

# The Independents

## by Berenice Reynaud

*Editor's Note: We hope you'll enjoy these exciting new video additions: since New Video's inception, it has been our passion, and joy, to dig up hard-to-find, important and obscure works that are of interest to sophisticated viewers. With few exceptions, the artist's works reviewed here by Berenice Reynaud are available exclusively from New Video.*

In the 60's a small group of New York-based independent filmmakers got together to define, promote, and advocate the birth of a "new cinema." They wanted to use "the medium" to express new aesthetic concerns, to find new ways to tell a story. Twenty years later, New York has become the capital of a new style of "independent cinema": a cinema that is independent not only of the "majors," but of traditional independent producers as well.

In short, it is a cinema of authors who have set out to explore, in all possible directions, the narrative, visual, and poetic possibilities of the youngest of the seven arts. The New Video Independent Film and Video Series is a sampling of various currents in "new cinema" filmmaking.

## Filmmakers

### **Ericka Beckman: OUT OF HAND and YOU THE BETTER feasts for the eyes**

The fourth woman represented in New Video's current selection is Ericka Beckman with two short movies, *Out of Hand*, and *You The Better* (the latter was shown at the 1983 New York Film Festival). Beckman's narratives are not based on dialogues, not even on "stories" in the conventional sense of the term, but on rhythm, color, props, movements, drawings and special effects (double exposures and matte techniques). Objects, brilliantly painted with the Bauhaus colors (red, blue, yellow), appear and disappear according to the framing and editing pace. Performers establish relationships based on collective games (baseball, etc...). Such an aggressive, cheerful competitiveness can be read as the filmmaker's vision of American society. Beckman's visual art background is immediately perceptible: both shorts are feasts for the eyes.