Gasworks
155 Vauxhall Street
London SE11 5RH
www.gasworks.org.uk

Anna Barriball
29th April - 19th June 2005
Gasworks Gallery is pleased to announce the forthcoming solo exhibition of works by Anna Barriball. For Gasworks, Barriball will exhibit a new body of work that includes sculpture, drawing and video. Her recent video work also looks to drawing as a method for investigating forms. In Draw (fireplace) (2005) a large sheet of tracing paper covering a fireplace is sucked in and out, wrapping around the features of the fireplace then expelling the air, causing the paper to inflate. The paper becomes animated and this strange form of respiration is at once ridiculous and mysterious.

Hayward Gallery
Belvedere Road
London SE1 8XX
0870 169 1000
www.hayward.org.uk

Rebecca Horn: Bodylandscapes
26 May - 29 August 2005
A spectacular installation bringing together the work of one of the most respected figures in international contemporary art. The show focuses on Rebecca Horn's drawings, and also includes sculpture, film and installations made over a period of thirty years. Much of Horn's work is influenced by her long stay in hospitals and sanatoriums following a serious illness in the late 60s. The show explores how that experience has shaped her work through her constant allusion to the body, to sensory awareness, physical frailty and desire.

Goethe-Institute
50 Princes Gate
London SW7 2PH
020 7596 4000
www.goethe.de

The Multi-Faceted Curator
A one-week workshop on curatorial practices in the context of contemporary art developments and increasing cultural exchange between Asia and Europe.
Organised by the Goethe-Institute Jakarta and the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF)
To be held at Goethe-Institute Jakarta and Selasar Sunaryo Art Space, Bandung, Indonesia
6 - 11 March 2006
Deadline for Application 10 June 2005
One must free the cinema as an expressive medium in order to make it the ideal instrument of a new art, immensely faster and lighter than all the existing arts. We are convinced that only in this way can one reach that polyexpressiveness toward which all the most modern artistic researches are moving.¹

Not without ambiguities, expanded cinema as a term generally describes synaesthetic cinematic spectacle (spectacle meaning exhibition, rather than simply an issue of projection or scale), whereby the notions of conventional filmic language (for example, dramaturgy, narrative, structure, technology) are either extended or interrogated outside the single-screen space. When in the ‘Preface’ to his book Expanded Cinema of 1970, Gene Youngblood stated ‘expanded cinema isn’t a movie at all’ and ‘when we say expanded cinema we actually mean expanded consciousness’², he was acknowledging that the term did not fully express the conceptual ambition and technological diversity of artists cinematic experiment practiced throughout the 20th century. Expanded cinema stems from expanded histories (see below), although the term a) implies a cinema (by implication narrower) that it has expanded from, and b) includes the word ‘cinema’³, which is sometimes misunderstood to mean film. The terminology could insinuate a form or even a material, which as a description for current digital practices, if taken at face value would appear to bypass huge chunks of its history, namely the electronic, and equally, the pre-film or proto-cinema which included technological voyeuristic devices; and considerations about sites of exhibition outside the permanent location of the cinema theatre, also described as ‘primitive’ cinema or the ‘cinema of attractions’⁴.

Now tracing a critical history for current forms of digital participatory expanded cinema within the established tenets of experimental film and video is complex, since similar to a performance or a music gig, these artworks focus on the experiential, and explore audience and artist relationships with the image mechanism or the technology, and never the same twice experience of the live event. There is an absence of a written history of moving-image that concentrates on performance as significant and often central to the film or video event, or recognizes the performer (whether artist or audience) as a material component of the cinematic, but there is also a philosophical chasm when it comes to the critical history of the electronic moving-image, in other words, video. It is the video history of expanded cinema that I will concentrate on in this essay, and as an introduction to the subsequent essays by the artists Chris Hales and Grahame Weinbren.

Although ‘video art’ connotes an analogue era and an apparent definitive technology, video is unlike, say, film, in that its material specificities are in flux, and as such it necessitates continual theoretical or philosophical review; the polemics are open to change, so that
video is a medium of amalgamation, and in its current form, a chameleon-like extant technology in the continuing history of digital 'new' media. In the 1970s whilst the passionate debates led by the practice at the London Filmmakers Co-op were philosophically driven, given textual voice by Peter Gidal and Malcolm Le Grice, and sharpened by the need for intellectual credibility in relation to the conservatism of both the fine art and film academies, philosophies emerging from the practice at London Video Arts, emanating initially from David Hall, Tamara Krikorian, and Stuart Marshall⁵, were swiftly eclipsed by the social, political and commercial imperatives perpetuated by Thatcher’s Britain. This is not meant as a slight on the artists who did write and believed in video as a medium; but they were dealing with an imaging technology unlike any other, one that was continually evolving, and any philosophy for ‘video’ (i.e. the apparatus) per se would be built upon shifting sands. Though there has been criticism that video practitioners of the early period wrote no critical history, and gravitated as soon as they could towards the commercial world of television, this had more to do with timing and the culture from which the practice arose, and survival in a cultural environment hostile to artists who didn’t make work specifically for selling. In the UK at least, the emergent ‘video’ artists of the eighties were more likely to survive via the commercially driven cultures of broadcast, than through the patronage of the ‘white cube’, or as philosophers of their practice. Whether using video or not, being an artist in Britain during the eighties had limited prospects. The (then) filmmakers simply had more unfettered time (i.e. starting from around 1966) to test their thoughts relative to practice, unburdened by the pressures of the (commercial at least) market place. As artists, we are still in the wake of this, and a kind of dual structure has materialised; an art of the academy (particularly evident where art schools have merged with research strong Universities), which at its best is pioneering, polemical and ideas led; and the commercially driven art of the gallery, which (when not a museum) is nonetheless, a shop. Importantly, much of current experimental expanded cinema tends to be produced within or adjacent to the academy, which provides one of the only arenas for new practice led philosophies to be tested relative to the historical (and academic) critical writing of the avant-garde.

Current practices in expanded cinema emanate from a broad historical trajectory, which includes expanded film of the 1960s and 1970s, and closed-circuit multi-channel participatory video of the 1970s and 1980s; also the performative and synaesthetic spectacles of the Futurists; Bauhaus; the happenings of Fluxus; and technological experiment in art. Exploring interactivity; synaesthesia; multiple screen configurations and semi-immersion, they are an amalgam of Nineteenth, Twentieth and Twenty-first Century cinematic technologies and artistic ideas, the wider history including the technological innovations and public display, which Tom Gunning has described as a ‘cinema of attractions’. This current experimental moving image era physically and conceptually transcends traditional media boundaries and is evolving new cinematic concepts and intertextual languages, providing an imperative to reconsider and review the under-explored practical histories of the avant-garde.

I like to imagine a philosophy of experimental cinema, which emanates from expanded film and the cinema of attractions, but includes the electronic, the computer, the active spectator, sculpture, collage, drama, and representation. I use the term ‘cinema’ not to describe film per se, but to signify a wide-ranging history and philosophical discourse. Importantly, the term is not yoked to the material conditions of a medium and the cinematic experience can cross media boundaries or be achieved through a range of media combinations. A cinematic configuration could involve intermedia, performance, spectacle, video, art and technology, and film, and could be located within the ‘black space’ or the ‘white cube’ of the gallery. Distinguishing film from video and emphasising ontological differences was particularly visible in the polemics of the 1970s, though since the late 1960s, and extending the scope of expanded film, it was artists working with video and the electronic who
were pushing the boundaries of moving-image and cinematic spectacle, technological innovation, interactivity and performance. Furthermore testing new paradigms of the then new media, many of these artists gravitated to video from film, i.e. VALIE EXPORT, David Hall, David Larcher, Malcolm Le Grice, Tony Sinden, Peter Weibel etc. The then polarising historical debates of 'film' and 'video' overlooked the fact that artists were free-flowing individuals experimenting with different kinds of media, and more often than not were working with and expanding both technologies.

With the advent of video in the mid-1960s and later its incorporation with trigger devices there was a technological means by which to control relatively basic audience interactive electronic closed-circuit events, and trigger based feedback. For example: Steve Partridge's 8x8x8 (1976), with its automatic video switcher, a programmable unit with a sixty four-way matrix of inputs and outputs, or David Hall's Vidicon Inscriptions the installation (1976). Though this is not to suggest that triggers were anywhere near as complex as computer based interfaces or matrices in current practice, but they enabled the audience to be an agent of change. The technical flexibility of video made possible the stage-management of time and space, pioneering the way for subsequent developments in interactive media and participatory cinema, it lent itself to devising inside its mechanisms, to looping and networking multiple channels, or to combining recording and playback technologies as gallery artefacts. It could be reviewed over and over, re-wound and fast-forwarded, and the recorded image could be interrogated by the artist and viewer from both sides of the camera, to evaluate the authentic relative to mirror-image or recording, and the direct address of self relative to total artwork and context of viewing. In this sense, if film was a technology of the indexical, video gave artists the means to articulate a time-based language of the un-seeable. Importantly, participatory CCTV work covered new ground in the relationships between context, spectator, screen, and artist. Play was incorporated as a dynamic aspect of the viewing experience, and the audience could inhabit the art-

work and actively engage with the representation. Furthermore broadcast into the private space of the viewer, video artworks networked and streamed through the televiusal conduit had ambitions to exist beyond the gallery space, inherent in many of these works, was the interruption of the public broadcast; challenging the assumption of the televiusal flow, and exposing the mechanism of the one way channelling of information. The purest of television interventions played knowingly with the assumptions of mass entertainment and the popular display of the 'telly'. The direct descendent of these works being interventionist internet art.

Monitor based works, which were more widespread until the late 1980s than projection, resembled the characteristics of optical devices such as the kinetoscope, praxinoscope theatre or kinora, whereby the audience looked in on the image. Similarly the monitor and playback as an enclosed system, both generated and displayed the image. Key to this premise is also the monitor's location outside the cinema theatre and its temporary exhibition within the gallery space, where the audience would walk around the work - i.e. the 'cinema of attractions'. Therefore, unlike 'front facing' configurations, in the closed-circuit environment or monitor based installation the audience's physical engagement could be actively orchestrated, and the act of viewing integrated as process, beyond the boundaries of the screen. For example, Ira Schneider's Wipe Cycle (1969) consisted of a camera, nine monitors with displays controlled by live and delayed feedback, which Schneider described 'was to integrate the audience into the information'; David Hall's Progressive Recession (1975) incorporated nine monitors and nine cameras playing with the perception of the viewer in time as their image was fed back and juxtaposed within the sculptural alignment of monitors in the space; Dan Graham's Opposing Mirrors and Video Monitors on Time Delay (1974) involved two monitors, two mirrors, two video cameras and a time delay to switch the viewer's image unexpectedly from one monitor to the next - the monitors were placed at either end of the gallery space facing mirrored walls.
and the viewer would walk from one end of the gallery to the other to see their image finally appear on the monitors. Many artists were exploring video as a sculptural material at this time, expanding the artwork beyond the screen into the gallery, evident from the vast number of works in the exhibitions of expanded video, Video Skulptur Retrospektiv und Aktuell (1963-1989) at Köln, Berlin and Zurich in 1989. When video projection was combined with time-delay devices to interrupt real time or pre-recorded images, or switchers to mix between channels it was approaching a technologically active and semi-immersive cinematic environment.

Lynn Hershman Leeson's Lorna (1984), was notably one of the earliest interactive video laser disc works by an artist, and enabled the audience to navigate multiple and non-linear strands of narrative via a remote control unit. With America's Finest (1992-1995), Hershman included an M16 rifle as a camera/trigger, triggering a projection of the audience holding the gun, fed-back into the gun-sight, and mixed with horrific situations where the rifle was used. Gary Hill's, Tail Ships (1992), used '16 channels of video, 16 monitors and projection lenses, sixteen laser disc players and a computer controlled interactive system' to create a projected environment whereby the audience's physical activity directly affected the images. In a dark corridor the audience could move towards the projections of individually interactive characters, 'as the viewer walks through the space, electronic switches are triggered, and the figures walk forward until they are approximately life size'. Tail Ships placed the audience in a central position both metaphorically and physically so that the image movement was related specifically to the audience movement. The audience were an inherent component of the work, as much a part of the visuals as the projected image, the projected subjects meeting with the real subjects, 'I wanted interactivity to be virtually transparent to the point that some people would not even figure it out'.

Drawing from the practices of expanded film and video, current participatory and semi-immersive cinema that the viewer can inhabit, is also the technological re-invention of pre film forms of cinematic display, i.e. panorama, camera obscura, phantasmagoria. Digital and computer based systems and interface evolution, have widened the sensory and tactile possibilities for audience participation with the moving-image artwork. The corporeal body can be central, and the subject as an active becoming rather than a passive given, can be both participant and accomplice in the composition of images. Having a tactile relationship with the images and physically intervening with the screen space, the structure of the montage is ultimately theirs. By their dynamic intervention the audience discontinue linear narration and extend the artwork beyond the boundaries of the screen, and as such these works continue the tradition of the avant-garde, which has played with narrativity, cause and effect and notions of dramaturgy.

In Grahame Weinbren’s Frames (1999) a three-channel computer controlled interactive cinema installation, the audience effected a structural change in the montage sequences by their physical interaction with picture 'frames' suspended in front of each of the projections. By placing their hand through the frames and their invisible matrix, the audience triggered the layers in the projected sequences, with their own body central to the mechanism. Tactility was crucial to Chris Hales' The Twelve Loveliest Things I Know (1991). This interaction was oriented around the small screen and the projection, a frameless painting that the viewer could get close to and dip in and out of. The audience were required to touch things brightly coloured on the screen to navigate the structure and to traverse a series of stories. Masaki Fujihata's Beyond Pages (1995) was a minimally beautiful sculptural installation, comprising a small table and chair and a projection of a door. The audience stroked the image of the book illuminated in the table, turning each page to reveal an animation and Japanese text with a voice speaking the word. Thecla Schipperhorst's Body Maps: Artifacts of Touch (1996), consisted of a life sized projection onto a velvet-covered table, of a woman curled up as if asleep, the audience stroking the image caused gradual and almost imperceptible changes in her movement. The work set up a quasi-intimate relationship between the physical intervening subjects and the projected body, and was sensual and intense, since the touch produced an apparent response. With each of these works the audience is absorbed into a synaesthetic and physical space and affect the montage or the structuring of the images – the collage – by intervention. The process is both in its making and reception; the technology and the subject are its material.

I describe these works as cinematic, and locate expanded digital moving-image firmly within the avant-garde film and video traditions, a trajectory centred on the established and unambiguous histories of artists experiment with moving-image, spectacle, cinema and technology extending at least throughout the twentieth century. There are subtle specificities embodied by the term – expanded cinema – that distinguishes digital (and usually computer augmented or controlled) participatory cinema from graphics oriented puppetry within 'new' media. Though too complex to deal with in this short essay (as distinctions are never clear cut)
loosely speaking, experimental cinema in the digital domain centres on the moving image, and focuses attention away from the individual frame or the still image. It plays with illusion transference, and the sensory, tactile, and experiential (often on both sides of the camera or in exhibition), often questioning the physicality of viewing. This is not necessarily a cinema of film (although could be), but it continues the tradition of experimental film and video; its critical context stemming specifically from a philosophy of cinema.

In the essays that follow, the artist Chris Hales discusses his own cinematic artworks and cites some of the historical preconditions of mass public interaction with film, citing Kinautomat the first known interactive film system for the cinema theatre, created by Ruduz Çincara and shown at Expo '67 in Montreal. The artist Grahame Weinbren is a pioneer of video and digital computer augmented expanded and participatory cinema. He discusses The Eri King, which he made with Roberta Friedman between 1983-86, and some of the technological implications of re-staging a totally digital version of the work in 2004 at the Guggenheim Museum in New York. Contemporary innovators of expanded cinema, these artists reflect on process, technology and context; Grahame Weinbren on the relative matter, form, and substance of digitality; Chris Hales on the structural essences of works made for the exhibition environment of the cinema theatre and the relationship between audience and artwork. The mass audience interaction with the large scale ‘front facing’ cinematic event. Artists’ engagement with the practices and philosophies of cinema whether with film, video or digital media, exist beyond any prevailing technocracy. These essays articulate some of the discourses and evolving ‘languages’ of the emergent moving image technologies whilst acknowledging the historical continuities of work with proto; photo and post photo-cinema.

Jackie Hatfield
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3 Cinema is Greek for movement
4 See Tom Gunning, ‘The Cinema of Attractions Early Film it’s Spectator and the Avant-Garde’ in Early Cinema, Space, Frame Narrative, ed. Thomas Elsaesser, p 56
5 This is not meant as a definitive list, since I am talking about the earliest period and the material debates in particular.
6 Designed by Howard Veil a technical engineer at the Royal College of Art
7 ‘A camera registers the passage of time by continuously monitoring the observer through a Polaroid shutter. At intervals the shutter is momentarily released - triggered by the observer’s movement across a photosensitive switch. The comparatively bright light images are burnt, or inscribed, on to the camera’s vidicon signal plate. Both the time continuum reflex and the retained (subsequently fading) “static punctuations” of that continuum are exhibited as one on a video monitor’, description of Vidicon Inscriptions - The Installation, David Hall, The Tate Gallery Video Show, 18 May – 6 June, (Tate Gallery: London, 1976)
8 Peter Campus (i.e. dor (1975), Mem (1974), Interface (1972)) was one of the first artists to incorporate video projection with feedback in the early 1970s, confronting the viewer with his or her own image in the gallery space.
9 Ira Schneider continued ’It was a live feedback system which enabled the viewer standing within its environment to see himself not only now in time and space, but also eight seconds ago and sixteen seconds ago. In addition he saw standard broadcast images alternating with his own delayed/live image. Also two collage-type programmed tapes, ranging from a shot of the earth, to outer space, to cows grazing, and a ‘skin flick’ bathtub scene’ Gene Youngblood, Expanded Cinema (London: Studio Vista, 1970), 342.
11 Hill has used computer controlled switchers in other works such as Suspension of Disbelief (for Marine) (1992-1992)
14 European Media Art Festival, Osnabruck, 1995
15 ISEA, Rotterdam, 1995
16 Video Positive, 1996