

The Museum of Modern Art Department of Film

11 West 53 Street, New York, N.Y. 10019 Tel: 212-708-9400 Cable: MODERNART Telex: 62370 MODART

#18

ENTRANCE at 18 West 54 Street

for immediate release

RECENT VIDEO DOCUMENTARIES ON VIEW AT THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

RECENT DOCUMENTARIES, an exhibition of six videotapes on subjects as diverse as cruise missiles and New Orleans piano players, will be on view at The Museum of Modern Art starting March 11. The exhibition will continue in the Video Gallery through April 12.

Since the pioneering work of Edward R. Murrow and Fred Friendly in the 1950s, television has provided a principal forum for the documentary. Work considered too controversial for commercial broadcasters often has found an outlet on public television; WNET/Thirteen in New York became a leader in encouraging such documentaries when it initiated its Television Laboratory in 1972. Another major outlet, the annual documentary festival at Global Village in New York, has featured these and other documentary videotapes, which have exhibited a remarkable freedom in subject matter and style. Such freedom is apparent in the six videotapes in RECENT DOCUMENTARIES.

The Ends of the Earth: Plaquemines Parish by New Orleans documentarians Andrew Kolker and Louis Alvarez takes the viewer to the bayous of Louisiana, to a parish that the Perez family has dominated like a feudal domain for over sixty years. The tape ranges from scenes of daily life among the trappers and oystermen of the parish to newsreel footage of the larger-than-life Judge Leander H. Perez, whose political dynasty, recently the subject of a New York Times article, is only now declining.

Stevenson Palfi presents another view of Louisiana life in Piano Players Rarely Ever Play Together, featuring three generations of great New Orleans musicians: Tuts Washington, Professor Longhair, and Allen Toussaint. Palfi--who worked for 2½ years on the project--brought the three pianists together in the hope of arranging and recording a public performance. Professor Longhair died only days before the scheduled performance, and Palfi's tape includes deeply moving scenes of the jazz wake and funeral. Piano Players has won over a dozen awards, including honors at the Columbus, Philadelphia, and Houston international film festivals.

Another black artist, writer and activist Amiri Baraka (Leroi Jones), is the focus of In Motion: Amiri Baraka, by St. Clair Bourne, an hour-long documentary

more/

49

RECENT DOCUMENTARIES: Schedule

portrait that reveals both the public and private man. The videotape shows Baraka's personal and political lives coming together in his recent and controversial legal battles. Signed, Sealed and Delivered: Labor Struggle in the Post Office, by Eric Lewis, Tammy Gold, and Dan Gordon, documents the efforts of postal workers to change hazardous working conditions--conditions that came to national attention only after one worker was pulled into a conveyor belt and crushed to death.

El Dialogo (The Dialogue), by Karen Ranucci and Estella Bravo, is a record of the exchanges between Fidel Castro and representatives of the Cuban exile community in the U.S. The tape discusses both the achievements of the Dialogue--the release of political prisoners in Cuba, the easing of travel restrictions, the reunions of families--and the sometimes violent opposition of Cuban exiles who refuse any cooperation with Castro.

58 The nuclear arms race is the subject of Andrew Stern's How Much Is Enough?: Decision Making in the Nuclear Age. Featuring interviews with many of the most influential policy makers, the tape traces the arms buildup from the early 1960s to the present and charges that the decision-making process was "haphazard, capricious, arbitrary, and most of all deeply political." The work has won the Polk Award.

The Museum of Modern Art's Video Program is directed by Barbara London, Assistant Curator in The Department of Film. Video programs are made possible by funding from the National Endowment for the Arts and the New York State Council on the Arts.

#

COMPLETE SCHEDULE IS ATTACHED

For information, the public may call The Museum of Modern Art, (212) 708-9500.

For further press information, please contact Stuart Klawans, Film Press Representative, (212) 708-9752, The Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, NYC 10019.

RECENT DOCUMENTARIES: Schedule

March 11 - April 12, 1983

St. Clair Bourne, In Motion: Amiri Baraka. 1982. 55 minutes.
(March, Tuesday; April, Saturday)

Andrew Kolker and Louis Alvarez, The Ends of the Earth: Plaquemines Parish.
1982. 58 minutes.
(March, Thursday; April, Sunday)

Eric Lewis, Tammy Gold, and Dan Gordon, Signed, Sealed and Delivered: Labor Struggle
in the Post Office. 1981. 40 minutes.
(March, Friday; April, Monday)

Stevenson Palfi, Piano Players Rarely Ever Play Together. 1981. 58 minutes.
(March, Saturday; April, Tuesday)

Andrew Stern, How Much Is Enough?: Decision Making in the Nuclear Age. 1982.
58 minutes. Photographer, Robin Hirsh; Editor, Joan Chaffee; Director, Samuel R.
Shore.
(March, Sunday; April, Thursday)

Karen Ranucci and Estella Bravo, El Dialogo (The Dialogue). 1981. 57 minutes.
(March, Monday; April, Friday)

Each program plays continually during MoMA hours on scheduled day of the week in
the Video Gallery, Second Floor, West Wing.

MoMA's entrance is located at 18 West 54 Street. Closed Wednesdays. Open daily
11:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.; Thursday, open till 9:00 p.m.