

terns. Playing with the patterns in accompaniment to rock music makes for an effective and artistic presentation.

15) Prepare public service announcements, such as concise reminders to recycle paper, conserve wa-

ter, save electricity, etc.

16) Prepare announcements of activities. In this case, the announcer should be positioned in front of a rear projection screen, and slides related to the announcements should be projected.

The Tactics of the Truth

IRVING FALK

The date? 534 B.C. The place? Athens. The cast? Thespis, the actor, and Solon, the legislator. The setting? A backstage scene between the above as related by Plutarch and quoted by A.M. Nagler in his book Sources of Theatrical History. The action? Solon, living an old man's life of leisure, went to see a performance by Thespis. After the play, Solon spoke to Thespis and asked him if he were not ashamed to tell so many lies before such a multitude of people. Thespis replied that it was no harm to do so or to say so in a play. Whereupon Solon chastened him, ". . . if we honor and commend such play as this, we shall find it some day in our business."

There is a derived caveat from Solon's remarks which still ensnares us today. Point a video camera at a scene in a street, a park, a subway, and roll through that camera half-inch videotape, and behold, the truth will appear on that tape when it is played back. Nothing could be farther from the truth. To test the idea, simply ask the student video director to shoot the scene in various ways, such as from the top of a nearby building, from the sewer level in the street, from a subjective character point of view and the lesson will become clear

to him. The truth is elusive and always will be as the film Rashomon says, or as Pirandello says in Right You Are If You Think You Are. Illusion is the condition of life and communications technology has introduced more people to more lies than even Solon anticipated "in our business." Take that same student-shot scene above and add the techniques of editing to the finished master tape and the lies become compounded.

Very often teachers using video with their students in class criticize the video product with the remark that the student has nothing new to say. This is a common complaint. It is an impatience exhibited by the teacher not with what is said (Solon aside), but with the manner of saying it. There may be some unconscious hope that the student using videotape will uncover some new universal truth not realized before when what is really being asked for is a fresh restatement of what we already know. So many of the fundamental truths have been expressed in the past four thousand years. Thespis, as well as the teacher and the student, knew all the basic hopes and fears and frustrations and ironies and ecstasies and despairs which are mankind's. Yet to each age and to each one of us, they come as if they were being expressed for the first time. Seldom has even the greatest of artists been original in his work. What he feels, millions have felt and thought before him. We treasure the work of the great artist because of his manner of saying it. In language, in dance, in music, in painting, in videotape, mastery is achieved by filtering the old universals through the prism of the artist's personality so that we see the old truths with new vividness. Dante, Shakespeare, Milton, Donne, Goethe, Tolstoy, all said nothing about the deepest concerns of man which mankind did not already know or feel. But what they said, they said in such a way that mankind's apprehension of these concerns were quickened — our emotional and intellectual batteries were re-charged.

Process of Truth

Frustration has been a theme throughout the long history of creative work. Few artists have given it as eloquent expression as Shakespeare did in Macbeth's "Tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow."



Mary Sheridan