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MPC: When one talks about the 1960s and the 1970s generations, there is this sense that the equipment that they were using in the Co-op very much determined the aesthetics and the language of the films that were produced there. Peter Kubelka speaks about this in his lectures, how the tools and the ingredients that you have in the kitchen determine what you make. Nina has spoken about the fact that although you were using the same tools as the previous generation, you were doing something different with them. What influence or importance did the tools of production have on your work?

AS: I wasn't trying to do anything different. Ruth is right about all the other influences – punk rock, novels, art. I was watching South American films at the Metro cinema in Soho, reading Tony Morrison, Maya Angelou. It was enough for me to explore my internal and my external world through film because I was held within this community that allowed me to do that. I wasn't becoming a film-maker. I wasn't becoming an artist. I was just doing the thing that allowed me to stay sane.

JM: I placed demands: on practice, on the articulation of the image, on anamorphic movement-space, on repetition and durational time, on haptic micro-topologies of forces, intensities and vibrations (of colour saturation, of density, of illumination, of grain, of blur and stain, of mood and atmosphere), on the opening of sutures, on the emptiness of images, on breaks and gaps and the terror of uncertain meaning. Despite the discourse-specific aspect of my practice, the formulation that best captured my process was being open to the imperceptible, as an indiscernible subject, to create the un-nameable in my films.

My excessive crowding out of all normative measures through extreme layering within and between film frames on the optical printer opened up hidden micro-spaces within and between frames (for changes of mood, atmosphere and feeling) through layering colour and light, folding in voids and darkness with anamorphic shape-shifting between frames was an effect of a demand on my practice to meet the crisis that I was living through.

SP: For me, my material engagement was as simple as putting film in a camera, filming and editing on a Steenbeck, where you hang your footage on pegs, which I did for the first ten years of making films. This impacts on how I make films now. There is a slowness of the journey to get the image onto film – the cost means waiting six months or a year for funds before you can start and then you have to wait until you can see it. This time is spent planning what you would do and how and why. This process meant that time was given to small details, to the filming, the editing, considering each moment in the film in relation to the whole. The process of cutting on celluloid with a splicer is a performance; if you don't like the cuts you can't easily put them back together. So this process becomes the language of the film; it is its content. For the last ten years I have shot my films on celluloid but edited on a computer. I value the limitations that celluloid forced on you. The almost endless options in digital post-production can mean that control becomes uncreative and this risks lacking an actual relationship with the material. Although I keep planning to shoot my film on digital or to mix with celluloid, my last film *Magic Mirror* and its sequel are shot on celluloid. But because I end up with a digital print, I am working between languages and time periods.

AS: The time element allowed emotions to be held communally. The process took a long time; you were battling with equipment. In a way, this allowed that community to exist because we were all there waiting.

RN: I found it so embarrassing to go to those labs, to have those men with their posters of blondes, and to sit there with *Tea Leaf*, which was my first personal film, having it graded and the sound track playing in front of those guys. It was so exposing.

ND: It is important not to idealize the material relationship with film. This idea of the 'hands on' was necessary only at some stages of the production. In the 1990s, artists could get access to high-end digital technology on downtime. Derek Jarman and John Maybury also post-produced their films in the mainstream industry on downtime. That's how I made *"Now I am yours"* (1992), which I post-produced at Chrysalis TV in 1992 and tele-recorded back to film. This cross-media platform is now standard in post-production but in the 1990s the two media were still separate and I tried to get what I needed from each in my working method. This was prototyped in *Stabat Mater* (1990), which was filmed on Super 8, blown-up to 16mm on the optical printer, telecined and off-line edited. I spoke the text into the microphone on the u-matic off-line deck as I edited, because it provided more immediacy, intimacy and 'material' closeness than recording in a sound booth. The relationship of picture and sound was more flexible on off-line than editing on the Steenbeck, which seemed stiff for this film and imposed a rigidity that was antithetical to what I wanted. The off-line edit was then transferred to magnetic and 16mm. In the films of the 1990s, I was seeking the flexibility that would only become available later with digital, but at the time it did not exist and you had to find this plastic flexibility through your own combinations of technologies.

AS: I was making *Fatima's Letter* from 1990 to 1992 at the Film Co-op and at the same time I was a student at the Slade. Rasheed Araeen had curated 'The Other Story' at the Hayward Gallery (1989) and reactions resonated throughout the British art scene, one of the issues being that women artists of colour were under-represented. There was a huge awareness about black artists and their lack of representation within the canon of western art. The term then was, 'Black Artists' (umbrella term for people of colour). Moira Sweeney programmed Trin T. Minh-ha's *Reussenblage* (1982) at the Co-op. Minh-ha also talks about the voice-over as being 'to the side of the film'. The idea that 'You don't know what you are looking at and everything you think you are looking at is other than what you are looking at.' This is something that really influenced me in making *Fatima's Letter* where I presented images of the London Underground but the voice-over came from an interior space. I think we were all dealing with a personal voice. There was a space between the image and the text that was relatively new and was coming from different places: feminism, black politics, Third Text, 'queer' politics – all of this filtered in different ways.

This was also taken up by people who were working in distribution at the Film Co-op like Tony Warcus, Pier Wilkie and Tanya Syed who was running educational workshops, a job specifically created by the Executive to facilitate access to the Co-op. Tanya Syed programmed monthly screenings and people like Anand Patwardhan came and presented *In the Name of God* (made in 1992 and shown at the Co-op in 1993), which was about the rise of communalism in India; Anoop Singh and Kobena Mercer also came. Lily Markiewicz did a lot. In 1987, Carole Enahoro curated a programme of films called 'Cinemas D'Afrique', where she showed Ousman Semène, Souleymane Cissé and Jean Rouch. I want to mention these people because citation is very important, particularly in relation to value. We have to cite each other in order to create a system of new value so that these spaces that did exist, that were other to those expected of experimental film at the London Filmmakers' Co-op, do not disappear.

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