Public Access Birthday

On July 6, 7, 8 the first anniversary of Public Access Cable TV in Manhattan was celebrated. A coalition of educational, service and arts organizations and video groups worked in cooperation with both Sterling and Teleprompter Cable Companies with support from the New York State Council on the Arts. The event “Public Access Celebration” was designed to make General Public aware that Public Access existed, to expose its mechanisms and point out possibilities of its use.

There was an interconnect made between the two cable systems for the three day event and from 10am to midnight Public Access Channels “C” and “D” were programmed specifically for the Celebration. Channel “C” presented a retrospective of the years Public Access programming and Channel “D” was kept open to receive feedback tapes generated at viewing centers. Monitors were placed in 16 community centers (church, park, schools, libraries, hospitals as well as community organizations). Locations were chosen because they already had cable or were then cabled for free, specifically for the Celebration. This allowed General Public to see Public Access. Since there are only 100,000 cable subscribers, most people visiting the viewing centers were new to P.A. and cable. At the majority of these centers there were people familiar with 1/2" video and there was equipment available for General Public to initiate programming which was then bussed or subwayed up to Teleprompter's 79th St. studio and sent over the interconnect on P.A. channel “D”. People could then view their tapes coming over the cable.

Other elements of the event were: a live microwave broadcast on two of the days from Central Park which went out on the company channel 80, live studio programming from both Sterling and Teleprompter; live telephones; and a simulcast over radio station WNYC.

There will be a complete analysis of the event forthcoming in Radical Software by Survival Arts Media and Dumping Place. This is merely notice that something happened.

Survival Arts Media,
595 B'way., NY, NY 10012