

DOMESTIC DREAMS

The 'kitchen-sink' cinema of the Sixties may have combined realism and poetry, but rarely has washing-up featured so literally in film-making. *Digital Creative Arts* spoke to Toby Kaufmann-Buhler about how his Adobe Design Achievement Award-winning piece, *Dishscape*, has brought the domestic drama firmly into the digital age



DCA: How did you first become interested in making films?

TKB: I began studying art in 1997 at the University of South Florida. Before this I had considered going into to go into art with the assertion that a music degree is just as useless as an art degree! I came to England and started the Communication, Art & Design course at the Royal College of Art in 2001.

I became interested in video through working with photography and sound. After a couple of years doing

this, I began to see video as a natural extension of my

DCA: What hardware and software do you use? TKB: My DV camera is a Sony DCR-TRV900. I've also a Minolta S414 digital stills camera, a Nikon N6006 35mm, a Canon Canonet QL17 and a SX-70 Polaroid

structure which in the end will inevitably be taken

DCA: How do you categorise yourself and your work? TKB: I shy away from the title 'film-maker', as it suggests some usage of film as a material. I would probably opt for something like 'digital artist' because this describes the basis of my current activity. I work with images and sound, primarily in the digital domain, but sometimes I feel that the digital world is

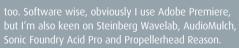
DCA: So, as a film-maker who rejects the title, how

do you feel about the medium of digital video itself; is it just cinema's cheaper cousin?

TKB: No, I feel that digital video is a development that has a distinctive character all its own. When I first came to video what I wanted from it was a way to put sound to images. With digital video the soundtrack is







DCA: Where did the idea for *Dishscape* come from? **TKB:** I had it in my mind that I wanted to create a

body of work based in a domestic setting. So I set up the camera in front of the dish rack and left it there. I recorded the whole day's washing-up activity.

The idea was that from the very beginning, there would be a change of 'landscape' within the frame and through the sound as well, which would render the field as an ever-changing tableau. The arm and hand,

at a level playing field with the image, which I feel makes it the right medium for me. I've had very little experience with film, but the little I've worked with it

DCA: What inspires you?

TKB: In *Dishscape* the movement and the sound really drew me into working with the material. In *Echo Tense*, an earlier piece, it was again the movement (of the trains, the people, and other images) that fascinated me, along with my collaborator's music. *A Fixed Existence* (still moves) was inspired by the idea of creating a fantastic narrative out of everyday

DCA: What are your ambitions?

TKB: I'd like to find an outlet for my work, in artistic and possibly commercial ventures, which will allow it there is a solid creative integrity. I'd also like to continue working on sound projects and, in the future, establish a studio for collaborative practice.

If Toby's work has inspired you, or you're keen to catch Dishscape parts two and three, you can contact him at tkbuhler@yahoo.co.uk.