

ISIS IS

Women & Film began in October 1972 when a group of Toronto Women met to plan an international festival of films directed by women (in retrospect, an appallingly ambitious plan). The idea snowballed. Plans soon included a thorough retrospective of films made since 1896, a video and photography exhibition and an 18 city tour organized by local co-ordinators across the country free admission and daycare centres in every theatre were planned, making the festival accessible to all.

It was a smash! Everyone loved it! Women were amazed at the creative force of women in the history of visual media. They felt supported when they watched films that reflected some of their own struggles. It was evident that the kinds of women we have seen portrayed in the mass media are not representative, and that female artists are now in a position to present alternative life-sized images. The films encouraged women to move in any direction their talents and interests take them.

Women & Film 1973 was a success. Now what? A very logical progression

was to take the festival, by means of a van, beyond the reaches of large cities and have each province plan and develop its own project in all its various stages.

This idea has become reality and here we are!

B.C.'s chapter of Women & Film is called ISIS, after the Egyptian goddess of life. By Means of travelling to each town, letters, a conference and emergency phone calls, we have established a working liason with each of the tour towns. Utilizing the films, videotapes, art show, (slides and actual works) books, puppets, written material, audiotapes and PR material that we are bringing to each town, each local committee is tailor-making its own 2-3 day festival. Local music, audio and radio workshops, art exhibits, poetry reading, pottery and batik workshops, yoga or dance classes, panel discussions, guest speakers and displays of culinary art (herbs, etc.) are some of the ideas featured in various towns.

Despite the many hassles we have encountered while co-ordinating the festival we are finally ready to start the motor of the van and leave.

... It's been wonderful meeting and working with women from so many towns. See you.

ONLY WOMEN?

Women & Film was originally conceived as a representation of only women's works. However, in many of the towns we visited, women requested films and tapes that concerned them but that were not produced by women—a dilemma!—we tried to get as much requested material as possible and have left it to each town to decide the focus of their own particular festival, whether or not it be strongly feminist.

THE FUTURE

We are trying to raise money for a specifically northern tour, focusing on the problems caused by isolation, a transient population and, most recently, development of the north-west sector. It is International Women's Year, so anything can happen.



Women from all the tour towns came to Vancouver August 10, 11, for a meeting. Here we are with the Van.