

: Guerrilla Television :

*Michael Shamberg and Raindance Corporation,
Holt, Rinehart and Winston
\$8.50, (\$4.50 paper)*

Reviewed by Royce Frith

Perhaps all of us have at one time fantasized about getting into television, "television" meaning some highly organized system represented by networks, broadcasting stations, advertising agencies, and other electronic establishments. Michael Shamberg and Raindance Corporation (the latter apparently Shamberg and friends) have a lot to say about the fact that television should not belong to some mysterious "them" whom we have to sweet-talk into opening the door to "us". Information and TV is you! --as one of the chapter titles proclaims--and the hardware for communicating our software is not that far out of the reach of you and me.

In appreciating this book, the most important thing to understand is what the book is not. It is not a primer on how to build your own private TV station, nor is it a manual on how to mug the establishment with media software. It is not, furthermore, a political tract; indeed, it treats politics as obsolete and informational tools and tactics as more powerful means for social change. The book's ideological objective is simply to break the strangle-hold of broadcast TV on the American and Canadian mind, and it is only radical in that it requires us to clear our minds of conventional attitudes.

North Americans are information junkies. We feel alienated if not surrounded by information in various forms--books, magazines, TV, ads in buses, along highways, etc. Some of us can't even handle the solitude of sitting on the toilet unless we have a token of print to keep ourselves occupied. Any organism needs a certain amount of information or novelty to stay alive, but we in "media America" have made information a staple just barely ranking behind food, clothing, and housing. We're in this media milieu whether we like it or not, and that can be a positive evolution if we can break the stranglehold of hardware and shift from a product to process based culture. Like the difference between renting a car and owning one, you pay for the service of using it (process) and not for the value of ownership (product).

A Canadian application of these principles springs to mind. I never could understand why the C.B.C. has spent, and continues to spend, millions of dollars on hardware (stations, transmitters, etc.) when all that counts is what we see on the tube--the programming. The C.B.C. could sell the hardware for millions of dollars to private operators and the same Parliament that gives the C.B.C. millions for building hardware

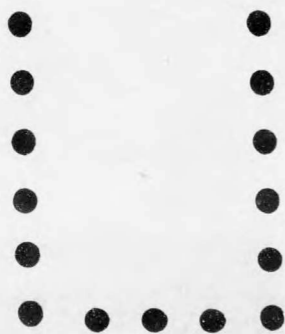
could pass laws which require private operators to carry a fixed amount of programming from the C.B.C. every day and night as a condition of their licence. All the public money would then go into good programming. As the Fowler Commission aptly put it, everything other than programming (process) is just housekeeping (product).

The transformation from a product to process based culture is, of course, already taking place: I.B.M., Xerox and Polaroid do not produce things; they process information and the things they produce are quite secondary to that objective. Information is energy and has no product mode; it's inherently process, which is why it's the energy of evolution.

The present tendency of flee from high octane changes into cults of ancient religion and back-to-the-land communes is essentially reactionary though, like the symptomatic relief of an aspirin, it may give immediate relief. Shamberg suggests that it is better to stick around and begin to humanistically structure and relate to technology; he furthermore offers amusing and interesting ways to relate to TV technology. The actual material in the book does not always satisfy the promise of the

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chapter titles, and the underground newspaper format may suggest a lack of substance and practicality. Nevertheless, there is more than enough substance to balance any unevenness. This book should make you look at TV differently, and if you accept your role in media America, who knows what else may change for you and society?

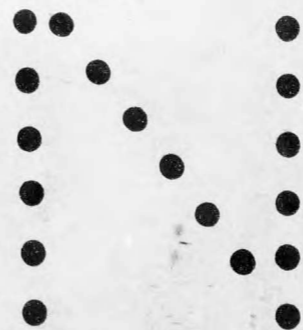


The highlight of this season's UNB concert series will be a recital by the distinguished pianist, Philippe Entremont. M. Entremont's appearance at the Playhouse on October 22nd has been arranged through the Creative Arts Committee of UNB as the first of a proposed annual series of concerts in memory of Professor Walter Baker.

The Committee has booked six events for the 1972-73 Special Events Series. The first, on October 11th, is a concert by Les Menestriers, an ensemble of five French musicians who will present 13th to 16th century music on a variety of medieval instruments.

The Entremont recital follows on October 22nd.

On January 10th the Festival Singers of Canada will appear. This Toronto chorus of thirty-eight voices attracted enthusiastic acclaim on a recent European tour.



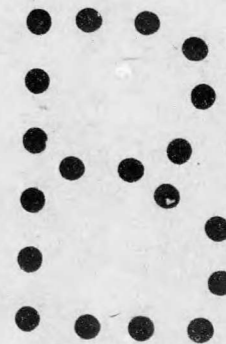
In February the Orchestra of the National Arts Centre in Ottawa will make its Maritimes premiere here with the Duo Pach, resident musicians at UNB, joining them as guest musicians. The tour also includes Halifax and St. John's.

The Contemporary Dancers of Winnipeg are booked for The Playhouse in February. Many people here will remember their performances at Expo 67.

The Series finishes in March with Daniel, who will give a performance of mime in the more intimate environment of the Memorial Hall Auditorium.

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Being sponsored by the Creative Arts Committee of the University, all these events are free to UNB and St. Thomas students. Others can ensure seats by applying for a membership ticket, obtained by sending to the UNB Art Centre a cheque made out to the Creative Arts Committee. The fee is three dollars (\$3) for each membership. Before each concert individual tickets can be picked up by students and subscribers at the Art Centre, the SUB, and the Library.