide-audience, and find out whether it is necessary to cater to it (I hope not).

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