

PRESS RELEASE

SCREENING: INFERMENTAL 4

SATURDAY 8 OCTOBER, 11.30AM - 7PM

Screening of Issue Four of the pioneering video cassette magazine *Infermental*. The issue will be shown in its seven-hour entirety and introduced by James Richards and Dan Kidner, in advance of their publication 'A Journey Around Infermental', edited with George Clark and published by Focal Point Gallery, Southend-on-Sea.

Infermental, the 'first international magazine on videocassettes', was initiated in 1980 by Gábor and Vera Bódy and 11 issues of the 'magazine' were produced between 1980 and 1991. Gábor Bódy's idea was to build an "Encyclopaedia of Recorded Imagery". The first issues were realised with boundless energy and a visionary zeal; though Bódy, the project's figurehead, died in 1985, *Infermental* continued for another six years. The first issue was produced whilst Bódy was on a DAAD residency in Berlin, and each subsequent issue was put together in a different city. Beginning in Europe, and with a distinct focus on connecting video and media artists in the east and the west, *Infermental* became a project with global reach when later editions were produced in North America and Japan. Each edition featured between 30 and 100 artists contributing complete films, excerpts, trailers, interviews, filmed performances and fragments, and was assembled by a different editorial team, normally consisting of two former contributors, and one supervisor.

Over the course of the project's life, a diverse range of influential figures contributed to the magazine including Margaret Ahwesh, Tony Conrad, Gary Hill, Joan Jonas, Jon Jost, Marcel Odenbach, Amos Poe, Steina Vasulka and Lawrence Weiner. But what makes it such a fascinating and enduring project were the less familiar names, the editorial rationale, the innovative distribution strategy and presentation. Enabled by the newly accessible technology of U-matic video, *Infermental* brought together a range of formats including 8mm, 16mm and 35mm, as well as video. The editions were sold or hired to institutions with specific instructions for their presentation: the tapes were to be played one after the other for the full duration of the issue. Given the status of video at this time, and broad lack of support from galleries and film festivals, *Infermental* attempted to find a new way to present and circulate work amongst artists and institutions around the world.

Issue 4 was edited by the French artists group FRIGO, and marks a shift in the editorial policy, drawing on the group's multi-disciplinary activities, collective organisation and experience in pirate radio. Authorship is problematised as amateur footage, highly authored artists' films, ethnographic documents, video performances and music videos are seamlessly edited together.

This screening is part of an events programme devised by James Richards to coincide with his exhibition at Chisenhale Gallery, which is open until 20 November 2011.

James Richards (born 1983, Cardiff) lives and works in London. Recent solo exhibitions include Rodeo Gallery, Istanbul (2011); *DISAMBIGUATION* (collaboration with Steve Reinke), Trinity Square Video, Toronto (2009); Swallow Street, London (2009). Group exhibitions include 'Clunie Reid and James Richards', Art Now, Tate Britain (2010), 'The Generational: Younger Than Jesus', The New Museum, New York (2009); 'Nought to Sixty', ICA, London (2008).



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Chisenhale Exhibition Partner 2011: Outset Contemporary Art Fund
James Richards' exhibition is supported by Bilge & Haro Cumbusyan and The Elephant Trust.
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