

"UNDENIABLY SENSATIONAL FEATURE"

By Paine Knickerbocker
San Francisco's most recent novelty, which may well be a significant pioneering demonstration of a new documentary and/or entertainment medium, opened over the weekend at the studio of Video Free America, 442 Shotwell street.

MET

"Carol & Ferd" began on Hayes street when Ginsberg (not related to Allen, although "Kaddish," based on Allen's poem, has been presented by American Free Video in New York) and Sweeney met Carol Rowe and Ferd Eggan, who were making erotic films at the Sutter Cinema.

Ferd was a homosexual and junkie, Carol straight but unconventional. Both were planning on getting married. Richard, a former lover of Carol, was expected momentarily, to attempt to talk them out of marrying. On the periphery was Gary, a homosexual friend of Ferd. Carol suggested that a movie be made of the situation. It took a year to film, because it required that long for various events to happen. "Carol & Ferd" shows what actually was taking place, not what took place in the past.

Eight monitors are used for this undeniably sensational feature, which its makers call "an underground documentary soap opera." It is often briefly be-

wildering; at moments the candor of the participants and the invasion (which they invited) of their privacy are startling, and the relationships which develop are continually interesting.

Ferd is revealed as the stronger of the two, which is not puzzling, but it is unexpected.

BRECHT

This continuing story of Carol and Ferd is all told in closeups, and often the sound is unintelligible. Many scenes show the cameraman observing and filming an intimate scene, a device Brecht might have approved to counteract any theatricality one might suspect. On occasions, the participants are shy, begging for a pause, or are not prepared for the intrusion. Carol suddenly bursts into tears at one moment, which is irresistibly moving.

Seeing the action — inevitably tedious, revealing and dramatic in tandem — is an unusual experience.

Discussions are so personal, one feels like an eavesdropper, but visually, with the eight images, it is fascinating. At times it resembles a split screen, at others, as if regarding the action through a special prism, and still again it becomes a chorus: eight identical images rubbing a nose simultaneously, in flawless choreography.

Video Free America
Novel Medium Opens in S.F.

Now in New York!