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# Of mentors, teachers and pioneers: herstories of video and media art in Europe.

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*This file contains the full text paper and the extended abstract of the presentation.*

# Of Mentors, Teachers and Pioneers

## Herstories of video and media art in Europe

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### Abstract

In the 70s many women artists perceived video – that at the time was relatively new - as a tool free from the heavy patriarchal imprint of traditional artistic practices. Thanks to its technical specificities, it facilitated performance to camera and allowed working in intimate contexts. In several countries, the UK among them, many women artists who were experimenting with video were in Fine Art and Sculpture Departments. These environments were marked by a strong male culture and most of the teachers were still men. A few years later, women video pioneers would become teachers in the Art Schools and Universities in Europe, inspiring a new generation of artists – and, more importantly, women artists - to explore video and new media. Their relevance and influence as educators have, however, not been acknowledged in the histories of the medium and are yet to be properly investigated. An interesting and yet marginalised figure of artist and educator is for example that of the British artist Elsa Stansfield – who, as part of the duo Hooykaas/Stansfield, is not recognised as one of the most significant pioneers of video art in Europe. In 1980 Stansfield was invited to establish a Time Based Media Department at the postgraduate institute Jan van Eyck Academy in Maastricht, where she organised symposiums and exhibitions and invited some of the most important video artists and new media artists of the time including Bill Viola, Joan Jonas, Marina Abramović, Al Robins, and Toni Oursler. Stansfield's work as an educator and mentor influenced several artists who were students at the time at the Jan van Eyck Academy. For example, Swedish video and media artist Antonie Frank Grahmsdaughter recalled: "For me Elsa Stansfield was a great inspiration as a teacher. It was very important to meet female artists such as Joan Jonas and Marina Abramović, along with others who were invited to talk about their work at the Jan Van Eyck. It was also significant that they were female artists as we female students could identify with these female video artists in a film world dominated by men, which is still the case even today." This paper aims to question transmissions and teaching methods and approaches as well as discuss and reassess the legacy of a generation of women video and new media pioneers – including Stansfield, Nan Hoover, Tamara Krikorian, Catherine Elwes, and Elaine Shemilt - who became teachers and mentors in Art Schools and Academies in Europe and influenced deeply succeeding generations of media artists.

### Keywords

Video Art, Art and Feminism, Media Archeology, Pedagogy.

### 1. Introduction

The commercial emergence of the portable video recorder in the late 1960s and early 1970s provided a key tool for many artists wishing to utilise a medium that was inherently more flexible and accessible than film. Many women artists, in particular, who were exploring intimacy, identity and the body, found in the Sony Rover Portapack the perfect ally.

It is interesting that Sony decided to use a woman model for one of their Sony Rover Portapack advertisements, presumably just to stress its light weight. The apparatus was portrayed as a fashionable shoulder bag to sport with a modern mini dress and a bob haircut.

The perfect accessory for the modern young woman. And yet, as can readily be experienced and as has been reported by many, the video tape recorder was although portable still hefty and relatively heavy (despite what the clever Sony advertisement might suggest).

However, borrowing an expression coined by the Italian video pioneer Luca Maria Patella, video was a "weightless" medium: a medium that was free from the cultural and conceptual burden of traditional art techniques. As a new medium most importantly, video eluded the established male-dominated art history canon, which had marginalised and excluded women artists and had been marked by a patriarchal gaze that had made women into models and objects. Therefore, video became particularly advantageous for those women artists who were exploring themes such as identity, the role of women in society and approaches to the gaze that had emerged during Second Wave feminism: it offered a unique platform and allowed immediacy and intimacy, thereby enabling women artists to incorporate elements such as nudity and the human body into their practice.

If teaching has always been the Cinderella of Academia and though very limited space has been devoted to, or attention paid to the history of how subjects were taught and art schools and departments developed, the knowledge to be had about women teachers and their key role in the teaching of video in the 1970s and 1980s (when it was a relatively new medium) is particularly limited.<sup>1</sup>

In this paper I will focus on some germinal case studies of pioneering women artists who began teaching video and media

<sup>1</sup> No specific study has as yet been dedicated to the subject. Nonetheless, passages and brief mentions on the role of women artists teaching or directing video programmes can be found either in histories

of video art or in biographies dedicated to specific artists. An example of this can be found in Jennifer Steetskamp. 2017.

art in the 1970s and 1980s, their influence on their students – in particular on female students, and the enduring impact of their legacies. In addition, I will discuss some of the challenges and obstacles faced by young and early-career women artists as they approached video within the context of art schools, with limited support and few role models, challenges and obstacles which remain largely unexplored.

This paper aims to address these important issues by analysing case studies from the United Kingdom and the Netherlands – where the teaching of video art was particularly active – with some references to other European contexts. Through this survey, which is part of an ongoing research project, the intention is to lay the groundwork for other, more extensive studies.<sup>2</sup>

## 2.1. Context

In the UK in the 1970s, many women video pioneers were attending programmes in Fine Art and Sculpture Departments where the chairs and most of the teachers and students were men. Such Departments were deeply affected by a decidedly male attitude.<sup>3</sup>

At the time, many schools in the UK provided opportunities to access the video apparatus itself, but only some offered training on how to use it or assistance from technicians, depending on the facilities available. At the forefront of this movement, there was the Maidstone College of Art in Kent, England, where ‘godfather of video art’ David Hall established the audio-visual workshop in 1972 and in 1975 founded the first time-based media degree course in UK. In any case Art Schools were key to accessing the apparatus. As Cate Elwes has pointed out, you had to be attached to an Art School to lay your hands on to a video recorder either as a student or as a lecturer (Elwes 2015).

In any case, we could argue that crucial training on the video apparatus was in fact happening outside of the art schools. Many artists learnt how to use or expanded their practical knowledge of the ½ inch reel-to-reel EIAJ format, simply experimenting with it and relying on knowledge-sharing and peer-to-peer feedback. The medium was evolving quite fast (the ½ inch open reel format was soon replaced by the ¾ inch cassette-based U-MATIC format, which made editing possible, and the two systems ran in parallel for a few years) and knowledge exchange among artists, curators and gallerists was crucial. Organisations like the London Video Arts, for example, facilitated the creation of video communities, while various festivals and other events offered invaluable opportunities to discuss theoretical and practice-based approaches and the specificity of the medium.<sup>4</sup>

In some art schools in the UK, opportunities to receive training and feedback on video were likewise provided by guest lectures on speakers’ programmes.

In the 1970s and early 1980s, Art Schools in the UK – as in many countries and more in general in the art world – were

particularly male dominated. “All the studios were run by men”, observed the British feminist video artist and author Catherine Elwes, describing the situation at Farnham<sup>5</sup> and later at the Slade School of Art where she was a student (Elwes 2014; for the quote: Elwes 2020). Drawing upon her own experience, Elwes recalls that at the time there were very few women among the part-time tutors at the Slade, and those that were employed there for the most part had only fractional, sessional or meagre part-time contracts. Lise Rhodes, for example, was teaching at the Slade but “very infrequently” (Elwes 2015). Nonetheless, some were able to offer Elwes important feedback in her first year. At the time she was still making objects, before her transition to performance and then video. None of her women tutors specialised in video or performance but Elwes was adamant about the importance of being able to share with them her autobiographical work in an intimate and respectful relationship, and she also emphasised the support that other women students were receiving from them (Elwes 2020).

Elwes also pointed out the importance of the women tutors being aware of current feminist discourse, participating sometimes in feminist collectives or groups and admitting the position of privilege that the patriarchy retained – something that she believed her male tutors at the time would have been unlikely to acknowledge (Elwes 1979; Elwes 2014).

The oppressive patriarchal culture at the Slade School of Art and the scarcity of women tutors drove Elwes to complain in 1979 (fig. 1). It was then that British performance artist Stuart Brisley allowed Elwes to spend as she saw fit the entire budget for the visiting lecture programme. She was thus able to create a programme that reflected much of the most avant-garde feminist experimentation with media of the time inviting pioneers such as Rose Garrard and Tina Keane – who were already working with film and video with a performative approach – and Rose Finn-Kelcey – who was using moving image in her practice – as guest lecturers. This innovative approach unfortunately would not be followed up and did not change the “balance” in the School but it is documented in an article by Elwes herself, that year, very poignantly entitled *The Feminist in Art School – a recent view*, which featured in the launch issue of *Feminist Art News*.<sup>6</sup> (Elwes 1979).

<sup>2</sup> I conducted an initial reflection on some of the issues discussed in this paper in my research on the AHRC funded research project *EWVA European Women’s Video Art in the 70s and 80s*. See Laura Leuzzi, Elaine Shemilt, Stephen Partridge (eds.), *EWVA European Women’s Video Art*, John Libbey Publishing, New Barnet, 2019.

This paper develops from a paper published in Leuzzi 2023.

<sup>3</sup> This can be observed for example in several interviews collected during the EWVA project available at [www.ewva.ac.uk](http://www.ewva.ac.uk), accessed 30 November 2021, including Catherine Elwes and Elaine Shemilt.

<sup>4</sup> I would like to thank for the insightful conversations with him, Prof. Stephen Partridge (September 2023).

<sup>5</sup> Later Farnham School of Art and Guildford School of Art merged to form West Surrey College of Art & Design.



Fig. 1 Slade School of Art, 1979. Courtesy of Catherine Elwes.

In 1982, Tina Keane started lecturing in Film and Video at Central Saint Martins College of Arts & Design in London. On her influence and legacy and that of other women artists, Malcolm Le Grice has commented: "During the 1970s and '80s, the teaching of women artists – including Tina Keane, Anna Thew, Anne Tallentire, Joanna Greenhill and Pam Skelton – was one of Saint Martins' major contributions to art education. Their influence helped create a lasting shift in the gender profile in British art, and Central Saint Martins in general maintained a committed concern for gender, ethnicity and sexual politics throughout the Thatcher years (Le Grice 2011)."

In addition, British video pioneer Tamara Krikorian taught at Maidstone and Newcastle.

The gender imbalance marked art schools throughout the UK. For example, at the Winchester School of Art - Scottish artist and video pioneer Elaine Shemilt recalls the lack of female tutors and the predominance of male students in her programme. From 1974 to 1976, she was a student in the Sculpture Department – marked deeply by patriarchal culture - and began to experiment with video as an impermanent part of larger installations and performances, and in 1975 her work was selected for the famous *Video Show* at the Serpentine Gallery (Shemilt 2020).

In her memories of the time, Shemilt, although she praises the access the School provided to the apparatus at the same time remarks on the lack of actual training. The lecturers' programmes in her view were highly beneficial insofar as they exposed the students to different approaches. For instance, when subsequently she became a student at the Royal College of Art (1976-1979) and Susan Hiller contributed as a guest lecturer, Shemilt recalls being offered positive feedback by a prominent feminist artist for herself and her colleagues (Shemilt 2020).

This experience as a female student in a male-dominated department and her approach to media transformed Shemilt's approach when she herself started to teach printmaking. Analysing the nature of her practice back then - which involved among other things the incorporating of a multimedia approach to video and film in larger installations and performances - we can appreciate how deeply it influenced her own approach to teaching: "My approach was for students to abandon the idea that they were sculptors or painters or video artists/ whatever. The important issue was to think of themselves as artists first

and foremost. Technique is just technique at the end of the day (Shemilt 2020)." At the time, several artists who were experimenting with video informed by their own diverse experiences and expertise deployed video as part of a more complex and integrated artistic practice that might include several media, including film, photography, performance, printmaking, painting and sculpture. Similarly, Maria Gloria Bicocchi – who established the pioneering video centre *art/tapes/22* in Florence in 1972/3 – has stated on several occasions that the approach that characterised the many conceptual Italian artists who came now and then to experiment with video at *art/tapes/22*, were often not interested in the specificity of the medium or any other technical aspect and considered video to be just another a tool to record a performance or to enhance their artistic research. They did not refer to themselves as video artists – and sometimes rejected that label as unduly "restrictive" - but simply as artists (Bicocchi 2015: 96-97).

## 2.2. Stansfield at the Jan Van Eyck Academie

Art School and Academies in different part of Europe started designing and offering courses or programmes that included or featured prominently video art only in the early 1980s and, interestingly, in a few - but very important – instances, women video pioneers were especially prominent in this context.

One of the most significant programmes was in the Netherlands, where, in 1980, the Scottish video pioneer Elsa Stansfield was invited – at the recommendation of Wiels Smals, the then director of *The Appel* - to create the Audio/Video Department for Time Based Media - soon renamed "Time Based Arts Studio" – which opened in September 1980 at the Jan Van Eyck Academie in Maastricht (Jennifer Steetskamp, 2017).

The Academie offered a postgraduate one-year programme structured as an "open workshop" for artists who had already received training and who were able to access the workshops at the Academie to develop their independent projects.<sup>6</sup>

The Audio/Video Department at the Academie was established thanks to Stansfield's international reputation as a European pioneer video and media artist. In the 1970s, Stansfield had pioneered video as part of the duo Hooykaas/Stansfield and had showed internationally. Her authority and experience were beyond dispute, and this enabled her to put at the service of the Academie her extensive international network. She was also familiar with advanced academic programmes in the field.

In 1978, for example, she had been awarded the first video bursary awarded by the Arts Council of Britain at the abovementioned Maidstone College of Art - a leader in the country in terms of the availability of technology and of expert technicians. The programme at Maidstone was attended by several artists who experimented with media at an international level, Stephen Partridge and David Cunningham among them. The Maidstone College programme could well have left a lasting impression on Stansfield at the time and may have provided a

<sup>6</sup> A one-year extension could be granted.

model or in any case a source of inspiration for her setting up of the Audio/Video Department at the Jan Van Eyck.<sup>7</sup>

The postgraduate programme at the Jan Van Eyck Academie was conceived by Stansfield as an open platform that stimulated the participants “to develop autonomous and independent research”. The Audio/Video Department adopted an expanded notion of “Time-Based Media”, which encompassed a range of different moving image art forms as well as performance and installation, in order to pursue “their integration with Fine Arts”. As detailed in a leaflet from 1987, Time-Based Media included: “film/performances, video tapes and installations, audio works and installations using any of these media individually or combined with any other media” (*Time-Based Media* 1988).

Stansfield hoped that the Audio/Video Department would welcome artists who wanted to “work with these media, equally in the areas of research and production”. Stanfield was therefore framing the programme so as to open it up as a tool for both practising artists and media professionals, foreseeing a future in which these knowledges and skills would provide opportunities for both.<sup>8</sup>

Stanfield was also profoundly aware of the difficulty faced at the time by those wishing to sell and distribute video works – an issue that in the UK had been at the heart of London Video Art’s support for artists. Consequently, the Department encouraged the production and distribution of the participants’ works and, from 1980, Stanfield set about creating a video/audiotheque (*teek*) in which were collected works produced by the participants at the Academie as well as works by guest lecturers and artists, and also works purchased from other collections and archives, creating a pivotal resource for students and researchers numbering hundreds of different pieces.

At the same time, Stanfield persuaded those at the Academie to view and familiarise themselves with the most advanced and pioneering experimentation with the medium, and this at a time when access was quite limited, and video and media art were mostly still excluded from the major museum and exhibition circuits. The programme of screenings and seminars at the Video/Sound Departments – structured with a good gender balance – allowed the participants to view, discuss, and analyse pioneering work in the field and be exposed to a wide variety of approaches to the medium. The participants also had the opportunity to take part in trips to relevant exhibitions and museums in the Netherlands (the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam, for example), and in neighbouring countries, such as Germany and Belgium where video art had begun to flourish.

Possibly inspired by what she had seen at Maidstone School of Art, Stanfield ensured that technicians were available to offer support and assistance as well as to pass on skills to the participants, who were able to individually book studios in which to develop their own work and experiment with the medium.

Much as in the UK in the 1970s, the presence of invited guest lecturers at the Academie was of crucial importance. Thanks to Stansfield’s international network of artists and institutions, the

programme included some of the most prominent video and media artists of the time from mainland Europe and the USA, including Julius, Madelon Hooykaas, Ulrike Rosenbach (who in the 1970s and 1980s lectured internationally and in 1989 became Professor for Media Art at the Academy of Fine Arts Saar, Saarbrücken), Joan Jonas, John Latham, Marina Abramović, Nan Hoover (who from 1987 to 1997 taught at the Dusseldorf Art Academy), and many others.

Just six months after her appointment, Stansfield organised a major event, *Maart 1981 [March 1981]*, which combined video installations, single channel videos, performances, discussions, and lectures. Those participating contributed to the organisation of the event and had the opportunity to show their own works – produced in those early months at the Video Department – alongside some of the most pioneering video practitioners from the UK, Belgium, Germany, and the Netherlands. Artists invited included Dutch video artist Lydia Schouten, Belgian video artist Lili Dujourie, British video artists Mick Hartney, Ursula Wevers, and David Hall.

In the abovementioned context of the Netherlands, where it was rare to have the chance to view much video art – and in particular video installations – *Video Maart* acted as a catalyst for the contemporary debate on video art as well as a key resource for the students’ practice.

In her brief text for the event, Stansfield pinpointed how the video scene in the Netherlands was at its early stages in comparison to neighbouring countries, in part owing to the lack of specialised departments and programmes within the country and the sheer difficulty of gaining access to equipment. She explained that video was usually just perceived as “an extension of some other department and rarely as a fine art option” (*Maart 1981*): this statement, as we noted above, would apply to some art schools in the UK too in the 1970s and early 1980s.

Jan Van Eyck Academie in her view had shown great “foresight” in setting up the Video studio.

At *Video Maart*, lectures and discussions with invited guests were organised to discuss views on and approaches to video art. This provided a rare opportunity to share experiences at a time when such events were few and far between.

Later on, in 1984, Stansfield also organised a symposium at the Jan Van Eyck to accompany the famous exhibition *Het Lumineuze Beeld* (The Luminous Image) at the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam.

From interviews with Hooykaas and other available materials, it is plain that Elsa Stansfield saw her teaching activity and her role as head of department and educator as an integral part of her practice. In 1988, in her introduction to the exhibition *Het magnetische beeld* (The magnetic image), we can read “Over the past seven years, beside the production and presentation of my own art, which I have done in collaboration with Madelon Hooykaas; I have tried to give navigational directions to those artists at the Jan Van Eyck who have undertaken an uncharted journey across the magnetic field of the time-based media.” (*Het magnetische beeld* 1988).

<sup>7</sup> I thank Madelon Hooykaas and Stephen Partridge for the exchange on the topic. See Madelon Hooykaas, private communication, 11 Oct 2023.

<sup>8</sup> In Stansfield’s view, in the future these mediums would provide a wide range of opportunities for professionals and artists to reach new

publics: “via cable, local radio/television stations and also through presentations of interdisciplinary work to not exclusively art-oriented audiences.” *Time-Based Media* 1987.



Stansfield's words have a profound resonance today through the highly evocative use of two images in this brief excerpt: the navigational directions for her teaching style, hinting at a gentle pedagogical approach, whereby she indicated possible paths to students, but respected their freedom; and the 'uncharted journey', which could refer both to the complex career embarked upon by her students but also to the unexplored territories they were approaching through their experimentation in media. In my view, these metaphors capture conceptually Stansfield's pedagogical approach: her way of fostering students' autonomy, in line with the more general stance evident at Jan Van Eyck Academie.

On Stansfield's teaching style, Hooykaas commented: "Elsa Stansfield had an unusual way of tutoring the participants. She let them feel equal and often did not comment on the work but asked questions (Hooykaas 2020)." We can infer that Stansfield promoted a peer-to-peer horizontal approach that resonates with much of the feminist approach to teaching. Students were gently led to find their own solutions through a sort of Socratic process. Analysing Stansfield's own words and Hooykaas' testimony on her teaching style, what emerges overall is a profound respect for and consideration of students as professionals in training.

Stansfield left in 1991, and in 1992 the Academie was restructured into three departments - Fine Art, Design and Theory (Steetskamp 2017).

### 2.3. Legacy

Among the video artists who attended the Jan Van Eyck in the 1980s mention should be made of the Swedish video artist Antonie Frank Grahmsdaughter.

Frank Grahmsdaughter recalls the profound legacy and influence of Stansfield over that generation at the Academie, and praises more in general the good gender balance and the focus on women artists. In particular, she commented: "Elsa Stansfield was aware in a way I had not encountered before, of lifting and supporting female students". And continues "I felt that it was important as inspiration and identification to have a female teacher...It was absolutely crucial that I was assigned a place and was admitted to the Time-Based Art Program at Jan Van Eyck Academie... Elsa Stansfield had deliberately created a generous significant platform with a strong female influence. I think the new medium meant a lot to me and to be able to shape my stories but also the female identification and inspiration based on the fact that my teachers were women and worked with video art, the female language, the female narrative and the gaze. I felt that we started from the same experiences as women in our stories, in our portrayals" (Frank Grahmsdaughter 2020).

Stansfield evidently played a major role in young Grahmsdaughter's artistic development and training and in that of her peers. In fact Stansfield, at the same time, herself served as a deeply influential role model, being a highly accomplished, internationally renowned artist, continuing to work in the field, collaborating with Hooykaas in the 1980s but showing also a genuine ability to support and encourage her students and in particular young women artists, all the while adopting a feminist approach to pedagogy and promoting gender equality in the programme she devised at the Jan Van Eyck.

Stansfield/Hooykaas' own practice and their approach to space through video – referring to works such as the installation

*Compass* (1984) – exerted a particularly strong influence on Frank Grahmsdaughter's installation *Transit* (1986, fig. 2).

Commenting on the abovementioned lively programme of guest lecturers at the Jan Van Eyck, Grahmsdaughter paid tribute to the visiting lecturers, some of whom left a long-enduring impression on her and her colleagues: "I still carry with me many of these experiences such as the workshop with Elsa Stansfield & Madelon Hooykaas' workshop, and with Marina Abramović" (Frank Grahmsdaughter 2020).



Fig. 2 Antonie Frank Grahmsdaughter, *Transit*, 1986

Later on, Antonie Grahmsdaughter started herself to teach at the University of Arts, Crafts and Design in Stockholm, where she organised the first international screening of International Video Art. Following Stansfield's approach, Frank Grahmsdaughter found it important to expose her students to video artworks by women pioneers. While teaching Grahmsdaughter visited the Academie with her own students and had the chance to meet and be reunited with her teacher Elsa Stansfield.

In 2017, artist and researcher Hagen Verleger developed a feminist collaborative project at the Jan Van Eyck. He renamed the Jan Van Eyck Academie as the Margaret Van Eyck and all the studios (until April 2020), which are dedicated to men to women artists: Anne, Elsa, Luzia, Thérèse, and Wilhelmina. (Verleger 2018)

And although admittedly for a brief time only, this project flagged the institutional gender imbalance, giving visibility to those women artists who unfortunately today are still kept out of the limelight.

This paper demonstrates the importance of the under-researched, pioneering contribution that women video artists made to the development of video as an art form, in their role as students and in their teaching practice and their leading of educational programmes. Some themes seem to be recurrent in the testimonies and in the documents discussed: the importance of women mentoring women and providing role models; promoting a feminist perspective and approach to using video; an «expanded» approach to video art as an art form including single channel video, performance, and installation; the intimacy allowed by having a woman tutor/teacher to share personal stories that feed into feminist works; and a feminist pedagogical approach.

Several women pioneers were active as teachers at some point and this aspect of their activity is still neglected and too little researched. This applies, for example, to artists such as Lydia Schouten, who had participated in the *Maart 1981* programme and in 1988 also started teaching at the Artez University of the Arts in Arnhem (The Netherlands; Schouten 2020). Further research would therefore make it possible to trace these activities in the wider European context, thereby reassessing the influence and legacies of women artists in future histories of video art and pedagogy.

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# Of mentors, teachers and pioneers: herstories of video and media art in Europe

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## Extended Abstract

In the 70s, many women artists perceived video – that at the time was relatively new - as a tool free from the heavy patriarchal imprint of traditional artistic practices. Thanks to its technical specificities, it facilitated performance to camera and allowed working in intimate contexts.

In several countries, including the UK, many women artists experimenting with video were in Fine Art and Sculpture Departments. These environments were marked by a strong male culture and most of the teachers were still men. A few years later, women video pioneers would become teachers in the Art Schools and Universities in Europe, inspiring a new generation of artists – and, more importantly, women artists - to explore video and new media. Their relevance and influence as educators have, however, not been acknowledged in the histories of the medium and are yet to be properly investigated.

An interesting and yet marginalised example of an artist and educator is the British artist Elsa Stansfield - who, as part of the duo Hooykaas/Stansfield, is now recognised as one of the most significant pioneers of video art in Europe. In 1980 Stansfield was invited to establish a Time-Based Media Department at the postgraduate institute Jan van Eyck Academy in Maastricht, where she organised symposia and exhibitions, inviting some of the most important video artists and new media artists of the time - including Bill Viola, Joan Jonas, Marina Abramović, Al Robins and Toni Oursler.

Stansfield's work as an educator and mentor influenced several artists who were students of the Academy at the time. For example, Swedish video and media artist Antonie Frank Grahmsdaughter recalled: "For me, Elsa Stansfield was a great inspiration as a teacher. It was very important to meet female artists such as Joan Jonas and Marina Abramović, along with others who were invited to talk about their work at the Jan Van Eyck. It was also significant that they were female artists, as we female students could identify with these female video artists in a film world dominated by men, which is still the case even today."

This paper aims to question transmissions, teaching methods and approaches. It also aims to discuss and reassess the legacy of a generation of women video and new media pioneers – including Stansfield, Nan



Hoover, Tamara Krikorian, Maria Vedder and Ulrike Rosenbach - who became teachers and mentors in art schools and academies in Europe, and who deeply influenced successive generations of media artists.

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