

INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC TELEVISION SCREENING CONFERENCE

SPONSORED BY THE PHILADELPHIA INPUT 88 ALLIANCE

WHYY, INC.

THE ANNENBERG SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATIONS, UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

TEMPLE UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF COMMUNICATIONS AND THEATRE

INTERNATIONAL HOUSE OF PHILADELPHIA, NEIGHBORHOOD FILM/VIDEO PROJECT



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May, 1988

Dear Delegate,

Welcome to INPUT 88, the beginning of "A New Decade" for the conference and its participants. It seems appropriate that we should start off the next ten years of INPUT with something different. This year INPUT will include some non-television professionals who are often the subjects of our programs. We are sure that opening up this new avenue of communication can only have beneficial results for television and INPUT.

Before we start thinking about the next ten years however, let's concentrate on this INPUT. Thinks are due to all the volunteers associated with INPUT 88. Everything from policy to program selection is made by people in a voluntary capacity with support from their home broadcasting institution. Remember, without these dedicated individuals there could be no INPUT. Special thanks must go to our colleagues at WHYY, your hoats for INPUT 88.

Finally, remember that this is your conference. The organizers lay the groundwork, it's up to you to make it happen. We need your full participation to make INPUT 88 a prelude to great things for ten more years.

Mike Fentiman President INPUT International Board



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Dear Delegate,

Nothing much to report from Berlin. The wall is still standing and so is SFB. Stern and almost dour mother Hoffman supervised us children playing the "selection game." Our valiant shop stewards and shop stewardesses—a majority of six against five for the first time—did their best as usual.

The rules for choosing the programs have been tightened and made almost foolproof. With better results? This has to be proved. After all, the Berlin group can only choose from what is offered them. The final answer on how things are going with INPUT is yours.

In fact, I have only heard complaints. "INPUT slides down toward a fairly ordinary festivel," or "Selections are not as good as they used to be," and "Old INPUTs were much more lively events." I am asking myself: "Can this be true? Or is it only a trick of the memory that things past have an exaggerated emotional impact on us?"

In the lucid introduction that Howard Klein has written for the American Video Festival—the best description of INPUT ever made—our President Emeritus says: "INPUT has brought together thousands of producers, directors and writers, and enabled them to form international contacts previously denied them. Perhaps INPUT's most important contribution to world culture is its evolution as a forum for examining Public Television by those who make its programs. If a culture does not deal with values, of what value is that culture?" How many sins have we committed in the name of these worthy goals? Troubling, unpalatable questions should be answered and not left to become skeletons in our cupboards.

We started to pull together this fiesta for producers in 1977. In television terms this is like going back to the Middle Ages, so many things have changed around us. It is only natural that some of our solutions—avant-garde at that

time--might look old hat by now. Even the most meritorious organizations have a built in mechanism that characterizes their growing old. They become over-self-protective; they privilege the strategy of their survival, instead of the very purposes that have originated them. Having a lot to lose they become less adventurous, less open, resent change, the challenge of change. Maybe we all need a "perestroika," a rebuilding, from time to time. Even religious orders, the most conservative of human inventions, go through this process. From time immemorial, it has been called "aggiornamento," bringing up to date. Maybe INPUT needs aggiornamento too.

David Othmer, the poor bastard on whose shoulders fell this year the onus of organizing INPUT, has chosen "A New Decade" as a meaningful subtitle for the Philadelphia edition. It seems an apt definition. Let's live up to it!

Sergio Borelli Senior Vice President International Coordinator

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Input 88, the eleventh annual International Public Television Screening Conference, is hosted by the Philadelphia INPUT 88 Alliance:

> Frederick Breitenfeld, President David Othmer, Vice President & Television Station Manager WHYY TV

Robert E. Smith, Dean Temple University School of Communications

George Gerbner, Dean Annenberg School of Communications

Linda Blackaby, Director Neighborhood Film/Video Project International House

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Dear Colleagues:

Last year we faced a critical situation as funding for INPUT 88 was uncertain. The U.S. board members called upon the support of PBS stations who have actively participated in past INPUTs. The result was overwhelmingly positive as stations generously pledged \$5,000 to help bring this international conference back to the United States in 1988. They held steadfast to this commitment even after the INPUT 88 Alliance was awarded a major grant by the Pew Memorial Trust Fund to host the conference. The stations' generous contributions have been set aside to create a fund for the hosting of INPUT 92, which marks the return of the conference to this country.

The network of supporting PBS stations keeps growing as we continue to open channels of communication with public television organizations around the world. As public broadcasters we recognize the future growth of public television will depend on our ability to reach out beyond our national borders. It is extremely satisfying to know that INPUT has found a permanent home in the United States.

On behalf of the members of the INPUT International Board, we salute the commitment of these contributing stations whose actions are insuring future dialogue among nations through the powerful medium of television. We also wish to extend an open invitation to stations who would like to join our efforts.

Henry J. Cauthen Treasurer

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THE BIRTH OF INPUT

The idea of INPUT took shape during a seminar hosted by the Rockefeller Foundation in Bellagio (Italy) from May 20 to 25, 1977. Half of the 14 participants were chosen by the Foundation and half by Circom, an association of television professionals. The subject of the seminar was:

TELEVISION: INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE OF CULTURAL PROGRAMMING

The participants were:

Howard KLEIN, director for the Arts (The Rockefeller Foundation)

Chloe AARON, senior vice-president (PBS Washington)
Fred BARZYK, producing director (WGBH Boston)
Sergio BORELLI, president (Circom Roma)
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Agnes VINCENT, art consultant (Ant. 2 Paris)
Bill VIOLA, video artist (New York)

THE BELLAGIO SEMINAR FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

The conference participants agreed on the following principles and recommendations:

The present international flow of programming on television is uneven and is dominated by commercial programming which leads to a situation in which quality programming of a broadly cultural nature is inadequately represented in the flow between countries.

PBS stations in the United States represent an underutilized resource for both the acquisition of foreign programming to be shown on U.S. television, and the providing of quality U.S. material to foreign programmers.

There exist a number of international forums for the screening, acquisition, and distribution of programme materials. However, these tend to favor the flow of standardized products and are therefore not helpful in stimulating a greater flow of quality cultural and innovative programmes among nations.

Public broadcasters and producers are interested in improving the quality of exchanges of programmes among nations and improving the mechanisms by which such exchanges can be effected.

Although policy questions can be difficult to address and policies themselves rigid, policy can be affected by practical demonstration.

The concept of international programming should be understood to include this thesis: good national programming can be, and often is, the best international programming.

Long-term goals should be further studied for possible impact on future policies regarding international cultural programming.

In order to effect changes in the present inadequate flow of international programming, practical steps should be taken. These should be modest, realizable and easy to put into action.

It was therefore proposed:

To begin our efforts at improved exchange by holding a screening conference within the next year in Europe. The screening conference would be planned to have a "special" character, defined by a) who attends, and b) what kind of programmes would be shown.

Who would attend: The participants should include programming executives but emphasize the involvement of producers to facilitate the exchange of ideas and maximize the possibility of cooperation in future production.

What kind of programmes will be shown (the group drafted the following general guide lines for programme submission): Programmes which in some significant and engaging way represent the diversity of human experience through our respective cultural differences. It is our hope that these programmes will emphasize those aspects of our respective cultures that are not adequately known or understood in other countries. It is also our hope that programmes will manifest fresh and innovative approaches to the use of the television medium for this purpose. In connection with the selection of programmes to be shown, we have taken note that those programmes which best serve the purposes of international exchange are frequently those programmes which were in the first instance intended only to open a window on our own culture for our own people.

Those participating in the screening conference will be sought from these countries (the list might be expanded): Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, England, Finland, France, Holland, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Norway, Poland, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United States, West Germany, and Yugoslavia.

The working title for the first meeting is the INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC TELEVISION SCREENING CONFERENCE. The conference would be represented in the following manner: To be held under the auspices of the Rockefeller Foundation and sponsored by CIRCOM, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) and the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS), with the cooperation of the International Television Workshop (ITW) and Prix Italia. In order to bring about this first meeting, planning meetings will be held by sub-groups in Europe and in the United States in June, with joint planning sessions held in September in Europe and later in the fall in the United States. The first meeting of the I.P.T.V.S.C. will be held in March of 1978 in Europe.

It is our intention that this meeting shall serve as a model for further meetings, to be held alternately in Europe and the United States. It is also our intention that other activities, particularly the exchange of information, be initiated immediately.