



# Winterl♀ck.

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...*goddess of life*

ISIS  
3006 Cambie Street  
Vancouver, B.C.

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ISIS, the Egyptian goddess of life, is the name chosen by the Vancouver Women & Film group, which has, since its founding in 1973, evolved to encompass many media activities. Their 1974 tour throughout British Columbia was very well received. A statement of their objectives for the tour ended by saying: "Although our tour has been designed and implemented by women, the philosophical focus is for people. We believe that in the changing socio-cultural environment, people should be assisted in understanding the choices available to them. It is our aim that both women and men of all ages will benefit from our programme." The following excerpts from the ISIS report illustrate their success:

It would be impossible to describe everything that happened on Tour but a few impressions seem more relevant than others. Anywhere from six to 170 people attended each afternoon or evening showing. In towns such as Cranbrook, only women came, whereas in Hope, there were mostly men. Students, sometimes in very large numbers, often participated in the programmes, as did pensioners. New Denver's Festival was very rurally oriented with its displays of homemade preserves and quilts and its fresh strawberry tarts for sale. In contrast, Penticton and Castlegar were strongly issue oriented, concentrating more on health and the law, while Kelowna and Courtenay were more interested in the Arts. Dance groups, health discussions, video and photography workshops, cake decorating workshops, local musicians, Tai Chi, and yoga sessions, and a group dynamics study were all featured in various towns. Each town drew up its own programme of films and each reacted differently to the same films, although Women On The March, Cancer and Women, Salt of the Earth and the Working Mothers films were consistently well received. Discussions, except in the case of feature films, generally followed each film and women gave vent to many questions they had regarding issues such as daycare, health, welfare women and feminism. The unfortunate media image of "Womens Libbers" was often dispelled.

Art Show

Four hundred invitations were sent to Women artists throughout B.C. to have their work represented in a touring exhibition and slide catalogue. Over one hundred women of all ages and backgrounds responded and the resulting collection of slides and actual works was incredibly diverse, both in its style and content, presenting a broad spectrum of the art activities throughout all of B.C.

This show was supplemented in each town by an excellent local art exhibit. Women enthusiastically brought paintings, prints, macrame, preserves, quilts, carvings, photographs, eggs their chickens had laid, icing sculptures, and even an outhouse!

We found the art show encouraged women of all political and social beliefs to participate in the festival. In turn their participation endorsed the festival for the entire community. People were overwhelmingly appreciative of the extremely high calibre of the touring art show and very proud of, and interested in, their own regional representation.

### Videotape Network

During the tour we videotaped workshops, singers, poets, and discussions. It is important that our videotape library does not consist entirely of "city tapes." If this happens we will be one dimensional - too few people will be represented and too few people will be served. Video is a good medium to form a provincial communication interchange because it is cheap and relatively easy to produce. It is not effective in all situations but it's ideal for small groups. Our videotapes are currently being used extensively throughout the province. Hopefully they will encourage local women to try their own productions which we can then distribute elsewhere.

Moira Simpson has sent us the following progress report on ISIS' current activities:

Four of us make up the ISIS/Women & Film collective. When we returned in December from our three month tour, each of us decided to work independently on our own projects, but to retain the group structure. This plan has worked very well. There are overlaps - certainly of concern and purpose - but we are all doing what we generally want to be doing and we have established a well-rounded centre. Our major hassle is, like most women's groups, insufficient funding to do what we want to do well. Pulling distribution centres and production units out of practically nothing isn't very realistic - but we try.

Here is a breakdown of our projects:



### Barbara Etches

- resident artist. designs posters, catalogues, flyers, etc.
- organized an expanding slide show representing over 100 women artists from all parts of B.C.
- helps women throughout B.C. organize their own art shows. For example, in Penticton, Prince George, and Vancouver.

### Mary Jane Cowan

- operates distribution centre.
- We are continually encouraged by the demand for our slide/sound productions, films and videotapes. Most of them are booked until **June**. We are preparing a new catalogue but til now promotion has been in the form of last fall's tour, along with a letter went to every "Teacher's Federation" Status of Women Representative in B.C., discussing our experiences with the Working Mothers films. Feedback from this has been good.
- Distribution also involves assisting women who have never held a film discussion group before, who have never worked a projector before...Women's groups are mushrooming everywhere in B.C. and the women involved in them are eagerly seeking aids or tools for discussions and workshops.
- Our library is unfortunately very limited. We are searching for materials on a wide range of topics.

### Elizabeth Walker, Moira Simpson

- As our need for more materials increases, we've been involved in more production. We're presently working on four productions and are tentatively planning a film on daycare in B.C. and a radio programme on women and the medical profession.
- Those we're presently working on are:
  1. Dinette Suite - an extremely low budget 4 minute 16mm. sync sound film about a housewife and her fantasies. We have finished filming and are now editing it at the NFB. This is our first film and we've been doing all the camerawork, sound, continuity, and editing ourselves - a great learning experience but we've found we need a bigger crew!
  2. We are presently laying a synchronous sound track on a group of slides we assembled last spring on "Women in China."
  3. We are storyboarding and budgeting a script for "Just A Minute."
  4. We are scripting and organizing a colour videotape production of Susan McCallum and Elizabeth Heinicke - famed and hilarious Whitehorse feminist puppeteers.

### Workshops

We feel it is important to share our skills with others. Partly for this reason and partly because ISIS couldn't pay her rent, we've been giving a course at Douglas College, Surrey, for the NFB, Challenge for Change Programme. It is not geared towards "students," but rather towards Surrey students. We've written a

set of notes that serve as guide posts for the course. It's been exciting working with people, especially many older women who have never looked at a piece of equipment before. Occasionally they had problems with the technical aspects of the course but we visited them individually with the equipment, and soon they were making their own programmes for use in the community and on cable.