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Now and Here: Experimental filmmaker as programmer

Abstract:

The organisers of this conference raised a several questions with regards to the location of reception: they asked:

- Where should we appreciate experimental films and works of video art? In movie theatres or in art galleries? How does the screening-location bear upon appreciation?

As a practice-based researcher, maker, and a programmer, I spend a lot of time examining the viewing experience, how the viewer is imagined, positioned, manipulated, directed, and arguably constructed via filmic constructions and also by location i.e. the site of reception, and how this physical positioning impacts the viewer as much as the filmic positioning. So, since I am approaching these questions departing from my own practice, I not only want to think about the location but also discuss how the filmmaker as a programmer has a distinct effect on the ways in which the experimental films, videos and expanded cinema pieces are perceived and appreciated. And why in fact this is at least an equally critical question especially in relation to the particular aesthetic experience that they create. It is true that the space determines certain conditions of viewing, but at the hands of the filmmakers I want to look at how those spaces are reconfigured to facilitate a more dialectical and collective viewing experience.

In this presentation I will argue that film screenings and events put together by film/video makers, collectives, or groups such as Bristol Experimental and Expanded Film or a.k.a. BEEF, Analogue Ensemble, Analogue Recurring, Contact, or collective-iz produce such unique events often in unconventional sites that not only transcends the black box vs. white cube paradigm but also challenges the dominant viewing experience in a similar vein to 1970s works from London Filmmakers' Co-op.