

ALTERNATIVE PROJECTIONS

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INTERVIEW SUBJECT: Terry Cannon

Biography:

Terry Cannon has been involved in the artistic and cultural life of Southern California since the mid-1970s. In 1975, he founded Pasadena Filmforum (now Los Angeles Filmforum), and served as its Executive Director for nine years. In 1984, after leaving Filmforum, Cannon founded SPIRAL, a quarterly magazine which examined significant topics related to experimental film and which featured writings and artworks by the filmmakers themselves. Cannon edited and published nine issues before the magazine's demise in 1986. He has also, since 1988, served as President of the Board of Directors of the Museum of Jurassic Technology in Culver City, California.

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TAPE 1: TERRY CANNON

00:00:46

ADAM HYMAN

It is November 15, 2009, Sunday. It's 12:56 pm. This is an oral history with Terry Cannon. And Terry, can you please start by saying and spelling your name?

00:01:02

TERRY CANNON

Okay. Terry Cannon. T-E-R-R-Y CA-N-N-O-N.

00:01:10

ADAM HYMAN

All right. Great. That's the hardest question. [laugh] Okay. We're ready to go. Okay. Tell me about when and where you're born, who is in your family.

00:01:20

TERRY CANNON

Well, I was born in, just outside of Detroit, Michigan in 1953, August 31st. And my father worked for Ford Motor Company. That's why we were in Michigan. And we had a brother and two sisters. I'm the second oldest in the family. And...

00:01:51

ADAM HYMAN

Tell me everybody's names and what else they do.

00:01:53

TERRY CANNON

Okay. Okay. Well, my dad is William Cannon. My dad is still alive, lives in Monrovia. My mother is deceased. That's Charlotte Cannon. The siblings are all still alive. They're Phil Cannon, Barbara Cannon and Nancy, and they're all still around. Phil is a kind of part-time musician. The sisters live in Arizona and they work in retail business. My dad is retired, of course. He's gonna be celebrating his 90th birthday this year. And we've worked collectively on a number of projects down through the years, my dad and myself.

00:02:41

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

My mother was pretty much what, I guess what you'd call a homemaker, lived at home. And, you know, in terms of my family, we kind of moved around based upon where my dad had work. And so...

00:04:03

ADAM HYMAN

Okay. So, you're saying a bit more about your mom?

00:04:07

TERRY CANNON

Well, no. What I was saying was that we kind of moved around with my dad's work. When I was born, he was working at Ford Motor Company. And then we eventually moved to the state of Washington when I was about five years old because he began working then in the aerospace industry. He was an, chemical engineer. And so I lived in the state of Washington for a number of years. Finally, we moved to Southern California when I was in about the second or third grade and he transferred down here and he worked for a company in Orange County called AstroPower, again, aeronautical company.

00:04:48

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

And then, finally, in 1969, we moved up to the Pasadena area. He began working at Jet Propulsion Laboratory. So that's how I wound up here in the San Gabriel Valley.

00:05:05

ADAM HYMAN

What sort of projects did you work on with them?

00:05:08

TERRY CANNON

Well, I mean, the projects came later. We actually started an automobile magazine in the, actually it was started in the mid 1970s. And then around the early to mid '80s, I basically took on that magazine and became the editor and publisher. And that actually was my major source of income in the later years of Filmforum. And also, when I was doing Spiral magazine and launching some of the other projects, I was also simultaneously working on the car magazine. It was a magazine for collector car enthusiasts, people who worked on their own cars. And it was a monthly so, you know, it kept me very busy. I was basically doing all of the production work and all of the editing and publishing work.

00:06:03

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

And we had different writers all over the country who, you know, contributed and submitted articles. And so I was always doing publishing-related things. I mean, even when Filmforum started, I had started a... [technical]

00:06:30

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

Anyway, when Filmforum...

00:06:32

ADAM HYMAN

What's the name of the magazine?

00:06:34

TERRY CANNON

The car magazine? It's called SKINNED KNUCKLES.

00:06:37

ADAM HYMAN

It's still all op?

00:06:39

TERRY CANNON

Still alive. In fact, I edited it for over 25 years. And about 2005, when I just decided, you know, I had enough. It was always a very kind of marginal income. And I was getting a little burned out and I wanted to tackle a new challenge and I decided to go to work in the library field. And so, you know, there, it would've been very hard to, I found somebody quickly to take it over, a guy in Huntington Beach. And I sold the magazine to him for \$1. So, I mean, it was a nice, clean transaction. He wanted to include a six-pack of beer, but I said, no, we got to do this legal. It's got to be, we have to have a money exchange. So it's actually still being published, and this guy is giving it a new burst of energy and creativity.

00:07:40

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

And that happens very often with publications and organizations. Somebody runs it awhile, you know, they get a little burned out, somebody new comes on board with a new burst of energy and creativity. It's been, I think, one of the keys to Filmforum over the years, is that there's always been that new energy that's come in when the person who's running it has, you know, has kind of had enough.

00:08:10

ADAM HYMAN

I'm looking forward to that, then

00:08:39

ADAM HYMAN (CONTINUED)

So tell me, was there any, in your upbringing, was there anything that you think would have indicated your later propensity to look into experimental film?

00:08:57

TERRY CANNON

You know, not really. Although I, you know, well, my dad made a film when he was in Detroit. A buddy of his that worked for Ford Motor Company left Ford Motor Company. His name was Steve Eisner. I don't remember him because, again, I was four, three, four, five years old when this film was made. And he made a, what would be, for a lack of a better term, kind of an experimental film on the life of Steve Eisner that he presented to Eisner when he left the company. And I remember as a kid saying that was wild. I was actually in that film. And the film, it's still here. I've got a nice copy of it. It was shot in eight millimeter.

00:09:48

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

And in that film, my first dramatic performance, I portray Steve Eisner as a young man. And Steve apparently was a kind of a radical guy when he was a youngster. And so, in the film, I'm seen with a hammer smashing records, you know, record albums, and ripping the pages out of encyclopedias. And so that was something that was kind of we had a lot of fun with in, over the years. But other than that, I'd say probably the only thing in my background that would suggest anything toward any, the direction I went in is the fact that my parents were very open and tolerant in letting, the kids, you know, do pretty much what we wanted to do, you know?

00:10:35

TERRY CANNON

I mean, they set a really nice environment. They were, my parents were very liberal-minded, very open-minded. And so, they were very tolerant of things that we were doing and supportive of the things we were doing. And so when my interest veered toward art or anything like that, they were very supportive of it, rather than saying, oh, gee, that's not, you know, that's not the direction to go in.

00:11:05

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

So, but other than that, not really, I mean, I can't think that there'd be anything really within the family structure that would have said, well, this guy is gonna run an experimental film organization when he goes out of a, when he gets out of college. But, you know, definitely, there was an openness and, you know, I was interested in doing, they were gonna be very supportive of.

00:11:34

ADAM HYMAN

And what other artistic pursuits did you do before going to college?

00:11:41

TERRY CANNON

Well, I mean, not that much, really. I mean, I read a lot. I was very interested in writing. I mean, that's something when I was in high school. I joined the staff of the high school newspaper. I didn't, wasn't on it very long before I was thrown off the staff. But I started getting interested in writing and end up, you know, writing essays and papers. I mean, I was definitely, as a young kid, I was kind of precocious. I mean, I would do, I remember when I was in the second and third grade, I used to, you know, when everybody handwrote their papers, I typed and wrote these really nice reports filled with, you know, images cutout in newspapers and magazines.

00:12:35 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

So I enjoyed that. I enjoyed the writing. And I suppose, in a sense that played into what I do later because I was always very well-organized. I mean, that's the one thing that, as you know, running a film organization, you know, you have to have a lot of organizational skills. You're doing a lot of different things at one time. And so, that was something I was always very good at. In fact, now that I'm running a baseball organization, kind of mixed melding baseball and art, the Baseball Reliquary, I've been asked quite a few times about that.

00:13:17 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

And definitely, as a kid, when I was going through my baseball card collecting stage, you know, in the 1960s, oh, I was really, when all the kids would open their baseball cards and put them on the spokes of their bicycles, I never did that. I kept them neatly organized in shoe boxes. I wasn't too keen on letting the other kids touch those cards. I didn't want the corners bent. And people thought I was a little unusual for that. But whatever that is, I mean, maybe that's an early form of anal retentiveness.

00:13:53 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

I don't know what it is, but that's, you know, I mean, I was always kind of well-organized and, you know, that's, you know, a trait, a characteristic that I think, you know, entered into a lot of the projects, Filmforum and other projects that I became involved with over the years.

00:14:15 **ADAM HYMAN**

Cool. And now, tell me, you know, tell me some stuffs about college. Tell me about where you went and why you went there and what study you're doing before.

00:14:23 **TERRY CANNON**

Well, I went to, when I graduated from Monrovia High School in 1971, I went to a couple of junior colleges for about a year, a year and a half. I took some classes at Citrus College in Azusa and took a few courses at Pasadena City College. And then in 1973, I transferred to San Francisco State. And I was there for about two and a half years, that's where I earned my Bachelor of Arts degree. San Francisco was kind of my first move out of the Southern California area and out of, you know, out on to my own. And, of course, that was a fabulous experience living in San Francisco. It was as much of an experience just being in that city at that time as it was going to college.

00:15:16

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

I took a kind of a liberal arts type program. It was part of what they call the school of creative arts. And, but what was interesting for me about that experience, and I didn't know what I wanted to do, but in this program, you would take a classes in, you know, theater arts, film, you know, just all kinds of, you know, it's basically a liberal arts education. But when I got into the film programs, what I did as opposed to doing filmmaking classes is I got into working for the campus film program, which was called the San Francisco Cinematheque. No relation to the Cinematheque at the San Francisco Art Institute, but their program was called the Cinematheque.

00:16:09

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

And it was, you know, very eclectic program and largely run by the students. There was one guy there who was a teacher and he had a class and basically you learn how to run a film program. And so I did that for a couple of years and it was, I really enjoyed it. And that would have been my first real experience in terms of film programming. And I would, you know, you do a little bit of everything. Run the house, operate the projectors, do the program notes, this is when we had, doing the program notes mimeographed. So we were, I was typing them up, you know, you'd be assigned to do a film. You had to do the program notes, you'd type it up on a mimeograph and you'd run them off.

00:16:54

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

And so the guy who was running that course, his name was Weber, saw I was really interested in that and was pretty serious about it. We did a, he did a huge Jean Renoir retrospective, I mean, almost all of his films. And so, we did some programming at San Francisco State. I think there was some, we showed at maybe University of San Francisco, we showed Renior's THE RIVER, a beautiful color print that hadn't been shown in the U.S. in many years. So, it was a lot of fun. And he saw I was interested in that, so he said, hey, why don't you come up with an idea for extended series, you know, for a couple of months?

00:17:40

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

And so, I created, my first real program that I put together was a jazz on film series. And, 'cause I was always interested in jazz music, so I said, gee, I'll meld the two together. And, so it was great, I mean, I went through catalogs. I looked at what was available. I pulled together their different programs. I wanted to do something a little more exciting and non-traditional. So one of the things I did was I knew John Handy, he was a well-known jazz musician, I'd taken a course with him. He used to play with Charles Mingus, very well-known alto and tenor saxophonist was on the campus.

00:18:19 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

And I said, hey, I'd like to have you, you know, maybe lead a group. We'll go around campus and we'll pull together some of the faculty who are jazz musicians. So, we brought all these faculty members that were in different parts of the campus together for like a jam session at one program, which was, I can't remember if it was before or after a film screening. And so it was a lot of fun. We did, we showed one of Ralph Gleason's films and we had a number of guest speakers. And that was my first kind of curatorial effort, and, you know, prepared the program notes and all that stuff.

00:18:58 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

It was very, it was quite successful. I mean, it was really, the programs were well-attended. And so, that was kind of my first foray into that. No experimental films on the program, but I did start, you know, seeing some of the experimental films that were shown on campus, went to a few programs at the Cinematheque, briefly met James Broughton who was there one of the years, I forgot which, but one of those years he was like a, even though he lived in San Francisco, he was, quote, unquote, a visiting professor, and did some programs there.

00:19:35 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

And so, that was, you know, kind of my initial exposure to the experimental film community. But that was kind of the, you know, beginning of my becoming kind of familiar with how do you go about, you know, putting on a program like that. And, however, when I graduated in '74, I think I graduated from there and moved back down here, I wasn't, you know, I didn't really, until probably late '74, early '75, I had already come back down in here. I started a little underground newspaper called FOLLIES.

00:20:22 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

Then I started thinking about, you know, the possibility of, kind of, setting up, organizing a film society here and seeing how that would go. And I thought, well, gee, I've got a nice, monthly kind of underground newspaper going and this would be a nice, it would be a really nice way of promoting the program. So, then the next thing I knew I was concocting this idea to start a film society.

00:20:55 **ADAM HYMAN**

Tell me a bit more about FOLLIES first.

00:20:58

TERRY CANNON

Well, I was really interested in, when I was in San Francisco, I was really interested in self-publishing. And, of course, San Francisco had a lot of great kind of underground newspapers that I had seen. And so, you know, I thought, well, maybe I'll get into publishing, but I don't want to get in, I don't want to do the traditional thing. I kind of want to do it my own way. And so, when I moved back down here, I moved back to Monrovia and lived at my parents' place for maybe a year, and that's where I started. I thought I'm gonna launch my own publication. I had, you know, a little bit of money that I'd saved up, and it was very inexpensive. Then I started a, basically a monthly kind of arts and entertainment paper.

00:21:49

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

We published some poetry and artwork. I knew, I started meeting a lot of people in the local area in Pasadena who were interested in writing on different subjects, film, just various cultural issues, politics. So I said let's start pooling some of this creativity together. And so, I started this magazine called FOLLIES and started-- it's a free magazine-- I started to solicit advertising for it because, I said, I think I got to support the thing somehow. So I started going out and hustling ads, you know, meeting some of the business people. And it was a good time period because things were really starting to kind of happen then. There was a lot of energy and activity in, even in terms of, you know, alternative publications.

00:22:41

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

Right around that time, there were a number of publications, I mean, the Los Angeles, The L.A. WEEKLY started. There was the LOS ANGELES READER, you know? A lot of things were happening in terms of the publishing, alternative publishing. My focus, though, with FOLLIES was on the Pasadena area because this is where I lived. There was kind of thriving art scene in Pasadena. And I said I want to focus on this area. So it was, the distribution at first was kind of valley wide. I had, I distributed it from Pasadena all the way out to Pomona and Claremont. I was distributing it at the Claremont colleges for a while. I had one or two people that, at the colleges where, and I think we had a little bit of distribution at Occidental too.

00:23:29

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

Otherwise, it was mostly at bookstores, record shops and things like that. So that was my first foray at 21 years of age into, you know, publishing. And it was a lot of fun. I mean, it was funky. I mean, it was all done on an IBM Selectric typewriter, all the, you know, headlines and everything there. There were no computers then. They were all done with transfer letters. So you get these big, you know, sheets of letters and different font sizes. And you'd have a little burnishing tool and you'd rub it, you'd rub, you know, it take, to do a headline, it would take you two seconds to do now, sometimes it took 20 minutes.

00:24:09

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

And that was, you know, you had these, you wanted a background pattern. You had to get these Zipatone sheets, which would apply a background, you know? And so, it's a lot of fun. And so, that was, the publication actually started a little bit before the, I started Filmforum. But I was thinking all along that, obviously, this would be a great way to promote a film society. I have a publication. I could, you know, promote all of the various programs, you know, and run photographs from the film. So it kind of happened simultaneously there. The, and I actually wound up having, doing FOLLIES for, close to three years.

00:25:00

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

And a lot of people who became involved with Filmforum worked on FOLLIES. I mean, Bill Scaff, you know, who became very much involved with Filmforum once it started, was a great writer and artist. He did many of the covers for FOLLIES. And he was a great graphic artist. And he's, he did all the covers. He was a columnist for a while. He loved food and then he wrote a column called "Brain Cheese." He was my food reviewer. I'd send him out to restaurants, and he wrote very unique food reviews. And Craig Rice and Keith Ullrich were graphic artists and did a lot of work on the publication, and collages and things like that. So it was a starting, kind of starting the building of a community.

00:25:51

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

And, you know, obviously, once the publication became fairly well-known, then a lot of people came to me and said, look, we, I've got some materials. There's no place else to publish it. Will you, you know, are you interested? So, you know, Mark Takeuchi who did an extensive photographic documentation of filmmakers of the early years of Filmforum, became involved and really became almost like the photo editor of it, of Follies. And, you know, so he, you know, had a lot of his photography published and he knew a lot of other photographers. So it was part and parcel of the beginning of a kind of a real artistic community in Pasadena. That by the time I started FOLLIES and Filmforum was just starting to really getting a head of steam.

00:26:43 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

So I think to some extent, the FOLLIES was a key factor in it because it provided a kind of cohesiveness to that community, a place where people could exchange ideas and have a regular, monthly voice that would appear each month with regularity here. It would be, you know, a kind of a voice for the artists. And, of course, we had listings of everything that was going on in the community of interest to the, to people involved in the arts.

00:27:14 **ADAM HYMAN**

So, how big were average issues and that was...

00:27:18 **TERRY CANNON**

Well, it was a tabloid, it was a tabloid size. I had it printed, at that time when I started it, I was printing it at a place in Santa Fe Springs called Midway Press. And it was, it would vary in size, I mean, probably, I'm gonna say 12 to 24 pages approximately depending upon how much material I had each month and how much cash I had to do it. And it was at times kind of experimental. We did some different things with it. I mean, it wasn't, it was definitely not a traditional publication. In fact, once I, you know, the thing started to get a little better known after about a year, I actually brought on one of our writers to help me solicit advertising. Her name is Julie Parker.

00:28:14 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

She was actually had been a teacher in an alternative school in Pasadena. And she was really interested. She was older, I mean, you know, I was 21 now and she, most of the people I was, that were involved with this publication were in their early 20s. And she was probably, you know, in her 40's. But she loved the publication, and she said I really want to help you. I know you're struggling, you know? So she went out and sold ads. But [laugh] she, I really, you know, every month, I threw different curve balls at her. And there were months where, you know, we would, you know, we would hide the name of the publication in the graphics of the magazine. And we would do pretty outrageous stuff.

00:29:02 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

Sometimes, some collages and artworks that were, you know, not palatable to too many advertisers because of their graphic or sexual nature. And so, every month, we get together and meet and she'd say, Terry, you're just making it harder and harder for me each month to sell advertising. [laugh] So, but it was a lot of fun and it was a great experience for me because I think it helped me in terms of Filmforum because I was working with a lot of people, coordinating, putting together the material, and most importantly, learning about deadlines and the importance that the magazine had to come out every month in a certain time, you know?

00:29:46

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

And so, it forced me to really stick with that kind of scheduling, and I was good at that. I mean, I'm just, that's one of the things that I do. Even at work now is I'm really good at, you know, I mean, I'm there. I do the work. I get it done. If it means that I have to stay up all night as I used to do with the magazine, I mean, I'd do it. I mean, whatever it took to get it done, I prided myself in making sure that the work was done and in on time and it was out on the streets.

00:30:21

TERRY CANNON

I had an old 1961 Ford Falcon I used to drive around town and distribute the thing. So [laugh] you know, it was a real one-person effort and, you know? And I look back on it now, 35 years later and there, you know, I mean, it's, it was spotty, there were some things that weren't that good. But when you're at that age everything you're doing is pretty exciting and, you know, so that was pretty much it for FOLLIES. And, of course, later when I left, when I, I wound up, believe it or not, selling FOLLIES to a guy at Occidental College named Ken Atchity who was an English professor there and he took a real interest in FOLLIES.

00:31:19

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

And he knew I was wanting to do something else. And he said, yeah, I'd like to, I have a student that I'm working with and I'd like to maybe, he had started a publishing company and he had done some poetry and things. And he said, I'd like to bring FOLLIES in and, into my publishing empire. And I've, you know, I don't, I think it was, I think I sold it to him for maybe \$500. It was really inexpensive. And at that time, I'd had a studio in Old Town Pasadena which I paid \$100 a month for, and he liked the fact that, okay, we'll pick up the lease on the studio and she can work there. And, but they wound up doing only a few issues and it didn't work out.

00:32:01

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

This, the woman that, the student that was gonna work on it, it wasn't quite the kind of thing she wanted to do. So it was a lot of effort. It's a lot of effort to put out a monthly magazine and, so it didn't last too long. But then I went into, I wanted to do something a little more based in Los Angeles. I wanted to move on to Pasadena and try something else. So shortly after FOLLIES, shortly after I sold FOLLIES, I started another magazine called GOSH!, which was, again, some...

00:32:40

ADAM HYMAN

When was this?

00:32:42

TERRY CANNON

The first issue of GOSH! was about, I'm gonna say about, it was 1980 and '81. It came out monthly and it came out for only 11 issues. I did it for about a year. And it was a tough time because there were a lot of kind of underground-type alternative papers then. And it was tough getting, you know, getting the advertising. And it was a little easier in Pasadena when I had a local focus to get advertising and I actually had the thing built up to where, you know, I was making a living, a meager living, but it was, you know, I was getting enough advertising revenue each month.

00:33:29

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

But GOSH! was a little bigger project and it, you know, I think it was better. I mean, you know, conceptually and artistically, I think it was better than Follies, but it was, it wasn't successful in terms of advertising. But it was good because, you know, a lot of young writers and artists became involved and a lot of them went on to do other things. Michelle Huneven had some of her first stories published there. Dennis Cooper was the poetry editor. And, of course, he went on to become a noted writer. Steve Escandon did some wonderful graphics. So a lot of people that were involved with the magazine, you know, it was a good kind of, it, you know, environment for them to start working on sort of their writing in this tabloid-type concept.

00:34:34

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

And I, of course, I had Filmforum at that time, so we also had a bit of a film focus in there too. I mean, we promoted some of the shows we did. Doug Edwards, whom I'm sure we'll talk about today, wrote several articles. In fact, he did a very nice piece on the films of Louis Hock for that. And at that time, he was looking for avenues to do some of-- for publishing some of his writing. So, anyway, that was my two, kind of alternative publications. And eventually, I, of course, went on and did SPIRAL as a film magazine. Also, just shortly after this time, I started doing the car magazine because I really realized I needed to, you know, I was living very, I had a very marginal [laugh] existence.

00:35:29

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

And I needed to really start, you know, trying to get a little more money. I had a couple of jobs that I did on the side. I did graphic arts work for a swimming pool manufacturing company for about a year. Just, whatever I could do to pick up a little money. And then, I'd been working a little bit on the car magazine with my dad and working and building that up. And when that got to the point where I could really start to focus on that and it was generating enough revenue from advertising and subscriptions, then I started focusing on that and doing that on a monthly basis.

00:36:06

ADAM HYMAN

And what other, what film experiences were you having particularly with film as art, experimental film in Los Angeles prior to starting Filmforum?

00:36:17

TERRY CANNON

Not much really because when I moved back down from San Francisco to the Los Angeles area, it was, you know, I mean, basically, you know, I, the only thing that was going related to experimental film at that time, and I really didn't know much about it until I started getting into programming, was Theatre Vanguard. So I didn't really, I mean, there wasn't much that I was doing other than just, you know, going to see films like everybody else at the commercial theaters. And so, really, it was in the spring of 1975 that I started to really seriously think about the idea of creating this film society. There wasn't anything really going on in the Pasadena area.

00:37:14

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

And at that time, I think I moved out. I was living in Pasadena and I said, you know, I really enjoyed my experience in San Francisco. I learned a lot. I'd like to create some kind of a film society here that, you know, would be an opportunity for me to continue to see the films and to share the films with this community that was, you know, really starting to develop. And so, I just said, I'm gonna just do it. And what I did was, initially, I, you know, established the name and then I incorporated it and then I went out and I got the 501(c)(3) nonprofit status. I mean, before we did our first program, I had that status.

00:38:01

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

Usually, a lot of people just go ahead and will start something first and then they'll get it. But we had that status. It was really easy to get then. And I just got a-- I forget the exact details, but I think somebody shared some paperwork with me and said, it's really easy to get this. And I called the IRS, I got the paperwork, I filled it out, I designed it as a membership-supported organization with a board of directors and so, I incorporated it as Pasadena Filmforum Inc. And so, and while we were waiting for the incorporation and the nonprofit status to come through, in the summer of 1975, I had my first kind of meeting, open meeting.

00:38:54

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

I had been working with a group, an organization called the Pasadena Community Arts Center, which had a small grants program. They're called, I think it was called Community Spirit. It was to give a small kind of launch grants to groups in Pasadena. And I'd gone and I talked to them. I said, I have this idea to start this film program. The person who was the, directing the Community Spirit and the PCAC was a woman named Marie Peckinpah who was Sam Peckinpah's widow. And she was an actress and living in the Pasadena area at the time. And she, oh, this is a fantastic idea. We're gonna give you a grant. It was \$75-grant. I remember that. I thought I'd struck it rich. \$75, wow.

00:39:44

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

And that was some of the seed money to kind of get rolling.

end of tape 1

TAPE 2: TERRY CANNON

00:00:47

TERRY CANNON

Yes, so we had, in the summer of '75, we had our first kind of open meeting. I remember getting one of the local elementary schools to give me a room for the night. And I put an announcement--there was a short article on the birth of this project. I think it was in the PASADENA STAR NEWS. They mentioned that this film society was being started and this Pasadena Community Arts Center was supporting it with a small grant. So we had a meeting and maybe a dozen or 15 people from the community showed up, thought it was an interesting idea to get some kind of a film program going.

00:01:31

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

They didn't really have much of an idea of what it was going to be about. I didn't really, either. I just had some ideas. But I figured this is a good place to start, finding out, number one, what people might be interested in seeing, and number two, developing a network to help support this thing. I said, when we get this off the ground, we're going to need people to assist in getting the program and finding a place to show the films.

00:02:01

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

And a variety of people showed up. Probably one of the most notable people where the Lavenders, Karen and Larry Lavender, who were residents of Pasadena, and they had a film calendar. I think it was called the Los Angeles Film Calendar. They had just started putting it out and it was, I think, it was a monthly calendar which listed all of the various kind of alternative film events and film societies that were going on with a listing of what they were doing. I know that seems commonplace now, but at the time, there was nothing like it. I mean, it was the only thing of its sort.

00:02:42

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

And so, they were in Pasadena and they were very interested in film, all kinds of film. And they said we definitely want to support you and get involved. And you can use--they had a nice house in Pasadena. We can use our house and have meetings there. So we met some people like that. And they were very interested, and so we got together a small group. And we were waiting at that time for our 501(c)(3) status to be finalized, and it was shortly thereafter. And I think we'd had one or two meetings after that and we decided, well, let's have some kind of an event or function.

00:03:26

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

We had talked about some different ideas and showing a variety of different kinds of films. I mean experimental films being a big part of that, but not a complete and exclusive part of it, at least at first. And so the first thing we did was we said, well, let's have a meeting, a public event in which we'll offer memberships and really launch this thing. One of the guys that we got involved with was an art professor. He ran one of the art galleries, I think, at USC. His name is Don Brewer. And Don had a house up in Altadena, big two-story house.

00:04:13

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

And he said, hey, let's do it at my place. We were looking for some place that could house 30 or 40 people and we could have food and a very kind of nice launch to the group. And so, in November of 1975, we had our first public event. And we had maybe, I'm guessing now about 40 people that attended. They were real hardcore film fans that, and I think we sold memberships, and they were very nominal like \$15 or \$25. And we got some donations. This was our first intake of money to be able to launch our first series.

00:04:58

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

I remember that event very well because it actually had elements of disaster to it. And we had the event on the first floor of this house. And what Brewer had failed to mention or had forgotten about was that since he was affiliated with USC, he had a group that was doing a kind of a docudrama on the life of Emily Dickinson. They were filming in the house. They were up in the second floor. And so, once the party got going down on the first floor and people were talking, and it was creating havoc with their film shooting, so they kept running down, okay, you got to be quiet now. For the next 15 minutes, everybody's got to be quiet.

00:05:46

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

I said, hey, Mr. Brewer, this isn't working out too good. And we have a party, and all of a sudden, everything is getting going, and of course, we were also going to show a couple of films. Well, it became a real annoyance. And somebody that was there that night worked at the Altadena Public Library, which is about a half a mile away. And she said, look, this isn't working out. You guys want to show a couple of films. I had my 16 millimeter projector there and a screen. We were showing, THIS IS IT, a short experimental film by James Broughton and a film by Truffaut, I think it was called LES MISTONS.

00:06:26

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

It was a kind of an early short film by Truffaut. That's what we were showing. We didn't want to show a lot, like 15, 20 minutes of film, just to kind of whet people's appetites. And, so she said, look, it's not going to happen here. I've got a key to get into the auditorium up at the Altadena Public Library. We can show the films up there. We got a screen, we'd bring up your projector. And so we announced [laugh] to our assembled crowd, hey, we're going to go up to the Altadena Public Library to look at the films, and they all went up. They thought it was great.

00:07:05

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

Some of them walked up, some of them drove up. The whole crowd went up there and we showed the films there. And we talked a little bit about the film society that we were going to start. So that was kind of the beginnings of Filmforum. I really didn't have a lot of knowledge as to what was going on elsewhere in Los Angeles. It was just really kind of my own interest. And so, that fall, I began to put together the first series. Of course, I had to find a place first, and that's when I think somebody at the Community Arts Center, said, well, why don't you try the Unitarian Church over on Orange Grove that was the Neighborhood Church?

00:07:55

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

And they have a large area there where they have their services and maybe they'd be willing. I went in there, I talked to them. They said, yeah, this is interesting. We want to help you out. And we found somebody there who was affiliated with the church, who would kind of be our liaison. They had, we had to have somebody from the church attend the programs. I forget who that was, but he was interested in films and he said, look, I'll be your liaison. And basically, that person was in charge of opening and closing the church on Monday nights.

00:08:33

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

I'm not quite sure whether we were starting on Monday nights there. I think we may have been on week nights. But I think it wasn't exclusively Monday. We didn't go into that format, really, until probably later on in '76. But anyway, we started to curate our first group of films and to put out a newsletter. And so, we did. I think we started off with an ethnographic film series for the first, maybe four weeks. Then we did a series of films on Paul Robeson, who was somebody I was very interested at the time. I got a few of the African-American community activists in Pasadena to participate.

00:09:22 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

And probably the key program that we did in that initial run was a series of underground films from San Francisco. Those were the best attended of the programs. There was the most interest in those. I was able to get really nice prints from Canyon Cinema and from some filmmakers, so , it wasn't like looking at a washed out, black and white print of THE EMPEROR JONES, which was really disappointing. We we're able to see some really nice prints, and so there was definitely a lot of interest there, a lot of enthusiasm.

00:10:04 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

It was pretty clear early on that that was the direction we were going to go in and that that was something that was really needed. I mean, obviously, it was great to do this other kind of programming, but there were venues for that, and there were universities and colleges showing that work, but the experimental film was something that was really important.

00:10:31 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

So it was really in the first series of programs. I think it became very obvious that that would be the direction, even though initially we did some other programming. That's not to say, that throughout the approximately nine years that I was director of Filmforum that we exclusively did experimental film programming 'cause my tastes were very eclectic. And we would incorporate some other things in that programming, but there was no question that the excitement for the experimental film programming told us immediately that was the direction that we were going to go in.

00:11:17 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

One of programs, I think, we did as part of that initial series was a group of films under five minutes. I forget what I was. It was 15 or 20 or 25 films under five minutes, and that was great. I mean, that was very exciting. A lot of these audiences, this was the first time they had seen work like this. And so, it was really invigorating and exciting. And since the concept of Filmforum was to have a discussion afterwards and to be able to talk about this kind of work, it was great because, this was obviously something where we could have a lot of the filmmakers

00:12:04 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

there present to talk about their work rather than having scholars talking about an ethnographic film or talking about a Paul Robeson film. Here, we could actually have the filmmakers sharing stories about their work, how they made the work, and in so doing maybe create, kind of a film community and encourage filmmakers who are interested in doing that work. So early on, that became very clear that that was going to be the direction.

00:12:42

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

After that initial series, which was three months, it became pretty apparent that we were no longer going to be able to continue at the Neighborhood Church because we ran into some problems, not in terms of content, but just in terms of their, they wanted the church, they had it configured in different ways, the seating. And we'd do our programming, and then they'd come in the next day and it wasn't quite, the chairs weren't put back in the proper way. And it just became obvious that our existence there was going to be short lived. At the same time, the Pasadena Community Arts Center was moving into a new building, and it wasn't a new building, it was an old building, but they were going to have a new facility.

00:13:34

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

And this was, you got to realize this was a government-funded arts agency that provided employment for artists. And this was in the heyday of that. I think they had funding. It was called the CETA program. It was government funding for artists. And they could come in and do stuff, I mean, they could do yard work. [laugh] They could do secretarial work there. They could create programs. And so, they took over this big building and they said, you're one of our core projects that we've got, helped get going, so how about coming in and showing films there.

00:14:18

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

And so, it was just a big bank building. And it was not an interesting space. But, we set up a projector in the back of the room. We had a screen. We had seats. And then we did at least six months or more of screening there, largely experimental work, although there were a variety of other programs, but I know we did some, I think we did some early programs of Méliès' films. But I remember in the spring of 1976, I want to say maybe May or June, we had our first one-person show. That would, of course, become kind of the hallmark of Filmforum for many years, and still is, really. I mean, we did our first show. It was really exciting.

00:15:14

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

It was Louis Hock, who at the time was living in Arizona. And I forget how we had hooked up. He might have heard about our group. And he might have sent a letter. And, I said, great. He even sent me films to preview, and I wasn't big on that. In the nine years that I ran Filmforum, I never did a lot of previewing of films. Only when it was somebody I'd never heard of, if it was somebody that I'd heard of through the grapevine or had been recommended to me. And that wasn't necessary. But I didn't know who Louis Hock was. He sent the films. They looked great. They were these kind of time lapse films. They were really lovely, beautiful films. And I said, sure, come on out.

00:15:59

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

I think he was teaching at one of the universities. That was our first show. And I said, well, we really don't have any money, but I said, I'd give you \$50. That's fine. And that's because we didn't have any money. I had the \$75 I was working on and then we would charge admission. It was a dollar or two at the door, and that's how we survived for the first couple of years until we got grant funding. But I always, no matter what the audience was like, for that first year or two, I think I always paid everybody \$50. It might have gotten up to \$100 in the second year. I remember Howard Guttenplan doing a show at Filmforum, I think, in our second year. And he loved Filmforum. He, you know, he said, this is great. You guys are doing a great thing.

00:16:43

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

But, Terry, he said, you got to get your honorarium over \$50. [laugh] That's not cutting it. Of course, he was coming out from New York and he was doing some shows elsewhere. But finally, when we got some, you know, funding from the state and from the NEA, then we were able to boost up our honorarium to a reasonable amount, where it would pay somebody really to come out and do a show. But that was our first one-person show. But we started really doing some serious experimental film programming. Sara Kathryn Arledge, I met around that time through Bill Moritz.

00:17:20

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

Bill Moritz said, hey, there's an experimental filmmaker right here in Pasadena, an elderly lady who made this wonderful kind of abstract dance film in the 1940s, with the Whitney Brothers. And you really need to meet her, and I met her, and she was really charming. And I started driving her to Filmforum shows because she had no way of getting there transportation-wise. I learned a little bit about her film, Introspection, which was originally shown in '47 at, as part of Frank Stauffacher's Art In Cinema series. And I heard a little bit about Art In Cinema.

00:17:54

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

I said, this is really exciting. I said, how about if we recreate your program, your night when Frank Stauffacher had you up there to do the world premiere of Introspection? She said, well, are you sure you want to do it? And I said, yeah. I said, let's dig up the original program notes from that show. And that particular night, her film was shown with a very long Russian film, I think it was by Kuleshov. It was called BY THE LAW. And it's kind of an interesting film, but it's long and it's pretty tedious. And we showed that and we showed Introspection, which was, I believe, in the original order it was shown after that.

00:18:37 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

And Sara got up and talked about what it was like to screen her film there and what Frank Stauffacher was like and what Art In Cinema was like. And, of course, now we know how important that series was to the kind of birth of the experimental film programming on the West Coast. So we were doing a lot of stuff like that. And then the organization started getting a little more well known. By this time, I think, by the fall of '75 or by the fall of '76, I started to go to a few of the Theatre Vanguard screenings and made the acquaintance of Doug Edwards who was running Theatre Vanguard at that time, which was really the only other place showing experimental film.

00:19:31 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

And they had a pretty advanced program at this time. And Doug took a real interest in what we were doing and encouraging what we were doing. He did not see it in any way, shape or form as being competition. But I think he felt, well, if this young guy can get this thing off the ground, it would be another venue for filmmakers that were coming in the area. So he was very encouraging. I told him, yeah, we really want to focus on the experimental film. We want to try to find a venue in the Pasadena area that's going to be a stronger venue. And we'd already started getting a reputation. We did a one-person show with Chick Strand at the Pasadena Community Arts Center facility. We did a program with Jules Engel. So people started becoming pretty aware of Filmforum.

00:20:21 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

And, so, Doug said, well, look, we got to get you hooked in to the grant cycle because, you got to have to support these things somehow. So Doug did something which I still consider a very noble gesture on his part. This was when he was working at the Theatre Vanguard, which was run by a woman named Judith Stark. She was the mastermind behind Theatre Vanguard. She brought Doug Edwards in to do the programming.

00:20:50 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

I didn't know much about Judith Stark, but he gave me, shared with me his grant application that he had written for, I think, the California Arts Council or maybe the National Endowment for the Arts. You see, here's a sample of my grants, here's how you do it 'cause I'd never really written a grant before. And here's how I did it and you can use this as a model, just don't tell Judith Stark that I gave this to you. [laugh] And so that allowed me, I think around '77, to write our first grant. I think it was '77 or '78 when we got our first grant.

00:21:28 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

We got a small grant, I think, from the California Arts Council, followed by a grant from the NEA. But the big turning point for us, for our organization, into really starting to get established and really just start doing some serious programming was in probably the spring of '77 when we moved to the theater space, our own theater space that we designed ourselves behind the Aarnun Gallery. Aarnun Gallery was a contemporary art gallery and framing shop in Old Town Pasadena.

00:22:09 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

And Ed Nunnery was the key person there. He had come to a couple of Filmforum shows. He knew we were looking for a space. I was getting the word out. Of course, I had my underground newspaper, so when I was distributing that every month, I would go to places like Aarnun Gallery and talk to the proprietors. And he said, we've got this new building we've just moved into. We're going to do the framing downstairs. We're going to have the gallery in the center of the building. And we have this big area in the back of the building. It used to be a sporting goods store.

00:22:45 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

He said, we got this big area in the back of the building that we could turn over to you for your film screenings. What was great about it is the upstairs in the back where we were going to be. The upstairs was the manager's office, so it had a second floor office building that had a window. So, I saw that. I said, wow, that could be our projection space. The gallery was subdivided, so there was this big wall, so it was just perfectly set up. I said, this would be beautiful, we'll bring in couches and set up our own theater space.

00:23:20 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

Ed Nunnery said, look, I'll lease this space to you for \$100 a month. You can use it any night you want. And so, that was it. I said that's great. We arranged the deal with him to come in there as his tenant. The access was through the back of the building and there was a parking lot in the back. The gallery was closed at night, so that part of the building was closed off from us. We brought in old sofas, we brought in a screen, we brought in some funky old speakers.

00:24:00 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

We set up the projection booth, and that was when we really started to feel like now we have our own space. And we're not sharing it with other people. The proprietors of Aarnun Gallery were very supportive of us, so now, we really could feel comfortable. We had some time now to really work on our programming, get some grants and start to establish a name for ourselves. Because I knew we weren't going to do it if we were traveling around, three months here, six months here. We had to have our own space and that was it.

00:24:38 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

So now, we were really ready to roll and to do basically by month. We'd put out schedules for either two or three months. I think initially it was two and then we went to three months, and we were doing screenings basically every week. We did some, not a whole lot of collaborative stuff, but some with Theatre Vanguard. Doug was certainly encouraging our program, and we did some of the filmmakers that came through, but then some of the filmmakers came and just did Filmforum. And, so anyway, that's kind of how we got started.

00:25:30 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

I remember, I'm not 100 percent sure of the date, I think our first show at Aarnun Gallery was around May or June of 1977. We had a big festive opening. I was really proud of this place. It was really cool because you'd go through the back door and you'd walk down three or four steps. So it was really like an underground cinema. And we had these nice, we went out and found some reasonably nice sofas. It was like a living room. Almost everybody who ever screened there loved the place. It was really quite charming.

00:26:04 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

Bruce Wood, who was a filmmaker from Chicago, came out. He was the very first filmmaker who screened at the new place and it was fantastic. It was right next to a railroad track and the Amtrak train from Chicago to Los Angeles came rumbling through every night at 8:00 sharp, which is when our screenings were listed as starting but we never started until about 8:10. So, we started right off the bat with what became a Filmforum tradition which is the audience would wait out there by the train tracks.

00:26:43 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

I don't know if, I can't say that I came up with the idea or somebody else mentioned it, but I remember putting a quarter down on the train track and the train coming by and everybody is waving at the Amtrak operator and the train ran over the quarter. I presented the quarter to Bruce Wood as a keepsake and a souvenir from his visit into Pasadena. And then we all went in and we watched the films. That became a weekly event and a lot of the filmmakers really looked forward to it.

00:27:15 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

I remember Pat O'Neill used to tell all of his filmmaker buddies back east, when you come to Filmforum, you're going to love this place because they have one of the great rituals in experimental film history. [laugh] So it was a lot of fun. Once we were there in the spring of...

00:27:49 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

'77 then we really began to, I think, establish our reputation and start to really do some serious experimental film programming. And people started becoming aware of us. Of course, right around this time they had the Film and Video Makers' Travel Sheet that came out at Pittsburgh, which was a wonderful little, I think a monthly little magazine that came out that listed all of the filmmakers, their tours. If you are a filmmaker and you were going to decide to travel the country in six months from now, you could list in there, hey, I'm going to be traveling the country. I'll be in Southern California in August and looking for shows.

00:28:40 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

And that was great thing. I utilized that all the time. So anyway, we were off and running at that point. And that was when we really started to, I think, make an impact.

00:29:14 **ADAM HYMAN**

How did you pick the name Filmforum?

00:29:17 **TERRY CANNON**

Yeah, in terms of selecting a name, to be honest with you, I'm not quite sure. The name just popped into my mind, Filmforum. Pasadena, of course, we were based in Pasadena so that was a natural. This all happened before we had our first program because that was when we did our incorporation papers and our non-profit status. Filmforum just seemed, I don't know if somebody had mentioned it or whatever, I can't remember. But it seemed right. It seemed the idea of a forum and an avenue for discussing work.

00:29:57 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

And since the whole concept was to have filmmakers present and to discuss, have a real discussion, serious discussion on the work, it just seemed like a good name. And I like the fact of bringing film and forum together. So, I mean, that was it. It just seemed like it worked. I didn't run the idea by anybody. By the time we had our first meeting, we already had the name. By the time I went and got that \$75 grant, I already had the name, Pasadena Filmforum. And I'll tell you a funny sideline to this in case we don't get into it later. We'd been going for awhile, not long, but I think in 1976 or '77, Bill Moritz came up to me. I think we had a meeting at Sara Arledge's house.

00:30:54

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

We were looking at some films and some of her glass slide transparencies, and she use to always invite me to come and project those. And Bill Moritz was at this kind of little party and screening and he said, hey, there's a woman in New York, her name is Karen Cooper. She runs an organization there called Film Forum. Now when I came up with that name, I was not aware of that organization in New York. And who knows? If I had been aware of it, maybe I wouldn't have used it. I don't know, but I wasn't aware of it.

00:31:26

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

But he said, she is aware of Pasadena Filmforum and she called me and wanted to know a lot of information about what was going on there because she was thinking about suing Pasadena Filmforum because she didn't think it was appropriate that you were calling it the name of her organization. I said, well, [laugh] it's kind of late now. We've already, we're incorporated. We're showing films and, to be quite honest with you, I didn't even know about the existence of that organization but that's Film Forum, we're Pasadena Filmforum.

00:32:03

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

I didn't know what the legalities of it were. But he seemed to kind of get quite a kick out of that, and I didn't know who Karen Cooper was. Anyway, I just dropped it. I didn't worry about it. I figured if I get a letter from her attorneys then I'll deal with it then. About a year or a year and a half later, I forget the exact date, George Griffin, who is an animator from New York, came out and did a show. We had arranged a show with him. And a lot of the filmmakers down through the years stayed with us here in Pasadena.

00:32:42

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

That was something we can talk about because that was really a lot of fun. But he was touring and we arranged to meet the night of the screening at Filmforum. This was when we were at the Aarnun Gallery. So I met him in the parking lot that night, half an hour or 45 minutes before the screening, and I went up and introduced myself. He was a very nice guy and a very good animator. And he introduces me, I didn't know that she was there, he introduces me to Karen Cooper who was his girlfriend. And, of course, I had remembered Karen Cooper because a year or so earlier, that was the name Bill Moritz had mentioned this was the lady that was thinking about suing us.

00:33:21 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

And so, we're walking, I shake their hands and we're walking in with his films in through the backdoor of Filmforum. We had a big sign over the backdoor that Bill Scaff had painted, Filmforum. And as we're walking through the backdoor, he turns to Karen Cooper and he looks up at the sign, he said, Karen, you know, when you created the Film Forum, you should've done it like that and had it as one word instead of two. [laugh]

00:33:54 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

So she just about, her face dropped. I'm not going to say that's like a comeuppance, but that was my Karen Cooper story. And she never mentioned anything. I think she, probably, if she did discuss it with her attorneys, they probably said, look, this is an organization that's on the other side of the coast. It's spelled a little differently. It's not Film Forum but it's Pasadena Filmforum, and so it was never mentioned, brought up to me again. But that story I love because, it was, you would've had to have been there to appreciate it [laugh] and seen her face.

00:34:38 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

So that's kind of the origin of the name and I can't remember whether there was much of any other names that were in the mix with me or whether that was just the first thing that came in to my mind and I said, hey, that seemed to work. But that was kind of the origin. It was always one word, not two. I like that idea of film forum as one.

00:35:12 **ADAM HYMAN**

You can never get anybody to, you know, spell it correctly. But, you know?

00:35:16 **TERRY CANNON**

[laugh] Well, look. I now run a group called the Baseball Reliquary. I mean nobody can even pronounce that. At least Filmforum is pronounceable. I mean, I get people calling up, is this the Reliquary? [sic] Is this the Requilary? [sic] I had somebody call up one day and got confused on the phone and said, is this the baseball aquarium?

00:35:43 **ADAM HYMAN**

That's a good one.

00:35:44 **TERRY CANNON**

[laugh] Yeah, I know. I like that. Yeah.

00:35:46 **ADAM HYMAN**

Can you go back to the Pasadena Community Art Center...

00:35:49 **TERRY CANNON**

Yes.

00:35:50

ADAM HYMAN

...and just tell me about the physical plant, the seating...

00:35:54

TERRY CANNON

Yeah. That was our second venue. It was an old bank building that had departed. I guess the city may have had some involvement with it and they turned it over to this community art center. So it was a large bank building that was kind of divided into two halves. And for a period, we were in one half, and for another period, we went to another half. It was just big, open spaces. There were some office areas but most of the things we were having to bring in each week. For many, many years at Filmforum, I brought in, I mean I had speakers there which I stored but like the amp, the sound equipment, I would bring that in.

00:36:39

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

I would just dismantle my own home equipment and I'd transport it there and hook it up to the speakers. That's how we had sound for years. We had to transport everything in. They were just big, open rooms and they had a lot of folding chairs and things that we would set up nicely for each show. Usually when we were there, they were Monday nights and there wasn't anything else. The center operated from like 8:00 in the morning till 5:00 at night so we pretty much had the place uninterrupted, although every once in a while, there was something going on and that was a problem too because since lots of different groups were using the space, sometimes there were some sound issues.

00:37:22

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

I remember when we were showing Jules Engel's films, there was a loud commotion and ruckus going on and it turned out it was some kind of an experimental theater group and they were doing some kind of primal screaming thing or something. And so [laugh] we had to deal with issues like that. For some of the filmmakers, it was just part of the excitement, but for some I think it was kind of a nuisance.

00:37:59

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

Chick Strand loved it. Chick did a one-person show there and she said, that reminds me of the old days at Canyon. It was pretty funky. It was a little funky when we moved to Aarnun, but it was, you know, we had, it was controlled funk. We had some control. We didn't have to have other groups using the space. That was the biggest problem when, with that space, every once in a while, some other group would be using it that night even though they'd be in the other building, other side of the building.

00:38:33

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

And there might be a door or something there I can't remember. I don't even think there was a door dividing these two halves. I think it was some kind of a drape or something. So that was an occasional problem. But the thing about that space is we used it for free. It was a free space and at that time we really had no money. Basically we had no grant money so we had an admission charge. Whatever the rental cost of the films or the honorarium to the filmmakers when it wasn't covered, I basically was paying for that out of my pocket, and I was glad to do it.

00:39:08

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

It was an organization that I had given birth to and I was excited about it. I had hoped that at some point down the road, we were going to be able to develop some funding be it through government or somehow some private funding. But eventually we'd be able to get this thing rolling. So, you know, that was a kind of a physical description of the community art center. Later, it was there for a few years and then they moved to Brookside Park. There was a horticultural building down there that they eventually took over and renovated. And it was, at one point, a venue that we had considered screening in but we decided not to go there.

end of tape 2

TAPE: TERRY CANNON TAPE 3

00:00:49

ADAM HYMAN

So, with the Aarnun Gallery, how many seats were in there?

00:00:53

TERRY CANNON

I think when you consider, it was primarily sofas...

00:00:57

ADAM HYMAN

Tell me where.

00:00:59

TERRY CANNON

The gallery?

00:01:00

ADAM HYMAN

Yeah, yeah.

00:01:00

TERRY CANNON

The location was 99 East Colorado Boulevard. That was the front end of the gallery. We were in the rear, so we described it on our fliers as being 99 East Colorado Boulevard in the rear. The entrance to the building was in the rear with the, primarily, it was sofas. We had a few folding chairs. I think we could probably cram 75 to 100 in there. It'd be pretty tight to get 100 but somewhere in that neighborhood.

00:01:35

ADAM HYMAN

And how often were you doing shows there?

00:01:36

TERRY CANNON

We were doing shows almost every Monday night with occasional other nights. Remember, we had the facility any night we wanted to. So we would do an occasional, every once in a while, we'd do a weekend program, a Friday or Saturday night. But most of the screenings were on Monday nights.

00:01:57

ADAM HYMAN

Okay. In the Neighborhood Church, how many do you think that seated?

00:02:01

TERRY CANNON

Neighborhood church, I'm going to say 50 to 75.

00:02:07

ADAM HYMAN

And what was that space?

00:02:10 **TERRY CANNON**

That was our first space that we...

00:02:11 **ADAM HYMAN**

No, what was, no, tell me, describe the space for me.

00:02:13 **TERRY CANNON**

Well, it was basically, it was a Unitarian Church and we were right in the main part of the church. So, it was kind of an open-ended building with not folding chairs, they were cushioned chairs. And, again, it was a simple projection in the back of the room. I believe we brought our own screen for those screenings. So, just an open room, basically.

00:02:46 **ADAM HYMAN**

Before we get to why you went to the Bank Playhouse, can you just describe the room of the Bank Playhouse and the seating?

00:02:51 **TERRY CANNON**

Yeah. The Bank Playhouse, that was our first classical theatrical seating where you had a raised, you had these raised platforms with actual theater seats. And that was an old bank building. As you walked into the building and through the teller's windows, you had just an open lobby area. Then you'd walk into a theater, and that was, I forget the exact number of seats. I'm going to say, it was an equity waiver theater. It's probably maybe 70 to 75 seats. And it was, again, typical theater-type seating.

00:03:35 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

We had kind of a lighting and sound booth that we used for projection. And we would project on to a screen which rolled down from the front of the theatrical area. And of course, every time we did a screening there, there was a different show going on, so we always had some kind of a different theater piece there. But that was the closest we had to a traditional...

00:04:04 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

So, [laugh] that was kind of the configuration of that space.

00:04:11 **ADAM HYMAN**

All right. So tell me why you moved from Aarnun Gallery? What was the story behind the move from Aarnun to Bank?

00:04:17 **TERRY CANNON**

Yeah. We moved because, and we moved, it would have been I think about around 1980 to '81.

00:04:26 **ADAM HYMAN**

December 1980 was the end of the gallery. January of '81 ...

00:04:28

TERRY CANNON

Yes, January '81 was the beginning. Well, what happened was right around that time, '79, '80, there really started to be a kind of gentrification process in Old Town Pasadena. All of a sudden, the city decided to renovate that area. It was kind of run down, it was mostly artist studios and they had this master plan to come in and basically make this into a real profitable area for the city, and so the rent started to go up.

00:05:01

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

So, Aarnun Gallery, and I believe they were paying, it was for this entire building, I forget what the square footage is, but it was a huge building, enough to have an art gallery, Filmforum, a framing shop. And their entire downstairs basement, which they used for framing, they were paying, I think, somewhere in the neighborhood about 700 or \$800 a month for that. And all of sudden, their lease came up and the landlord was jacking the rent up to 3,000, 4,000, 5,000, something like that.

00:05:38

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

Aarnun could not afford that anymore, and so they proceeded to begin looking for a new place, something that was going to be much smaller, obviously, and they wound up relocating on Green Street in Pasadena, in a very small place that was just barely large enough to have their framing shop. They could no longer have a gallery. So, once they told me the days are numbered, then I began looking for another venue. And I was looking around at several places. I had actually talked to the Pasadena Playhouse. I had gone over there. That was being renovated at the time.

00:06:19

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

We were looking at a small theater about a 69, 70-seat theater that was real problematic because the theater seats went all the way to the back wall. We would had to set up a projector in the back on top of the theater seats. I had actually even went to a place in the city of San Gabriel, a theater company there that had expressed an interest. They had a nice little theater in the back of the San Gabriel Civic Auditorium. But I didn't really want to move it out of Pasadena.

00:06:56

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

Anyway, they started a theater company at the Bank Playhouse just a few doors away from Aarnun Gallery. I met a guy there named Fred Glienna, who's still around. He was the general manager of this new theater company that has started. He said, hey, we've got a space here and you're looking for a place and let's make this thing work. Monday night is a great night of the week for us 'cause we don't have any, it's basically a closed night. We have no theater, we're not rehearsing, so if you want to continue on Monday nights, we could make this thing happen.

00:07:34 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

The theater itself was bankrolled by a guy named Nathan Roth. Nate Roth was a long time Pasadena optometrist, very wealthy guy, one of the wealthy elite of Pasadena who dabbled in theater and decided he was going to start his own theater company. He bankrolled this thing lock, stock and barrel. He brought Fred Glienna in as his general manager and paid him. And he was probably most notable as the father of David Lee Roth of Van Halen. He had a lot of money because when David Lee Roth was in high school, his dad used to rent the Pasadena Civic Auditorium for David and his band to play there.

00:08:21 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

He was a real eccentric, real Pasadena eccentric. And Fred Glienna knew we had limited funds. He said, what are paying over at Aarnun? I said, \$100 a month. He said, how about \$150 a month? So, we paid like \$150 a month to use the place. But he was kind of a visionary guy and he saw this as being great. He knew that we were starting to build an audience. Maybe some of our audience would go to their theater productions and it would just create more interest in what they were doing there.

00:08:54 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

We made a very smooth transition, amazingly just a few doors away, it was basically in the same block of buildings. So, we moved there. And we were there, I guess, about three years at the Bank Playhouse. It was a very serviceable, functional place. They treated us very well there. One of Nate Roth's secretaries who did some work on the side for the theater loved Filmforum and she served drinks and tea cakes out of one of the teller's windows there. So, everybody could come in. We stored all of our equipment in a big vault there. They had a very nice little booth that we turned into a projection booth. And Fred came to many of the screenings, so he handled a lot of the lighting for us and sound work.

00:09:50 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

It was a very nice venue and charming just like the Aarnun Gallery space was. I think part of our success was we had really had cool venues. And a lot of places like Oasis, which went from venue to venue, they struggled to find something as intimate and nice as what we had. LAICA, LACE. They were in pretty ugly-looking gallery spaces where the acoustics were poor, folding chairs.

00:10:26 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

I always thought that part of the success of Filmforum was the fact that we had neat venues, and everybody remarked about how great it was, whether it was Aarnun or the Bank Playhouse. They were really great places with nice acoustics and a nice projection of the work.

00:10:48

ADAM HYMAN

Yep. Okay. So, in those years, in your years running it, who were, like, the regular attendees of the Filmforum?

00:10:57

TERRY CANNON

Well, in terms of our regular audience, we had probably a group of about 15 to 20 people who came to almost every show, or if not every show, every other show, and that was our core group. And, depending upon what was going on any given night, we had other people from throughout Southern California attend events. Probably the most notable people of those that came very regularly would've been Bill Scaff, whom I mentioned earlier, and Bill was a filmmaker who was really starting to do some important Super 8 work at the time. He was also a graphic designer, an artist and we'd worked, we'd collaborated on many projects. And he did a lot of work with Filmforum.

00:11:49

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

And his wife Mary, who later became my wife, was a regular attendee. And, Keith Ullrich was fairly regular, Craig Rice, Steve Escandon. By the time he moved into Pasadena, Michael Guccione became a regular. He wasn't so regular early on, but by the time we were at the Bank Playhouse, he was very regular. Sara Arledge came a lot. And then there were just a lot of other people who weren't really filmmakers but were just people that hung out in the area, loved to be able to have and see work, new work, interact with the filmmaker.

00:12:35

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

There was an espresso bar right down the street called the Espresso Bar. In the late stages it was run by Margaret Schermerhorn. We'd go there a lot after screenings. They had created quite a scene there. So a lot of people that were at the Espresso Bar would come to the screening. She came to a lot of the screenings. Her husband, Jack McIntosh, a painter, like those were his paintings there. He used to come to, so it was a real mix. There was a lot of artists that lived in the area, not filmmakers but painters, sculptors and some of them would come to the screenings.

00:13:18

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

We had a nice core group, and I always thought that was, again, one of our keys to our success. Because, as you know, depending upon who is showing their films, what else was going on, sometimes it was hard to draw a crowd. But if you could count on a core group of about 15 or 20 and they were engaged people, they were people that would stay through the screenings, ask interesting questions, I think it was, again, a part of our success because even if it was a small crowd, usually the exchange between the filmmakers and the audience was really good.

00:13:57

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

In fact, even though our audience wasn't an audience of academics or people who are attending film school. They weren't necessarily well-versed in film semiotics or whatever was popular at that time. They always asked great questions. And filmmakers used to always come up and say, I've done shows at all these top-flight places and this was one of the most engaged and interesting audiences that asked some of the most interesting questions that I've ever been asked before.

00:14:39

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

And the reason why they said that is because, more often than not, they were surprised. They had the sense that they were going to come in to this place Pasadena--I think Paul Arthur at one point told me that a lot of the filmmakers thought that going to Pasadena was like, if you were in New York, it was like going to a screening in Hoboken. I could never tell whether he was saying that facetiously or, but whatever it was, it worked because that core group was really a great group and they were enthusiastic. We rarely ended a screening at Filmforum. It almost always continued on at the Espresso Bar.

00:15:23

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

There was a bar called Smilin' Joe's that we used to go to. And very rarely did a screening just end at the theater. We almost always, a crowd, an entourage, went to another place and there'd be 15 or 20 people, and we'd take over a restaurant or the Espresso Bar and continue the discussion about the work. And so that was very nice and I think appreciated by a lot of the filmmakers. For me as the person who was running the organization, it was something I took a lot of pride in because I said, we want to do this right. We want to make it memorable for the filmmakers.

00:16:06

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

A lot of them really fell in love with the organization and a lot of the people that we had doing two or three screenings were people who really wanted to come back and, oh yeah, I want to come back. As soon as they get a few new films together, we want to come back and do a show and, so there was a great comfort level. And not a stodginess. I think the screenings were a real surprise for a lot of the filmmakers. I think they maybe came in with kind of low expectations. And maybe they were going to do a screening at the Oasis and/or Theatre Vanguard and we were kind of the add on, the tag on show.

00:16:47 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

We had a little honorarium money, but we pretty soon became front and center. That was kind of the key show. You do Filmforum and that was going to be the real centerpiece of the tour. So that was nice to get that operating. And I think a lot of the filmmakers in Los Angeles really appreciated, I think, in particular people like Pat O'Neill, Chick Strand, Grahame Weinbren and Roberta Friedman, who were intimately involved with Oasis, loved Filmforum. They knew how different it was from Oasis and Vanguard and Encounter cinema.

00:17:28 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

This was really, there was more heart and soul there and they really appreciated that, and they really went out of their way to promote Filmforum to other filmmakers not only in the U.S. but they traveled a lot and went to a lot of festivals in other parts of the country. And they said, if you're going to come and do a show in the United States, you must go to Pasadena Filmforum. So, the word spread pretty quickly, and we got lots of inquiries to do shows.

00:18:03 **ADAM HYMAN**

So, let's leap ahead to [unintelligible] what were your relationships then with the other venues and how did the nature of your screenings, well, you've addressed your screenings.

00:18:12 **TERRY CANNON**

Yes.

00:18:13 **ADAM HYMAN**

But like how did Oasis and Vanguard differ from you and how did you get along with the people organizing those?

00:18:19 **TERRY CANNON**

Well, in terms of the other organizations, we got along very well with both Oasis and Vanguard and later Encounter Cinema. I'm a person who, I know at that time in the film world, there were a lot of polemics and issues and there were some division there, I was always very diplomatic. I was very eclectic. I had a different kind of programming philosophy, for better or worse. Some would say it's not a good programming philosophy, but I felt that if a filmmaker had come along who was really dedicated to experimental and independent filmmaking and creating a significant body of work that that work was worth showing.

00:19:11

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

Whether it was animation, narrative work, structuralist work, which was very popular in the late '70s and seemed to be a particular type of film that the academic community embraced, I wanted to show everything. I felt that my job as the programmer of this organization was to expose our audience to a little bit of everything. And some of the other organizations were a little more, wanted to show a certain kind of thing. So I got along with everybody, I think, very well. And there may have been at time some issues between the other two organizations. But they felt that their audience was more overlapping.

00:20:03

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

Theatre Vanguard and Oasis felt that they were kind of vying for the same audience. Rarely would they do the same filmmaker. Filmforum served a really, for the travelling filmmakers network, served a very important role as a second show. And so half the time, usually, we were doing a show with a filmmaker who was at either Oasis or at Vanguard but rarely both. They rarely program the same filmmaker. Even if it was a notable filmmaker that certainly there would've been plenty of an audience for two nights, they didn't do that.

00:20:44

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

So we were very often that second show. And by '78, '79, we were getting some grants from the state and the NEA. So we were offering a comparable or even larger honorarium than they were. We were up to 200 and we went to, I think, 250 for awhile. And back in '78, '79, \$250 was, I don't know what that would be comparable to today, but it was a decent honorarium. If you could pick up 200 and 250 from another organization, all of a sudden you had \$500. If you picked up a gig at one of the universities, you might have \$1,000 in two or three days in Los Angeles.

00:21:25

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

So we always collaborated well with the other organizations and got along really well with both. And my recollection is that Oasis was largely on Sunday nights, Filmforum was on Monday and Vanguard was on Tuesday, and I think Encounter Cinema was on Tuesday. So it really worked well. If you did a show at one or the other venue, you could do both places in two nights. And so that kind of worked well. We didn't have to adjust our schedule, we just always screened on Monday nights. I can't remember why we got into Monday nights. We just did, and that turned out to be our primary night. So, that worked well and it was great because, like I was saying earlier, we had real different venue.

01:21:41 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

It was a little more folksy and homey that the screening environment was like a living room type of environment. And we put up a lot of the filmmakers. Mary and I lived in a small kind of bungalow apartment for most of the years that we ran Filmforum. We put up the filmmakers in the living room, and we didn't really have money to put them up in hotels and we didn't want to. We wanted to be able to hang out with them. And since I was doing the magazines, quite often I had some time, we could go around and do things, and it was part of the really enjoyable experience that I had.

00:23:08 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

Sometimes we had 25, 30 filmmakers a year stay with us from anywhere from a day to weeks. Kurt Kren came into town once and we couldn't get rid of him. He stayed on and on and on. Very often we were the ones doing that. Occasionally Pat and Beverly O'Neil or David and Diana Wilson would know a particular filmmaker, whoever, maybe Ernie Gehr or somebody that they knew very well and they'd stayed out with them.

00:23:40 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

But a lot of the times we wound up putting up the filmmakers, which is great. We enjoyed that and it was fun because if they did stay for three or four days, they could hang out in Pasadena and actually meet some other people that were going to attend the show, before the show. Sometimes we had private screenings at our house and they'd show some work that wasn't being shown as part of the program. It was a lot of fun. We got along very well with the other organizations, and I always considered myself kind of a diplomatic person and a sociable person. I knew these filmmakers that were traveling that it was not easy.

00:24:27 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

They were going into the strange areas and meeting a lot of people they didn't know. I wanted to try to make it as enjoyable as possible for them. That was my key. If a filmmaker came into town and did a good show and had a good time and they wrote me letter back and said, hey, this was really nice, that was for me that was worth all my effort because that's what we were there for. It was to bring them in, have our audiences get exposure to the work. And they were making a commitment and we were making a commitment. And if it worked well for both then we've done our job and they've certainly done their job.

00:25:14 **ADAM HYMAN**

Cool. Now, what did you, how are the tasks set around for Filmforum like, so who else was involved in putting together shows for Filmforum, what did everybody do?

00:25:25

TERRY CANNON

Well, the way the organization developed even though we started off with a kind of a board of directors. And in the first few months we had some involvement and it wound up basically being a one-person operation. Mary, of course, was involved but the day-to-day work and all that stuff, basically, I assumed all that. Every once in a while, people would come along and do things, but it wound up being kind of a thing where when you'd bring people in to do some things, you couldn't exactly count on them every time. And so I just figured I've got this down to a system and I'd just do it myself.

00:26:21

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

Where I would engage other people and get them involved with the filmmakers that might stay for three and four days is just to have some people helping out, and just in terms of entertainment, in doing things with the filmmakers. But the actual operation of the programming, the applying for the grants, the setting up the space 'cause that was something I had to do every week. I was basically dismantling my sound system, bringing that in. We had a guy, his name was Wilbur George, who was involved with us for quite a few years who was our ticket taker and that was great.

00:27:08

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

That was one thing, obviously, if I'm getting up, I was always the projectionist, so I'm getting ready preparing for the show. We had to have somebody taking care of that front house. So he was the ticket taker and treasurer for many, many years and did a good job. So that was pretty much covered and he would help out and Mary would help out in terms of preparing refreshments and things because we know we always had some sodas, whatever, maybe some...

00:27:49

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

But most of the tasks fell upon my shoulders and you get into a routine. You know how it is. You get into a routine and you know kind of what needs to be done and you allocate the time to do it. And I didn't mind doing it. I kind of knew how I wanted to present this thing. I did it my way and I always introduced the shows, and there were certain things I certainly liked more than others. I love the programming aspect and doing the fliers and that was always enjoyable. And the most creative thing I think is putting together programs.

00:27:56

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

The only thing that I thought if I had more days in a week is I would love to have done a little bit more in terms of just creative programming. When all of a sudden we became a centerpiece for the one person shows and people really counted on that show in Pasadena to make a West Coast trip happen. Then all of a sudden probably 80 percent of our programming became one person shows. That takes a lot of the creativity out of, because then all you're doing is basically selecting who's going to do the show on any given night. And I always enjoyed putting together programs and taking a group of experimental films and putting it in into some kind of thematic context.

00:29:25

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

That I really enjoyed and there's virtually an endless, and I did a little bit of that. If you look at the programs usually at any given two or three-month cycle, there would be at least a couple of those kinds of shows. In the summertime, that gave me an opportunity to do a little bit more of that 'cause fewer of the filmmakers were traveling then. That cycle of traveling filmmakers usually was September and October through, maybe, May and June. Summer months, a lot of the venues shut down. The schools were closed, so filmmakers couldn't pick-up a school gig.

00:30:04

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

In the summer months, I used those times and we did some of our extended series, Show for the Eyes, The Passionate Eye, some of the more serious programming where I would gather together films and do some type of a thematic type show, I would do them during the summers.

00:30:25

ADAM HYMAN

How would you learn about films to program?

00:30:29

TERRY CANNON

Mostly just reading about them through publications, hearing about them through other filmmakers. Since we had Doug Edwards and the Oasis group there, those people were seeing a lot of films, traveling around. I always ask filmmakers who would come and do shows, what's out there? What have you seen? Who should I be aware of? And they were always giving me tips. I remember asking Graham and Roberta at one point and they said, hey, we were at the London Film Festival recently. There were these two filmmakers from Italy. Their names were Yervant and Angela and they brought in these incredible found films and they had these scented films.

00:31:19 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

They would have these Bunsen burners in the front of the room and they'd have these scents. And they said, we, these people are fantastic. We got to try to get them here, and so things like that. And then all of a sudden you'd work on setting something up. They'd come out here and they would had their own people that they would recommend. You just found out and heard about work. Lots of the work that I showed I hadn't seen before. I had never seen any of Yervant and Angela's films probably.

00:31:47 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

Half of the films that were being shown, I was seeing them for the first time. So, the word would spread around and if somebody was going to try to travel and put together a tour, you wanted to try to be a part of that as much as possible because you wanted to be able to help them cover costs. That's one of the reasons why one year I decided to set up a tour for Yervant and Angela, and not just because I loved the work but I also wanted to see what that was like to arrange a tour with all these different places. I was always the one that was setting up a date, now I wanted to try to do that, and it was great.

00:32:31 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

At that time, roughly '76, '77, until the early '80s, you could travel around the country and pay for your cost with these honorariums and even make a little bit of money. I don't know whether that anybody could do that nowadays. But at that time because I'd always hear from the filmmakers. I'd say, well, are you going to go home with some money in your pocket? And very often, they could do it.

00:33:12 **ADAM HYMAN**

Okay. And then what else, tell me about the economics of it. How did you get paid? What did you pay filmmakers, attendants, et cetera?

00:33:21 **TERRY CANNON**

Well, in the glory years, you know, '78, '79, '80, '81, we were getting a California Arts Council funding and National Endowment for the Arts funding. I can't remember the exact totals but I think we ranged in there from about \$3,000 a year to, I think our high point was in around 8,000 to \$8,500 a year. That would have been combined California Arts Council and NEA. I want to say that that year that we reached our peak, we got about 3,000 from the CAC and about 5,000 from the NEA.

00:33:34 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

And all of that money went back into the programming. I was working. For the grant application themselves, I always put in a budget for me as the executive director just because, I think Doug Edwards had told me, look, even if you don't take any money, put yourself in there as a salary because the governmental agencies want to see that. They want to see that there's somebody being paid something at the head of the ship because otherwise they feel it's going to be flaky or whatever. They want somebody in there that's getting some kind of salary.

00:34:49 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

So I always wrote in a salary, but I never took any money because the costs were such that... So our honorariums varied but by that time they were 250, 300. Sometimes we would do double shows, maybe have a filmmaker, I know Curt McDowell did a couple of shows, Kuchar, Willie Varela, we'd have them do a show and a seminar with maybe 500, \$700 then for an honorarium. So by the time you figured in rent, the honorariums, the rentals for the films, there was your budget.

00:35:28 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

We did a lot of good work on limited amount of money. We're talking about 35, 40, 45 shows a year for 4,000, \$5,000 budget. And it doesn't go that far, really, if you're just computed if you're paying 250, \$300 per show. But we got to the point where by the time we were getting \$8,500, I didn't have to put my own money into it. Some of those years where we were making \$3,000 grant money, I was still winding up putting money into it.

00:36:13 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

I was really happy when we got to the point to \$8,500 because then I knew that we were going to have enough to cover all of our honorariums and all of the rent. And at that time I may have even farmed out some of the fliers. I don't know if maybe I'd given Bill a little bit of money for flier design or something. I forget. But that was the high point. And then there was one year, and I don't know which year it was but the NEA had some excess money. I got a call from somebody at the NEA or something and they said, we have some excess money and we want to give--it was not much. It was like, maybe a couple thousand dollars then.

00:37:08 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

But they had like 15,000 or \$20,000 and they were thinking about giving it to a couple of organizations on the West Coast. And they weren't just going to give it but they were actually sending out somebody from the NEA just to kind of check out a screening. And then I guess if they liked what they saw, you were just going to get some money. And I remember a guy that came out, he was involved with the Rocky Mountain Film Center in Colorado. His name was Virgil Grillo.

00:37:42 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

He was with Don Yannacito. They were involved with the Rocky Mountain Film Center and also connected to the University of Colorado. And they sent Virgil out just to come out and check Filmforum out and he really liked it. And a month or so later, we got \$2,000 or something. Just the NEA had a surplus and didn't have to write a grant for it. They just say, here, you're doing a great job. Keep it up. Here's \$2,000. So...

00:38:17 **ADAM HYMAN**

We'll never see that again.

00:38:18 **TERRY CANNON**

Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Those days are, I'm sure, long over. But one of the things that kept me doing it and kept me doing it unpaid for all those years was because the grant application process was so simple and it didn't burn me out. I didn't love the grant writing part of things but I knew you had to do it. And as long as it was fairly simple, I was willing to do it. The CAC and the NEA grants were simple, very easy to write and you were getting a lot of that money based upon your reputation.

00:39:01 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

And everybody was getting something. And I don't know what Oasis got. I want to say Oasis was kind of getting about what we were getting grant wise. Theatre Vanguard and Encounter may be a little bit more. Their expenses may have been a little higher, and I think Doug had a real, I mean, he was pretty tied into the funding. He was kind of the--I don't want to say he was the godfather of film programming in Los Angeles but he was, kind of. He was the major figure and so it only made sense that they were going to wind up getting whatever funding was going to come this way the most.

00:39:45

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

We were really getting, I think, our funding based upon the quality of the work that we were doing because our applications were the same every year. We're going to do 35 programs, in-person filmmakers, here's the budget, you know, and the people at the NEA knew about all of these organizations that they were funding. The word got around, the people knew what was going on. Filmforum, by this time, was pretty well recognized and everybody knew that we were central to this traveling network.

00:40:19

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

Part of it was the NEA wanted to keep that alive because that was really keeping this filmmaking alive and allowing this work to be shown all over the country. So they, I think they were well aware of... and I'm sure I mentioned that in the applications too.

end of tape 3

TAPE: TERRY CANNON TAPE 4

00:00:53

TERRY CANNON

There were several different things that we counted and relied on. The LOS ANGELES TIMES for quite a few of those years covered experimental film on fairly regular basis. And for at least maybe three or four of those years, they had assigned Linda Gross to doing the experimental film coverage. Kevin Thomas did an occasional experimental film review. I think Doug Edwards knew him pretty well. And he would do a capsule review every so often of different screenings, similar to what he did, special screenings.

00:01:44

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

But Linda, they assigned her the task of doing the experimental film coverage. And she admitted she wasn't very well-equipped to do it and she really wanted to write about commercial films, but she was assigned this task and she did it willingly. And I think she did a pretty decent job actually. I don't know the exact number but probably at any given quarterly schedule, at least three or four film programs were covered by Linda.

00:02:19

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

And it was always the same way. I would talk to here, hey, are you interested in this? I usually had to promote it a little bit, say, hey, this is something really important. Then I would have the film, I would get the film in advance from the filmmaker and I would--she lived in West Hollywood. And I always had to take the films to her place that was the deal. I lugged my projector over, I took over a small screen and I sat with her and I watched the films with her and we talked about the films.

00:02:53

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

And some of the films she kind of struggled with and we would talk about them and she often wrote, almost always wrote a positive review, even if it was a difficult film or something she didn't particularly like. She would always focus on something about it that she did like. So, they're very favorable reviews and some of them were very lengthy at times. Nobody is going to believe this now or 20 years down the road but they'd devote occasionally a third of a page to an experimental film review. A film program that was going to maybe be attended by anywhere from 10, 15 people to 50 people.

00:03:37 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

And sometimes we'd have two, three, four weeks in a row where we'd have a review, so it was really amazing. I think Oasis would get reviews for their shows occasionally and so would Theatre Vanguard, but we got our share, of course, by the time Oasis was gone. And it was basically Encounter Cinema and Filmforum and eventually just Filmforum, we got pretty good coverage. That was our primary source other than occasional mentions, David Ehrenstein at that time for a quite a few years was writing for the L.A. READER. And David was quite an experimental film buff. And he would write, if not a full scale review, they had their film listings and he almost always wrote a small blurb listing in the READER.

00:04:33 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

We didn't get too much coverage in the LA WEEKLY. In those days, they didn't really have anybody interested in writing about experimental film. Since the READER was really giving us a lot of coverage and their advertising rates were very inexpensive, for a couple of years, I ran a small ad in the READER. But at that time our grant funding was up and into that five, \$6,000 area, I decided, well, I'll grease the wheel a little bit since they're, given us some coverage, we'll run a small ad. So, we ran our small ad with the Filmforum heading and then screening this week. That was pretty much the extent of it. There were occasional other things but not much locally.

00:05:22 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

There were, I think the LAICA or Oasis screening did a couple of journals. And there would be after the fact coverage of the screening. But as far as local coverage, that was about it. We'd get listings, of course. The L.A. TIMES would be very generous whether they were reviewing a film or not, usually on the Sunday paper before our Monday screening there would be, in their special screenings, there would be a listing and maybe even a brief description.

00:05:53 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

That was about the extent of the coverage but it was fortunate that we had that, there's no question Doug Edwards was totally instrumental in the TIMES covering experimental film. There's no question, he pushed the TIMES, he was on I think the Filmex screening committee and he really promoted. Without him I don't know that we would of had that coverage, but he really pushed it. And so, I think he is largely responsible for the TIMES giving any coverage to experimental film.

00:06:34 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

But it was different, there were three organizations and there was this sense that this was kind of an important art form, they would cover review performance art. The TIMES was different than it is now. And, now, I think more of a situation about the money. If we're going to be able to cover you, you're going to have to provide us a little revenue, advertising or whatever.

00:07:07 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

But you didn't have to do it then. Here we were the small organization based in Pasadena. And every couple of weeks there'd be a fairly major review. It wasn't always a huge review. Sometimes Linda Gross would write something and she'd call me, and she said, Well, I'm sorry they cut my review in half or whatever. But that was the way it always worked and that was another part of my job is going over there usually three or four days, five days before the screening.

00:07:39 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

And driving over to West L.A., I'd get off work, drive over there right after work and it'd be 11:00, 12:00 by the time I'd get home. But it was worth 'cause it was exciting to have the coverage and it was great for the filmmakers too. It was wonderful to get some coverage, some mention. Years later, I remember getting notes from the filmmakers and seeing where they had cited that as a review of their work that they had received.

00:08:15 **ADAM HYMAN**

Great. And were there any films that you were involved in the making of?

00:08:22 **TERRY CANNON**

Not really. Sara Arledge's last film that she made, WHAT DO TWO RIGHTS MAKE?, which was made in the early '80 was kind of a Filmforum project in the sense that a lot of people that were intermittently involved with Filmforum including myself had some involvement on that project. I didn't do that much on the project but I lined up some people to work on that project. Ed Nunnery and his wife Marcia acted in it, I mean, it was a lot of people, local people that got involved with that. But, no, there wasn't anything really that I was actually involved with myself.

00:09:14 **ADAM HYMAN**

Tell me about Filmforum film then?

00:09:16

TERRY CANNON

Oh, Filmforum film, yeah. Well, that was in about 1980 or '81. We had gotten our California Arts Council grant. And everybody always wanted a documentation at the end of the year to prove that you spent the money wisely and spent it somewhat according to how you had planned in your original proposal. And almost everybody would just send documentation, fliers, program notes. Anyway, one year, the CAC said, look, we want something different. We don't want just your usual documentation but we're asking all of our grantees to send in a visual documentation, a film, a photographic record, something other than just a written document.

00:10:09

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

And they sent \$200 to all the agencies to give them this extra money to do something creative. And you realize this was before computers. Nowadays, you could do a PowerPoint or a little DVD. So, I said, what am I going to, do? I've got \$200 and I saw Craig Rice who was one of our regular attendees. And he had been doing some very interesting experimental work along with Keith Ullrich, and I said, hey, Craig, I got \$200, how about doing a little documentation on Filmforum? Very simple, it's just as simple as that. He said, well, what do you want to do?

00:10:46

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

I said, I don't know. How about something like a day in the life of Filmforum, you know? Show what's going on at the screening, take some shots of the audience coming in, the audience leaving. Maybe get a few of the filmmakers or attendees to talk about Filmforum on the soundtrack. It was a very quick, simple little project. He started by going around the neighborhood and filming a few things, some paint cans on the ground. By that time, the neighborhood was getting a little rundown. So, and then went in, shot, I think, one or two screenings. I know one of the--it was during one of our jazz film programs 'cause I know one of the jazz films was being shown, came up into the projection booth, shot some stuff there.

00:11:30

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

People coming in, leaving, the train coming up the tracks. And then he asked some of the filmmakers who were regulars to comment about the films. And so, there's a lot of people on there. I know David Wilson said a few words, Pat O'Neill said something. Margaret Schermerhorn, who was the lady who ran the Espresso Bar, was quoted on there. I think Keith was on there. Just, you know, what does Filmforum mean to you? Why do you go to a lot of the screenings, why? And so it was a very simple little four or five-minute film. I don't know what it cost Craig, maybe stayed within the \$200 budget, maybe spent some money out of his pocket.

00:12:21 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

We shipped it up to the CAC. I said, make two prints, one we can send to the CAC and one we'll keep with Filmforum. So that was pretty much it. And I just put that film away and then it resurfaced a few years ago when David James did his book and he was interviewing me for the little section on Filmforum. And I said, jeez, somewhere around here, I've got an old 16 millimeter film can with the film that Craig Rice and showed it to him and he said, oh, this is great. I wish every film organization had a little document like this. So he took it to SC and I think made a video copy of it. And so that was it. It was really just a little, simple film about a day in the life of Filmforum.

00:13:13 **ADAM HYMAN**

Cool. Excellent. Okay. Tell me about SPIRAL.

00:13:20 **TERRY CANNON**

Well, SPIRAL was actually one of the reasons why I decided to leave Filmforum. In 1983, I'd run Filmforum for about eight or nine years and it was, as you know, it was a lot of effort. And things started to change a little bit at that time. And changing from my standpoint, kind of big changes. For one, the Bank Playhouse was just about ready to vacate. And it was obviously no longer feasible for us to have a screening venue in Old Town Pasadena. And with the gentrification in Pasadena, I realized it was going to be very, very difficult to find a space which meant we may have to move out of Pasadena.

00:14:13 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

So I was not exactly shopping Filmforum around, but I was keeping my eyes open for anybody that could come in and maybe had a burst of creative energy and was interested in taking over. And that's when at some point, probably around the spring of 1983. Trish Knodle came in to the picture. And she just called me up one day. She had been involved with Pittsburgh Filmmakers for a number of years. She was out here in the Los Angeles area. I think she had been in San Diego for a while and she was really wanting to get back into the experimental film scene.

00:15:04 TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

She was really interested in maybe being intimately involved with an organization, i.e., maybe even running an organization. So we had several conversations and she came out, we had several visits. I told her what was going on with Filmforum. The other thing that was definitely happening at that time, there were these kind of cataclysmic changes about to occur, and one is that Filmforum wasn't going to be able to quite operate the way it had for nine years. That is a one-person type operation. It was becoming very clear from the granting agencies, both state and federal, that the small organizations like Filmforum were no longer just going to be given money. But you had to develop boards of directors.

00:15:54 TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

You had to go out and make concrete efforts to solicit money from the private sector. They were no longer going to fund 50, 75, 80 percent of the budget. So that was also coming down the road. And that wasn't something that I was looking forward to doing because I basically have been running the organization by myself for about nine years now and I wasn't too thrilled about the board development, but I saw that that was something she was really good at. She'd had some background in that. She was really interested in developing that aspect of the organization.

00:16:36 TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

So we basically started a plan to transition Filmforum over to her as the executive director. I think it was the Passionate Eyes series, I believe, was in the summer of 1983. And that was her introduction to our local film community because by then, we'd already kind of made the decision. I was going to continue doing Filmforum until the conclusion of 1983, and then her plan was to move Filmforum into downtown Los Angeles in '84. She felt very strongly that that was going to be the next really big blossoming area. There was a lot of funding there. There was this art scene being created. There was a lot of things happening there.

00:17:26 TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

Encounter Cinema, for all intents and purposes, was finished. Oasis had wrapped things up a couple of years earlier. So there was nothing really going on with the experimental film in that area. It was all Pasadena. And she felt strongly that moving it into that area, more centralized location, would be better. And so, I agreed. I thought it was a good idea because Pasadena was going to be very difficult now to find a venue. And so, that was the beginning of the process. Albert Kilchesty had come into Pasadena around that time. Gary Adelstein at Berks Filmmakers said, hey, this guy is coming into town. His name is Buddy. He's really, loves experimental film.

00:18:15 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

He's going to keep an eye on him, look out after him. And he got very much involved and started working almost immediately with Trish, starting out doing film projection and things that she needed assistance with. Of course, a few years later, Buddy and Richard wound up taking the helm of Filmforum. But that was how that transition occurred. And although Trish didn't stick with it very long, I think maybe two years, maybe three, two years probably. I think she was an important transitional figure in terms of the transition out of Pasadena and also into a board development.

00:18:59 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

She got Doug Edwards to get involved with the board 'cause really, Encounter was pretty much done, so he felt this was the only organization in town now. I don't think it was tremendously successful and a lot of things ultimately happened in downtown L.A. to make it not the greatest of areas for Filmforum. But she started that transition, the next step for Filmforum, which was to kind of develop the board and make it more really like a typical organization where there's lots of input and some people on the board who have contacts with people and can develop and build the organization.

00:19:49 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

I don't want to say that it had become stagnant with what I was doing. But we got to a certain point and there wasn't much more for us to do. We kind of done what we, that's it.

00:20:11 **ADAM HYMAN**

So go on to SPIRAL.

00:20:20 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

I had been thinking actually, toward the latter part of Filmforum, when I had run it in '83, thinking about doing a film journal. I'd been programming for Filmforum for about nine years and had a little experience with doing two issues of the CINEMANEWS out of San Francisco, two guest editorships, one, the Super 8 issue, which I did with Willie Varela, and then one issue, which was kind of a Pasadena Filmforum Los Angeles issue. And I wanted to continue being involved with experimental film, and I felt one area that was really needed was a kind of a creative film journal.

00:21:12 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

Not doing something like what MILLENNIUM FILM JOURNAL was doing which was basically lengthy or critical pieces, but something a little more creative, where filmmakers would be able to have some of their artwork published, some of their drawings, some of their photographs, some of their text pieces and collages. And also I thought this idea of taking an important topic, some topical issue and throwing that out each month and letting filmmakers comment about it would be really good.

00:21:48 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

There was a lack of a creative filmmaker's journal. And so SPIRAL was kind of an attempt to provide that. And I'd had, as I mentioned with my alternative publications, I had quite a bit of publishing experience. And so I decided to launch it as a quarterly publication, subscription publication, very limited newsstand sales. I put this out initially and basically threw it in the laps of the filmmakers. And I said, look, this is kind of for you. This is your magazine, and you're going to need to support it.

00:22:31 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

And the subscription price was nominal, but the bottom line, it was going to have to be supported by the filmmakers or it wasn't going to exist. It wasn't an expensive thing to do, but it was fairly costly. I really needed probably 300 or 400 subscribers to make it really pay for itself. I wasn't wanting to get into a situation where I made money, but I did pay Bill Scaff to do some of the layout and design on it. So I had that cost, I had the printing cost and I had the mailing cost. And I wanted those costs to be met.

00:23:18 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

I didn't care about making a salary, even though I put a lot of time and effort into it. But those costs needed to be met. And also we decided that we wanted to do it in different formats. We just didn't want to come out with a spiral-bound magazine every quarter. We wanted to do some different things. So, in the nine or 10 issues that we did, we did one issue that was a audio tape, an anthology of sound works by filmmakers. We did a postcard issue which contained about 50 postcards designed by artists and put into a little plastic bag. And they could be kept or they could actually be used by the subscribers to mail out.

00:24:05 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

So that was a really a cool concept. And it just never took off. [laugh] Again, maybe a lot of it was just that it came out of Pasadena. Maybe it wasn't taken that seriously. A lot of times this provincial attitude hurts a lot of things. When I was doing the CINEMANEWS which was put out by Canyon Cinema when I was doing them, and Canyon at one point, they had this, I think it was a quarterly newsletter magazine that they put out, that was sent to people who had memberships or had their films distributed there.

00:25:00 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

Dominic or somebody there at Canyon had this great idea. I thought it was a great idea. Rather than us doing an issue here in San Francisco, talking largely about San Francisco films every month, we're going to open this up to other regions in the country. And I grabbed on to that. I said, hey, we'll do one for Pasadena and maybe next quarter they'll do one in Chicago and then maybe in Boston. And it's great. It's a national membership organization.

00:25:27

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

Why not have this as a vehicle for different filmmakers and different communities to talk about what's happening there, not just San Francisco? And, oh man, that issue I did in Pasadena, controversial. I heard about that for many, many, many months. That was, of course I wasn't in on the direct things, because that was all happening up in San Francisco, but I heard how controversial that was because the filmmakers in San Francisco didn't want this to travel around, and why is Filmforum having an issue?

00:26:09

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

And so there was a lot of controversy. There were people that threatened to quit Canyon and pulled their films out of Canyon. And I heard about this all later through the grapevine. Unfortunately, I don't know, maybe some of that attitude wound up, meaning the demise of Spiral because it was something, it was really kind of different. It didn't quite fit in to the academic film-type journal that a lot of people were used to. These were the things that had gotten some kind of grant support. This was something that was a little different. It was a little more creative, more funky. A lot of people loved it and really appreciated it.

00:26:58

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

And after I announced that, we got the membership up or the subscription base up to maybe, at its peak, maybe a little over a hundred. And I would look at the list of filmmakers that were out there who, for whatever the subscription was, \$20 or \$25 a year, would really benefit from having a subscription to this. They just didn't support it. And I don't know if it was--I tried to at the very least make it topical by having that topical issue every month, something that would be really interesting to them and their livelihood as filmmakers.

00:27:45

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

And there was a lot of good dialogue and some times five or six or seven filmmakers would submit a response, what's the future film versus video, hot-button issues. It just never really took off and I was putting a lot of money into it and it was pretty clear that I wasn't going to be able to go much up above that 100 and 125 subscribers. I really needed about 300. It was barely covering half of the production cost. And I was covering that other half and it just kind of became not economically feasible for me to do it.

00:28:31 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

So I was kind of saddened by that because I thought I was prepared. I thought in the nine years that I had run Filmforum that I was in a good position. Having met so many filmmakers, for one thing, I figured, well, that at the very least that all these filmmakers that have done shows at Filmforum are going to subscribe, but a lot of them didn't. And it was disheartening to say the least because I felt that that was something that was very much needed in the experimental film world, was a journal like that, to augment some of the more academic things that were out there. And it was very creative and I think it was one of the best things actually that I've done.

00:29:16 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

I didn't use high-quality printing. I used basically, that was done in an offset printer. And I just pushed them to the limit, they did some things that they had never done before graphically, and they were challenged by what I was bringing in there for them to print. And they wanted to do a decent job. So if I had a ability to go to a real high-quality printer, we could have probably done a lot more. That was literally done in an offset print shop, just a place like a Sir Speedy, you know, Quick Print.

00:29:52 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

It didn't look like it, it looked better than that. Anyway that was disheartening because, and that would wind up proving to be really one of the last things that I did in terms of like a real strong commitment to experimental film. 'Cause when I turned Filmforum over to Trish, I wanted to really disconnect from it. I didn't want to be one of these people that was kind of overseeing it. I had done my thing. It was time for her to come in or whoever was going to, it was time for them to do their own thing.

00:30:30 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

If she wanted to consult with me on something, I was, of course, glad to do that, but it was time for her, and the same way with every successor. It's important that they'd be able to do their own thing 'cause everybody brings their own unique thing to it. I think pretty much everybody who's taken over, in many ways, has not only just contributed to what I had started but have done, in many respects, a better job. And I'm not just saying that. Your programming now is as diverse and as interesting. I don't go to a lot of the shows, but I'm very impressed with the programming.

00:31:11 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

I mean, it was, I consider it way beyond what I was doing, so I think, everybody has added and brought their own unique thing. And I think 50 years from now when people are doing an anthropological study of Filmforum and they look at this organization, the thing that they're going to study about it is the fact that it was uniquely gifted to have all these individuals that came around right when the person next to them was getting burnt out, who took it up, picked up the ball and went with it, and didn't just go with it but brought their own unique energy and enthusiasm. In a sense, this organization is being reinvented numerous times and I think improved in many ways 'cause everybody has had different challenges.

00:32:03 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

It's a whole different world now for you as the programmer than it was for me. And I think it's a much more complex situation. It was really simple, just the grant situation. Wouldn't you just be able to like to, basically, sit down at the typewriter and knock something out in an hour and get a \$5,000 grant? That's what it was like in those days, the money was flowing a lot better than now. Now, it's really, I think, a whole different thing. So, there's been a lot of luck with Filmforum. Obviously, it's a great idea, it's a great concept.

00:32:43 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

Many organizations that have started and fallen by the wayside, but Filmforum has been lucky in its history to have had that 'cause you look at most of the organizations, they don't survive. Oasis was there for a few years. Theatre Vanguard, that was Doug's thing. Once he was gone, that was it. So, that's, I think, the real reason why Filmforum has been able to do this for 35 years is it's been this unique succession of individuals at the helm and...

00:33:35 **ADAM HYMAN**

Let's start with Barbara Hammer was very affected, because she said you were the first one to, like, bring her to have her do a show anywhere besides San Francisco. So tell me how you even heard of Barbara Hammer then in the first place which led to invite her?

00:33:48 **TERRY CANNON**

You know, I'm not sure. To be honest, I'm not exactly sure how I heard about her...

00:33:59 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

I don't know whether Barbara had written me a letter or whether somebody had recommended her. But I had heard about her work and I vaguely remembered her from when I was in San Francisco. But she might have been a graduate of San Francisco State. I don't remember. But when she wrote me a letter or called me on the phone, she was such an engaging and wonderful person. And I said, wow, this sounds great. And she was doing performance and film and there is nothing, I mean, that's very nice to hear that story.

00:34:37 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

Any programmer in their right mind would have done a program with her. And I think maybe we just happened to be one of the ones she called, because I know she showed her work all over the country at some point. Again, it was a part of the situation that I was saying where we engaged with a lot of the filmmakers and we established long-term relationships. Willie Varela came here many times and he just loved coming to Filmforum. And almost at times, we became almost like family members. That happened with a lot of filmmakers.

00:35:22 **ADAM HYMAN**

The Film In Music world show with Roberta Friedman and Grahame Weinbren, do you remember anything? Tell us about it.

00:35:30 **TERRY CANNON**

Yeah. I do and that might have been just something we worked on together. Roberta and Grahame, I probably talked to them about doing a show, and they were very much into sound at the time. And I think it was a show that involved largely improvised music accompanied to film. And they were always doing interesting and creative stuff. And that was one thing about Roberta and Grahame is they always seemed to be a little bit ahead of everybody else.

00:36:03 **TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)**

And they loved Filmforum and our space was really nice acoustically, good for music. So that's how that happened. I think that was something they had actually programmed and put together.

00:36:17 **ADAM HYMAN**

Films In A Box?

00:36:19

TERRY CANNON

Films Found In A Box was just a very simple thing. I found an enormous box of films at a yard sale one day and I bought them for next to nothing and I went through and there was lots of interesting stuff. They were old sound test films and color test films and parts of strange music test--It's all kinds of odd ball stuff that some guy had collected. I guess, he was involved with the film industry who was throwing all his stuff out. And I recut the stuff together and made a film that was a kind of amusing and interesting, a 90-minute film. And we showed it at Filmforum once or twice, and it got quite a reaction. Then I went up and showed it at the Cinematheque and a couple of galleries.

00:37:09

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

I changed it every now and then because the box was just, there was all kinds of new stuff I added and just something that I had fun with. And a little bit of a precursor to guys like that Prelinger with their collections of movies, hygiene movies and stuff from the '50s and '60s, just an odd assortment of films largely from the '50s and '60s.

00:37:39

ADAM HYMAN

Where is that now?

00:37:41

TERRY CANNON

Sitting in my storage unit.

00:37:42

ADAM HYMAN

Cool.

00:37:43

TERRY CANNON

It's just sitting in there. Well, it's not cool. It's very hot in there. It's probably...

00:37:45

ADAM HYMAN

Let's get it out of there.

00:37:46

TERRY CANNON

We got to get it out of there. [laugh] Well, you got SHOW FOR THE EYES. So I guess, that'll be March...

00:37:52

ADAM HYMAN

Can you talk about SHOW FOR THE EYES now?

00:37:53

TERRY CANNON

SHOW FOR THE EYES was in 1981, I decided to work on a summer-long series of surrealist and dada films. And I got Richard Meade who was involved a little bit with Filmforum at that time and Keith Ullrich to work on that series with me. And we all decided that what we wanted to have is this signature piece. And as a closer to that series was what we called an International Mail Art Film, M-A-I-L. We would extend an invitation to filmmakers and artists throughout the world through various channels that we were going to do this film as the culminating film of the series.

00:38:38

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

Gave them two or three or four months to submit bits and pieces of film, nothing over five minutes, send us the film and we'll cut it together as it arrives, Super 8 or 16. It turned out to be about 90 minutes of Super 8 and about 90 minutes of 16. We said we're going to project it at the end of the summer in 1982 and that's it. And so, we showed the film and it was pretty amazing. Lots of filmmakers from all over the world sent stuff, bits and pieces of existing films, outtakes from films that they'd never used, stuff that they had shot or shot originally for this film. And it's just this wonderful three-hour collection of film. At that time, mail art was really very popular in the early '80s.

00:39:33

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

There were mail art exhibits, galleries all over the world. There would be a theme and people would send artwork or, maybe sometimes, it'd be done with a postcard. A lot of it was sent through the mail and that was really big. A lot of artists were into that. And there was a history of that with the Surrealists and Dadaists. It was very successful. We had packed houses for the programs and it was really nice, one of those summer months where I was able to kind of do something a little different. Then we did a little box catalog. We decided to do it and it was kind of a cool thing.

00:40:17

ADAM HYMAN

And *El Ojo Apasionado*?

00:40:19

TERRY CANNON

Same thing. It was a summer-long series. That was 1983. That was kind of my last big series and I decided that it'd be interesting to do a program of Chicano films, films from Mexico, films that were shot in Mexico by Caucasian filmmakers. It was about a seven or eight-part series. And maybe one of the first series that really focused on Chicano experimental and independent film. We kicked that series off with a big fundraising event at the Rialto Theatre catered by a local Mexican restaurant. And we showed a print of *QUE VIVA MEXICO*, the Eisenstein film.

00:41:10

TERRY CANNON (CONTINUED)

And that was also Trish's introduction to the world because I introduced her at that. She had done her thesis or something on Eisenstein. She really knew all about his work and about that film, so she gave a little talk about that film. And at the same time, I introduced her as going to be taking over as the Filmforum executive director effective in 1984.

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