

April 24, 1996

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

MAY 3 1996

MOTION PICTURE, BROADCASTING
AND RECORDED SOUND DIVISION

Mr. Steve Leggett
Library of Congress
Motion Picture, Broadcasting and Recorded Sound Division
Library of Congress
Washington DC 20540-4690

Dear Mr. Leggett,

We are writing to comment on the study of the current state of American television and video preservation by the Library of Congress.

As a small non-profit media arts organization which began active programs in video in 1969, we are now facing the enormous problems associated with cataloging and preserving these tape artifacts. We are not alone, and collaborate and cooperate informally with several organizations in the State struggling with similar problems. The work represented in our collection has been created by independent artists working in a cross-disciplinary mode. It has helped to define the precursors of the media culture of the 90s. The collection is a cross-section of the history of democratic community participation in media and of contemporary technology-based art practice. The type of work represented here and in a number of other collections is a small but important segment of American media and should not be overlooked.

We urge you to recommend national set-aside funding for the preservation of *independent* film and video. Many small organizations hold work with great social, political and aesthetic significance. As a group, we have much more limited resources than larger institutions, and a greater need for technical assistance. Further, the works held are often not represented in other collections. Perhaps the greatest need is for coordination of efforts throughout the independent community and a collaborative model.

We would also suggest establishing national standards for cataloging which address issues of accessibility by libraries, schools and universities, compatibility with MARC and compatibility with internet or on-line modes of communication to insure intellectual access for all citizens.

In conclusion we would like to suggest that a specific task force be established, which would address the unique needs of the independent media community. The participants of this task force could be suggested by the field at large, a process which could perhaps be coordinated by a consortium of media programs at state arts agencies and state and national media membership organizations such as Media Alliance in New York State.

Thanks for your attention. Please keep us informed of your progress.

Sincerely,



Sherry Miller Hocking
Assistant Director

- 132 -

EXPERIMENTAL TELEVISION CENTER LTD. 607-687-4341 VOICE & FAX
109 LOWER FAIRFIELD ROAD NEWARK VALLEY, NEW YORK 13811

23 F4