

Buzz

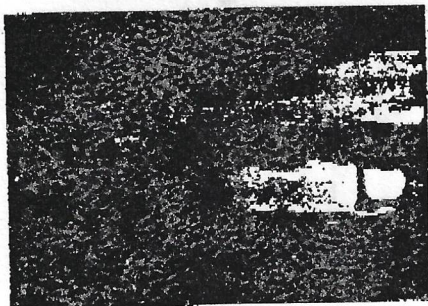
MTV, Sun., 9 P.M.

It's part documentary, part music

video and part acid trip. For a half-hour every week, it turns your TV set into a mind-bending kaleidoscope of rapid-fire visuals, transporting you to the very edge of TV's outer limits.

It's a new MTV "current events" series called *Buzz*, and it's like nothing you've ever seen before. Slated for debut this April, each episode stitches together bite-sized celebrity interviews (David Byrne, Terence Trent D'Arby, Dennis Hopper) with snippets of weird, dadaistic imagery (old B-movie clips, computer animation, newsreel footage) to create a lightning-fast, surrealistic video montage—sort of like *60 Minutes* as written by Franz Kafka and directed by Federico Fellini. There are supposed to be "journalistic" themes underlying each segment—a Danish experimental theater troupe, computer hackers—but everything whizzes by at such a breakneck pace you're not really expected to keep track of it all.

MTV has been tinkering with non-musical programming in recent years (game shows, comedies, newscasts), but *Buzz* is by far its most serious venture yet—and that may prove to be a problem. Teeny-boppers tuning in to catch the latest Paula Abdul vid-



Buzzing by at breakneck speed.

eo probably won't find this sort of artsy experiment in televisual aesthetics all that appealing.

For a fringe audience of video-savvy eggheads, though, *Buzz* will be a blessing—a fascinating journey into television's unexplored visual potential. MTV deserves credit for putting a show like this on the air: While most networks still pander to the lowest common denominator, this one takes chances, pushing the envelope of broadcasting to bold new limits.

New York freelancer Ben Svetkey frequently writes about TV.

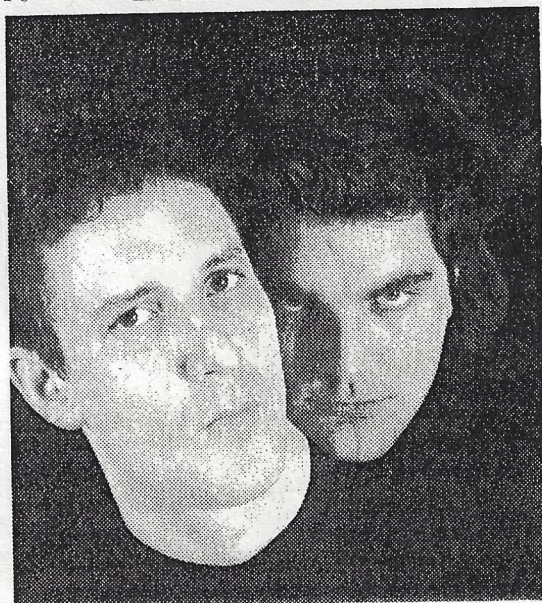
Buzzing with life

television

Channel 4 has linked with Initial Film and Television to provide the UK's first terrestrial outlet for an MTV American programme, *BUZZ* - out this Friday at 6.30 pm.

BUZZ has been especially adapted and anglicised from the successful American version for British screens. It is a magazine-style programme full of views, news and culture from around the world. Each show begins and ends with "Global Panels" compiled from the man on the street covering topics like, "What is beautiful?", "Who and what is sexy?", "How do you view racism?" etc. The first of the series opens with a teaser, "Everybody is different - Everyone is the same - *BUZZ* is about people, the future, and change all over the world."

Throughout the programme pieces of data are fired at you, such as "the average number of words a person speaks in one minute is 180", "the chances that a deep breath inhaled today will contain a molecule of Hitler's breath is 99 in 100". Art slots include "Reality theatre" which moves body and soul unlike classic theatre which is dead. As for music, controversial music guru puts in his opinion and heavy



Buzz's trendy co-producers: Jon Klein and Mark Pellington

metal rocker Jon Bon Jovi adds his comments on life for *BUZZ*, "Life is like a big Old Jersey submarine sandwich. See it's big, it's exciting, it's inviting. You really don't know what is in it but hopefully if you're lucky it goes down good, stays down and you enjoy it." Deeply philosophical stuff. And all I can say on *BUZZ* is if you don't watch it you'll probably regret it.

Anna Joseph