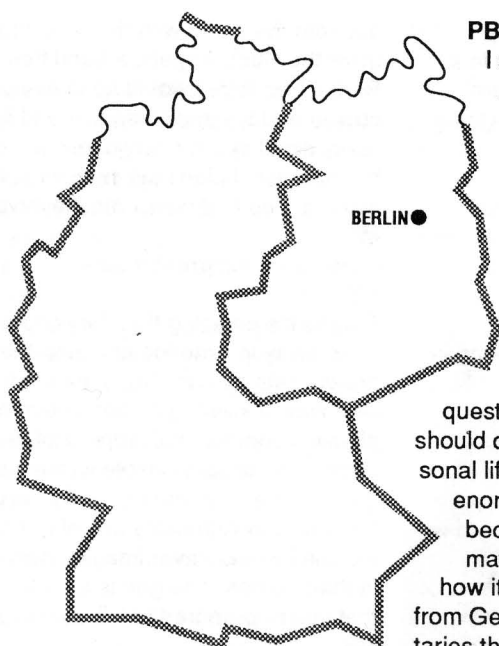




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GUNS AND GIRLS AND GUERRILLAS
 an interview with
PENELOPE BUITENHUIS

PENELOPE BUITENHUIS is a Canadian independent filmmaker who has been living and working in West Berlin for the last five years. She has produced and directed 15 short films in Canada, the U.S. and West Germany and recently began directing for German television. Her 'new narrative' works are set in the ghettos of urban centres - New York, Berlin, Toronto, Vancouver and Rome - and edited in such a way that the cities become one decaying metropolis. Working primarily in super-8, Buitenhuis is concerned with the interface of popular culture, political consciousness and human experience within the frame of the urban landscape. The filmmaker has worked with Dutch and German musicians to create original, vibrant soundtracks to accompany her films.



PB:
I started making *They Shoot Pigs Don't They?* when I came down to San Francisco in 1987 to show political documentaries from Germany about the census. I don't know if you heard about it here. It's an obligatory census that everybody had to fill out about their income and personal statistics and if you don't comply there's a 500 mark fine. It posed

questions about what the government should or shouldn't know about your personal life. I wanted to expose this enormous resistance to America because we tend to give out information so willingly, without knowing how it's going to be used. On the way from Germany to show these documentaries they wouldn't let me into the States and they were very suspicious about the tapes. In the end, they found me in the computer and it turned out there was a warrant for my arrest for some car insurance thing from 5 years before which I didn't know about. I was handcuffed at the airport and taken to the police station and basically, that started my rage against police. That summer I'd been stopped by police a number of times and taken in for ridiculous reasons. Charges were always dropped, but I sort of felt..

MH:
This was in Germany?

PB:
In Vancouver. I felt there was a real tendency in Canada, more so than in Germany, towards a kind of vigilante police activity. If the guy didn't like your face or the way you talked or if you said what you thought about things, then it was quite easy to have false charges laid against you. I'm a white middle-class person, so I can imagine for other people it must be a lot worse.

It was ironic because I was coming to San Francisco to show how the computer is used against the individual, and that's just what happened to me. There's quite a strong anarchist community in San Francisco and I asked some people if they would like to do this film with me. In the two scenes with the two pigs watching television, the actors are two San Francisco guys; one is a singer from the Dicks. That was all I ended up shooting there. It became too chaotic. I

had written this script very quickly and it wasn't ready, so I dropped the idea and continued in Berlin with the manifesto section, where the women speak on television and give a manifesto about police brutality and the killing of this black guy. It was an ongoing process for the next 3 years, shooting bits in New York and Berlin and Vancouver. I didn't ever write a full script, I adapted it as I went along.

I wanted to show that certain portions of society never get media access, and that the only way to get it is to forcefully take it. The other thing about the film is that in Germany, particularly, there's a nostalgia for revolutionary images: Baader Meinhoff, Che Gueverra, the fist, the black flag, all these things that are constantly re-used in demonstrations and leftist rhetoric. I feel those kind of symbols and "Down with Imperialism" rhetoric is no longer applicable today and that a new form of resistance has to be developed. Constantly recalling this sort of nostalgic imagery of revolution makes it absurd. The main character in the film, Yvonne, the black woman, is surrounded by these posters, and she's obviously a part of this imagery, affected by it. At the same time, she's never lived a revolution in her generation, so in a way it's a dream that's never been fulfilled.

What triggers events in the film is the killing of this man Keane in Harlem by police who claimed afterwards he was a crack dealer. But neighbours said he'd never been involved with crack, he was an accountant. The cops said they found a vial of crack in his larynx, which everyone claimed they planted after he was killed to justify it. In *They Shoot Pigs the Women Attack Pigs Revolution* begins with a takeover of ABC and a national broadcast that reads an anti-Pig manifesto. Then police all over the streets become the targets of this revolutionary coalition. Eventually some members get hurt and the revolution is called off to avoid any more bloodshed. The remaining members hijack a plane to Germany, to start again. In the end the film fails because it's not clear enough. In a way it becomes a slapstick comedy about revolution. They end up hitting police on the head with sticks but, what I'm really getting at is that these ideas of takeover are really not feasible any more, and thinking they are

MH:
Where did you learn about filmmaking?

PB:
I tried to get into a school in Paris but my residency papers didn't come through at the last minute. As a contingency plan, I'd applied to Simon Fraser University because I heard it was one of the few schools that didn't follow a commercial vein and they paid for your filmmaking. I never had any money, so if I was going to do it, I had to do it there. I never considered movies an art form, I just went for fun, like every other kid. When I was 18, I got this education about European film and realized there were other possibilities. I was outraged that I hadn't even heard about this work. I think it's still true, that unless you live in the privileged artistic world you don't hear anything about it

After the course I went to Paris and got involved with some documentary filmmakers and got the bug. I also realized that Paris wasn't the place to be a female filmmaker. I wasn't interested in being an actress or anything and they could never understand why I would want to learn anything technical. Editors and script girls are about the only roles open in Latin countries for women. It's very much a man's world. Canada's the same but Germany has women working in all facets of filmmaking.

MH:
Tell me about *They Shoot Pigs Don't They?*

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is really fantasy.

MH:
 Within the organization of the revolutionary group a very distinct hierarchy is set up. There's a couple of people who talk and the rest follow their orders. Yet one of the things they're fighting against is exactly this alienation of duties and responsibilities - that if it's your job to do something you should control how that job is done. They're protesting a lack of media access which has become too centralized, which we can only passively accept into our living rooms, and yet this same kind of top/bottom split exists within the group itself.

PB:
 Anarchy's idea of all leading all is a nice idea but this quickly becomes chaos, so, in a sense I criticize the idea of anarchy as much as dictatorship. In the revolutionary groups of the past there were leaders. That's the only way it could work.

MH:
 But the operation of the squats was cooperative in a way that seems to underline much of what's politically/

collaboration is itself an image of a different kind of social order. Even in a small way it pushes against Western ideals of the romantic individual, signing the film.

PB:
 I think that's valid. In non-urgent situations, collaboration and non-individualism can function, but in situations of direct action, I don't think it can.

MH:
 And how do you see your film-making in relation to that?

PB:
 Part of my mandate in making films is that because I can't pay anybody, I allow them as much creative input as they wish as compensation for not being able to reimburse them in any other way. The women reading the manifesto made a lot of changes to it. They decided on how the choreography of the guys behind them would be, and the costumes they wore, for instance. I didn't tell them to wear black bras, that's how they showed up. I said, "You're supposed to be tough leaders - interpret that how you will" and that's what they decided, which I thought

do. I did the same with the soundtrack: I gave the Rude Angels, a band from Berlin, free rein. I would go in every couple of days and listen to it and if I really didn't like it, I would talk to them, but basically I didn't tell them what I wanted. I do that with almost everybody.

MH:
 Guns are a recurrent motif.

PB:
 For me it's amazing that they could take guns away in America and drop the murder rate by half. Guns are such a cold way of killing, you don't need any physical contact. In Europe a lot of people are uncomfortable with my use of guns all the time, but I'm really uncomfortable with America's use of guns. People I would never imagine have them in their homes. The gun is an admission that you're prepared to kill.

MH:
 But you show people getting killed.

PB:
 But in *They Shoot Pigs Don't They?* it's done in a very slapstick way.

MH:
 The black man?

PB:
 That's the one element that actually happened, that this guy was killed, and for that reason I made that quite graphic. It's not a revolutionary dream, he died unjustly at the hands of the police. Not to forget.

MH:
 But isn't the proliferation of guns in the States doubled by the proliferation of guns in your films?

PB:
 Because I'm a non-violent person, this apparatus that makes violence so easy fascinates me. I don't understand it.

MH:
 As you use the image more and more, do you understand it better?

PB:
 No. I use it as a cliché or simple representation of death like they do in Hollywood. I can't imagine someone stopping breathing because I'm pulling the trigger. Most of my guns are



THEY SHOOT PIGS

culturally vital in Berlin. These squats might house groups of filmmakers who would work collaboratively, and this

was quite amusing. Some feminists feel uncomfortable with that representation, but that's what those women chose to

like they do in Hollywood. I can't imagine someone stopping breathing because I'm pulling the trigger. Most of my guns are

plastic.

MH:
I studied film in Oakville, and at the end of the year everyone sits down to watch the hundreds of films produced. I was shocked by what I saw - it was an endless display of killing, with every means you could imagine and then some. It was violence imaged by people who'd never experienced it, Quinn Martin memories, an image of an image. It was a chilling feeling. So much of experimental film has very little to do with violence.

PB:
I was amazed at the Experimental Film Congress how few films had any people in them at all.

MH:
That's not representative.

PB:
Is it a collective denial? Perhaps there's enough violence in other forms of representation that we can leave it out in ours. *Pigs* takes place in New York, which is a very violent city, and the cops are everywhere showing their cocks, their guns. It's there in the papers everyday, I just can't seem to get away from it. But *They Shoot Pigs* is also a criticism of revolutionary forms because violence creates violence. Any revolution that tries to undermine a system often ends up using the apparatus they're fighting against, and that I'm against. Unfortunately, though, to fight you often have to use the same method of destruction.

MH:
Or using a means of communication that people can understand, using dramatic forms for instance. It's confounding - on the one hand it's not understood, on the other it's appropriated.

PB:
In *They Shoot Pigs* there's only once that a policeman is killed, with a knife. Mostly they're just injured. There's a difference in who's using the guns; only the police are shooting.

MH:
What about the way the film functions? Who would see a film like this?

PB:
Generally I'm a kind of pack rat filmmaker. I just take my films around, like I am now, to the Euclid or the MOMA or the American Institute of Film in Washington. I push myself, since my experience for short films and no-budget



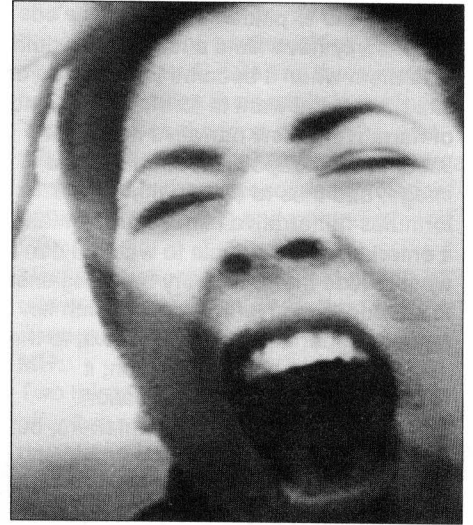
Penelope Buitenhuis

films has been that there isn't a lot of incentive for distribution companies to push them. There's no money in it.

MH:
But do you see the films working as a form of direct action? How do they function politically?

PB:
The reaction in Europe has always been very interesting because although I live in Germany, much of my work is based in America and American culture. Even people in alternative cultures have a certain image of America which I think is incorrect. They assume a very glossy, complete picture, so people are often surprised at the decaying ghettos I show. I inform Europeans of a subcultural existence they might not be aware of. The most insight comes out in discussion, rather than in direct response to the film, because when I show my films six at a time it's a real overload of information and images. People are overwhelmed. Response comes when we start talking.

For instance, *Disposable*, which is about disposable North American culture, is an ironic idea for Europeans because they're surrounded with tradition and history. They don't even realize how much tradition plays a part in their way of thinking and those that do suggest it's an impedance to your freedom of thinking, a



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weight they're forced to carry. *Disposable* is set in an America which has turned its shorter history into a very disposable form of culture, with television and magazines that are gone tomorrow, that foster a cultural amnesia. That leaves museums and institutions as the places of our public memory and I feel uncomfortable with that agenda. If you're in Paris or Berlin the shape of your space, the architecture, the statues and monuments, are a constant reminder of what went on before. In North America it's difficult to remember anything.

MH:
North American experience was founded on removing our indigenous people, our foundation is already one of erasure and genocide. *Disposable* takes up this question of the custodians of memory. You show two men, one arguing for the importance of the past, the other lost in the present.

PB:
As an artist both have validity. Europeans envy America because an intuitive response to image making still seems possible. But I don't think we're children; it's not possible to be naive or to go back, any more than it is for the Europeans.

MH:
Your film work is also straining the traditions of a certain kind of experimental film work.

PB:
Even though I really enjoyed working in an experimental vein, when I took my

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films around to places that didn't necessarily have films audiences I would lose them when it became too obscure or experimental. I want to form another kind of narrative, a new narrative that's not linear in its juxtaposition of sound and image, and tries to disturb the typical formulas of narrative film. I want to make it entertaining for people to watch. I don't want to lose them. I'm very much against this tendency in North America, with its endless superimpositions and text, to the point that I lose what's going on; it becomes intellectual masturbation. Maybe it works for other film-makers, but my purpose is not to preach to my own kind.

I've shown just about everywhere, in warehouses, and cafes and outside, really trying to reach other kinds of audiences. A lot of peoples' response is, "Oh, we've never seen stuff like that, this is really strange, I never knew stuff like this existed" and that's what I want to get at. I want people to realize there are other ways of telling stories or talking about issues or presenting opinions, but I think it's necessary to maintain a certain narrative line. So, in the last 6 years, I've turned much more towards narrative.

MH:

What about the people who say that your work casts off the tradition of experimental film entirely, that there's nothing left of it any more, it's not experimental, it's something else?

PB:

"Experimental" means in any form or way in which you wish to make it. Experimental lies outside mainstream form, and beyond that, I'd say it's free rein. At the Experimental Film Congress in Toronto there seemed to be a definite definition of what constituted experimental film, which I found shocking. How could there be? How could it continue being experimental if it could be pinned down beneath the words?

Curiosity towards other forms of communication has dwindled because it's not so new any more, and a lot of people are fed up with obscurity and don't want to see that. I have to say, at the Experimental Film Congress I really sat back and wondered, "What were they saying in that film?" I didn't understand some of the work, and I'm an educated filmgoer, so I can imagine for the uninitiated it

must have been totally confusing. I'm not suggesting you need to dictate what you're saying, but why do you make images? You want to bring something across to people. You don't want to leave them totally confused when they leave. What I was very annoyed with at the Congress was that new narrative, in a sense, already seemed like a cop-out, and I disagree: I think new narrative is a way we have to go now to be able to reach an audience that is fed up with experimental obscurity or endless superimpositions or layering text. I'm trying to make experimental film fun to watch, and I don't think that's such a bad thing!

MH:

Purely formal film experiments seem increasingly to emerge from a certain kind of privilege, a class privilege, that has the time to worry about things like 'film as film'. As well the increasingly academic and institutionalized context for work is heading production off in a certain direction. Because the universities are the ones interested, work is unwittingly designed for that context or buried altogether, and that's why work is becoming increasingly insular and cut away from any kind of audience at all.

PB:

I agree. I'm continually shocked at the similarity of films to one another in Canadian festivals. At the Insight Festival in Edmonton, all the documentaries took a certain form that spoke of the NFB; the experimental work took this very obscure academic form, and when I showed my work, people were really shocked because it didn't fit.

Although people think of German film as being innovative, they don't have nearly the history of experimental film that we do in America. It's not institutionalized like it is here. At film school they don't learn about Stan Brakhage or things like that. Film theory is not nearly so prevalent in Europe as it is here, generally film schools teach you how to make film, and, as a result, they're not so patient with experimental forms.

MH:

One thing that's different between your work and a lot of the other German stuff I saw is that a lot of filmmakers have a very strong aversion to language. Long stretches of work will have no dialogue or titles, whereas North Americans seem

obsessed with text. Your work is relatively wordy when compared with other German work.

PB:

As an English-speaking person in Germany I have a different relation to language, even though I speak German.

MH:

When Tom Chomont, a New York filmmaker, was traveling through Europe he couldn't ever afford to stay in one place so he ended up making work which was silent, without any language, because he was constantly put in situations where he couldn't understand the language and was forced to find some other way to communicate.

PB:

I think a lot of the sounds provide a non-verbal dialogue, I think sound is an international form of communication, it triggers thoughts and associations. But particularly in Germany, where language has been abused by Hitler and other great orators, filmmakers are wary of their own language because of the way it was used under fascism. Words don't seem the same now. English can be brief and succinct in a way that isn't possible in German, it doesn't have the same freedom of juxtaposition. In English you can put words next to one another in a stream-of-consciousness which is understandable because the words have an integral meaning in themselves. But in German each word is very dependent on the words surrounding it. So you can't free it from its history, its weight. Because I'm not German I look at the way they've put their language together - like the word 'geschlechtsverker' which means copulation, and in it is the word 'schlecht', which means bad and 'verker' which is traffic. I used to think it meant 'bad traffic'. But they can't see that the word holds its own moral. When you're in your own language you don't realize the way its been impregnated by culture, the way your mouth shapes your understanding. Or 'Leidenschaft' which means passion and 'leid' is pain. The Germans never notice of course, just as we don't. In the same way experimental film is concerned with the form, of how you do something, and when you make the form strange you're able to see it, until the form becomes too strange and you can't see it at all.

O V E R T H E W A L L

MH:
Tell me about *Disposable*.

PB:
That was shot in New York and Toronto with Samantha Hermenes. Samantha is extremely talented but she doesn't use it, so whenever I see her I push her to work with me. I came to Toronto and she's always felt like an outsider there because of the sex change so I said, "You should come to New York and why don't we write a film that we'll shoot in two days?" So we wrote the script in a day and shot it in two days. The idea was to try to show that living in a big city it's necessary to become indifferent to the horrors you see around you. I still get tears in my eyes when I see the bag ladies in New York. But to survive you have to build up a certain indifference to remain optimistic and creative. So this women sees a lot of

she gets kicked out, but nothing really gets inside. Then it turns out that the events that happened have been planned by a guy whose trying to inflict his paranoia on her. He's bothered by the fact that she can live without being affected. All the things that have happened to her have been set up for her to see.

MH:
Scripted.

PB:
Yeah, it's very much to do with constructing the film. The paranoid guy is also like the filmmaker who's saying all these events were no accident. She says she'll stay indifferent and survive. People said that's a call for apathy but I don't think so.

MH:
The paranoid person is suggesting to her

she's implicated. The paranoid relates to her in the form of a letter which she opens at the end, detailing the events of her day, showing their origin in the word. This letter has the form of a script, and this person then becomes analogous to a filmmaker. Is there a necessary relation between filmmaking and paranoia?

PB:
Most filmmakers are paranoid about understanding. That's why they make dramas.

MH:
Two thing in her apartment seems to offer her some degree of comfort: her parrot and her mirror. I think there's a distinct narcissism at work, she's able to escape from her surround in the image of herself.

PB:
She's an extreme case. After she's cut

off the world all she has left is herself. The mirror falls because of the violence of the argument next door, and this splintering of the mirror shows the outside world really stepping into her life, breaking her image. That's when she gets the angriest.

MH:
There's a suggestion that there is no outside, that it's impossible to be alone.

PB:
That's why it all continues even when she gets home. The neighbours are fighting, the landlord boots her out, the paranoid telephones. In the film I use a heavy soundtrack by Mechanik Kom-



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ugly things which she ignores, they're an everyday occurrence. She passes a murder, a dope deal, arguments and corpses. She's even blase about her personal life, her apartment is trashed,

that all of these events - the murder, the dope deal, the person lying dead by the sidewalk - that seem circumstantial are all coming from one place. They make up a narrative of which she's a part,

mando because in New York you never escape the noise. I couldn't live there because of the overwhelming sound. You're never out of New York when you're there.

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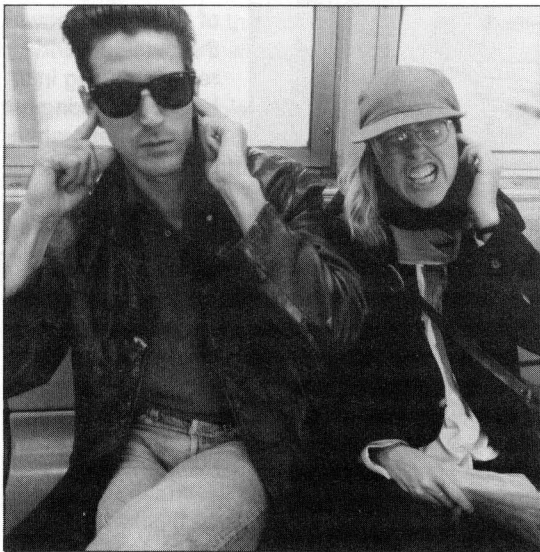
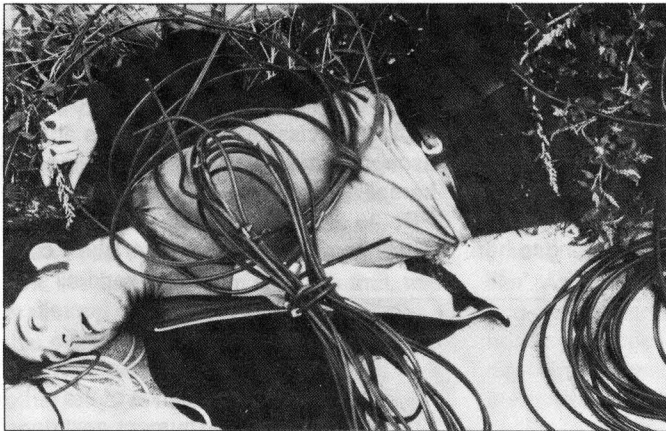
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MH:

There's an analogy between being surrounded by sound and the way we're filled with images all the time. I've been trying to imagine a time when you would have to go somewhere to see an image of any kind, that they should be so rare, it would take a special effort to see them. Given that everyone who's looking at your work has, by the ripe old age of ten, seen more images than they could ever



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remember, and that these images are ordered in a particular way, how do your films function against all that?

PB:

All my films are shot in ghettos, decaying parts of the world. It's not random where I shoot or who's in them. Fighting the Hollywood image thing is impossible, but despite their image overdose, people

come out of my work with some sense of the homeless, unjust, fragmentary, dirty, decaying world. I think the impression leaves a mark that doesn't become part of the background. A lot of that has to do with the soundtracks. For far too long sound has been secondary to image but I try to bring it forward, to make them equal.

MH:

What's the film that's shot off the television set?

PB:

Combat not Conform. 4 minutes. It's basically a summary of activities and demonstrations. Now it's irrelevant because Reagan is in it. The demonstrations were against nuclear plants which were good for business, for the pre-eminent value in the world, for money. Inside of all this a few people

are trying to fight for something fundamental: no nuclear weapons in our country. I wanted to make an image of this resistance, to show it's still possible.

MH:

Tell me about your new film.

PB:

It's called *Llaw* which is wall spelt backwards. It's a personal diary about the days leading up to and succeeding the crumbling of the wall. I was in the woods of British Columbia this summer writing a script and I kept seeing via satellite all these reports about mass exodus from East Germany. Everyone said to me, 'You should be back in Germany, it's really exciting', but I

wondered what difference it would make. But it seemed ironic to be sitting ten hours from any city and still seeing images of what was happening at home, or what I call home. I returned to Berlin on the 3rd of November. Six days later the wall came down.

The film begins in the woods of British Columbia and pixillates into the wall. It

starts with November 2, with narration over the titles about being in BC. Then it questions Gorbachev with a scratch track - "Did you ever think it would happen so fast? How can you sleep at night?" that repeats over various images of Gorbachev.

On Nov. 4 there was a demonstration of 1.5 million people in Berlin Alexanderplatz which was broadcast on East German television and they were saying extremely subversive things, that the government should step down, they'd had 40 years of oppression and now it was over. Writers, intellectuals and poets spoke in front of this mass of people. I watched it with a number of people who'd escaped from East Germany and they were stunned at what was being said on television to the whole country. We knew at that point there was no turning back, that it was just a matter of time. That broadcast said it all.

On Nov. 9 the wall came down - I was on the way to a concert of Faith in the War. I heard it on the subway at 7 pm and everyone started shouting. My equipment was locked in my apartment which had been confiscated, I was having personal problems, so I didn't get my camera until Nov. 11 so visually I shot off the TV and shot a lot afterwards.

Nov. 10 begins a metaphorical dialogue between east and west. Its set in the hallways of Britannia House, and revolves around the idea that we've been enemies for forty years but all of a sudden we've decided none of that was necessary any more. We see the camera move into a room where a couple beat up on each other and kiss in the end. This is intercut with images of 1961 when the wall went up and images of today when guards are standing at the top of the wall and people are handing them flowers. That's the power structure metaphor.

The next day is Nov. 11, photographed in the next hallway. It's about people getting 100 marks when they come over, the whole money game. Inside the room a business man opens up a suitcase filled with money and tries to give it to the same woman as before now dressed as a typical communist (laughs) and she's reading a book and trying to ignore it but eventually she takes it and stuffs it in her pocket and

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eats bananas. Bananas became a symbol of capitalism and exoticism because they don't have bananas in East Berlin, so when they saw this fruit in West Berlin—

MH:
They went bananas.

PB:
Exactly. The third scene had to do with the marketing of the wall, the selling of freedom and democracy. An American consortium offered \$50 million to buy the wall but I don't think they're going to get it now, both the British and French Museum have stakes. The whole world wants a piece of history. There's not going to be much left at the end of it, everybody's chipped away so much of it. Everybody wants it. I call it the pet rock of history.

The last section shows a woman lying in front of her TV. An American survey taken after every major broadcaster was talking live from the Brandenburg Gates, showed that after five minutes most Americans switched the channel, so history brought the ratings down. (laughs) The film's about the media spectacle, cashing in on the events of history. The last statement goes: "History makes me suspicious who will be the next enemy." It's about the artificiality of politics.

MH:
When the news reports started coming up about the wall I imagined all the people I spoke with in Berlin - Ulbrich, Bryntrup, Schillinger and all the rest - beginning to make work about it. That the wall would create a whole new genre of filmmaking. No sooner did I get back than you arrived with *Llaw*.

PB:
Everyone was there with a camera, looking at everyone else who was there with a camera. A lot of people were chipping away at the wall which is a crime because the wall belongs to the east. At the beginning they tried to arrest a few people but in the end they gave up because everybody was doing it. But it's not that easy to get a piece because cement doesn't chip that well, and the only people who made a profit are the ones who came with jackhammers. West Berlin became horribly crowded, the subway was impossible, the shops were filled, the smog was unbelievable

because the East German cars have no emission controls, and everything was sold out. So all of a sudden your normal everyday life was like New Delhi. A lot of West Berliners were fed up with the whole thing just in practical terms. I left on Dec. 23 and it still hadn't gone back to normal. Friends of mine were disturbed because they'd spoken up in the past and had to go to prison or leave as a result, but when a mass movement begins everyone sings along. My friends from the East are looking at all these



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right wing assholes who never said anything before and wondering what's up. A recent Spiegel report claimed that 30% of the East Germans are fascist. So there's a lot of questionable things happening. The reforms are good, but does that mean that Eastern Europe will become another capitalist stronghold, another market? There's a striking juxtaposition between the events in Eastern Europe and the American invasion of Panama - is this the freedom everyone's moving towards?

MH:
The real question is - what kind of shape will an oppositional force assume? How is it possible?

PB:
There was a crazy euphoria that's still going on in a way. When I go back I'm going to go show my work in East Berlin and take my bike into the countryside. But the artistic world is frightened because Berlin's peculiarity came in part from being surrounded by a wall, it had

something special. The strangeness of its circumstance brought many international artists to Berlin. That's over now. Everyone's wondering how the culture of Berlin will survive.

In 1984 I made a film about squatting in London, Amsterdam and Berlin. I was fascinated, and it was really cheap, and where I was living at the time, in Paris, it was very expensive and there was little alternative culture. So I moved to Berlin. There aren't many places that have a strong alternative movement with an

audience and a press. Berlin is fantastic. Super-8 in Berlin is respected, I get a whole page in the newspaper about my work. People are really curious, and I never found that anywhere else. It's cheap to work, there's a co-operative mentality, there's not a hierarchy of importance. They're more interested in what you're showing, not the format. Now I'm quite well known and there's the possibility of doing longer, more

expensive things. I feel like there's potential there. Everything's possible there because in Berlin there are no rules. I think Germans are quite open to seeing different kinds of work. I don't think that's true in Canada.

PENELOPE BUITENHUIS
FILMOGRAPHY

- 1981 *Granville Alley, Motion Still Abstraction*
- 1982 *Wasting Time in Black and White*
- 1983 *Word Continuum in Spite of Surface Eraser*
- 1984 *We Just Want To Live Here; Alternative Squatting*
- 1985 *Drawing Attention*
- 1986 *Disposable; Periphery; Framed*
- 1987 *Movimento; Combat Not Conform; Indifference*
- 1989 *They Shoot Pigs Don't They?*
- 1990 *Llaw*