im Asch began his ethnographic film career in 1959 as an editor on John Marshall’s Ju’hoansi (!Kung Bushmen) films at Harvard’s Peabody Museum. During the 1960s, he worked documenting the educational experiments that led to the first anthropology curriculum for elementary schools, *Man: A Course of Study*, inspired by Jerome Bruner. In 1968 and 1971, Asch joined Napoleon Chagnon to film the Yanomamö Indians in Venezuela. The films they made have been used in classrooms around the world and won numerous awards. From 1975 on, he worked with his wife Patsy Asch and several anthropologists to document rituals, oratory, and large celebrations in Indonesia, in an acclaimed body of ethnographic film shown internationally and rewarded with prizes such as the Grand Prix du Film Ethnographique for *A Celebration of Origins* in 1993.

**Asch and the CVA**

In 1982, Asch joined the faculty at the University of Southern California where he served as the Director of the Center for Visual Anthropology (CVA) until his death in 1994. Under his direction, the CVA collaborated with USC’s School of Cinema-Television to create a graduate program unique in its emphasis on both textual and visual media as components of an academically grounded thesis.

**Asch and Ethnographic Film**

Asch’s impact on ethnographic film has been profound. His commitment to collaboration between filmmakers and anthropologists, and to producing study guides that package films for classroom use, contributed to a pedagogic shift from simply screening films to incorporating audio-visual media into university research and teaching. Asch developed a method of filming single events or sequences to produce footage that could be edited into a larger film, but could also be used by researchers and teachers in ways the filmmaker had not conceived. Asch trained a generation of ethnographic filmmakers and, over the course of his career, worked to encourage the Yanomamö, his most famous film subjects, to use media to convey their own culture to the wider world. In what turned out to be his last years, he collaborated with Venezuelan anthropologists to teach the Yanomamö to use and maintain their own video equipment and provided ongoing support to their initiatives. Since his death, the CVA has continued his pioneering work of incorporating audio-visual media into anthropological research and teaching.