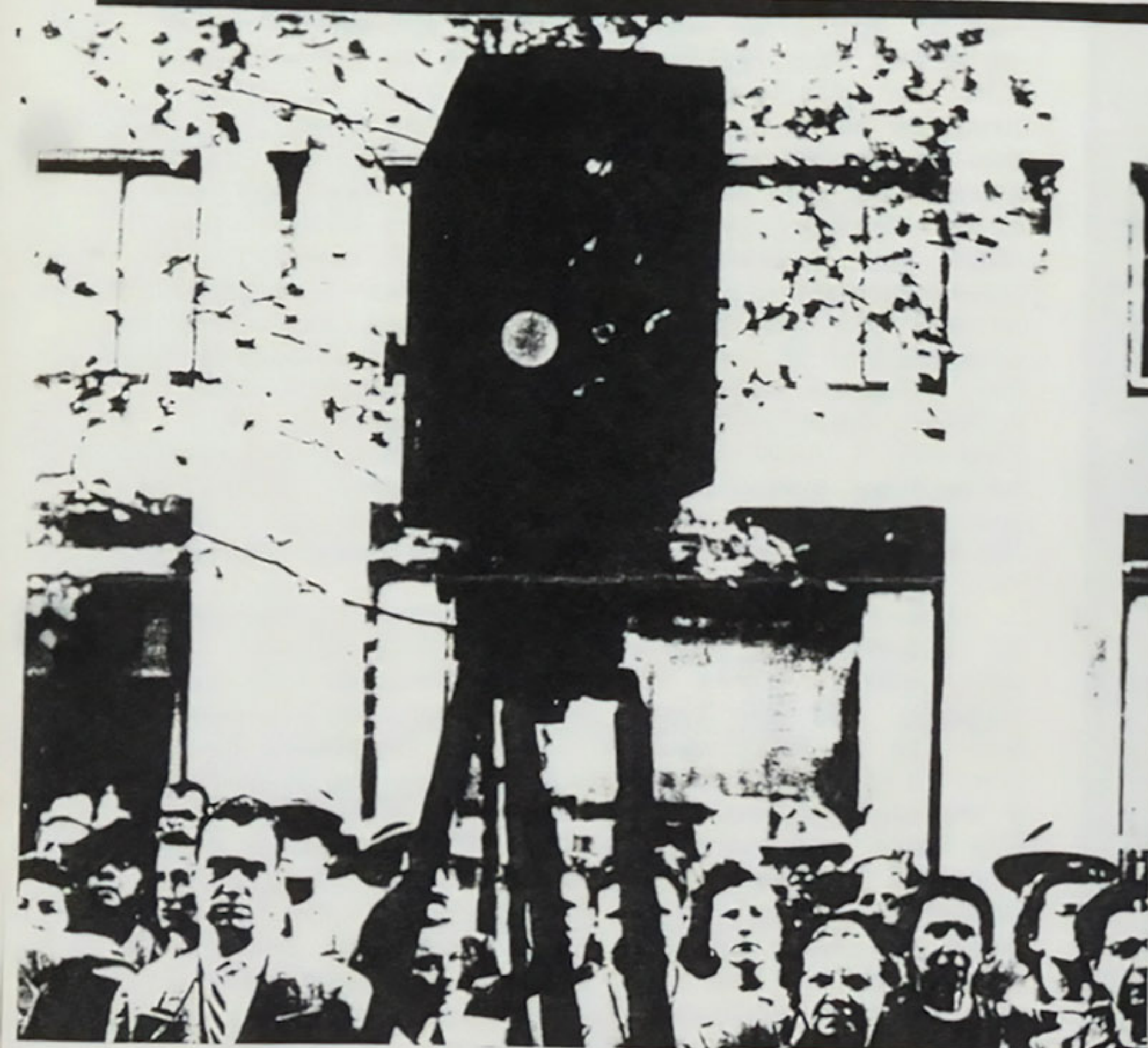


SUPER EIGHT

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE MELBOURNE SUPER-8 FILM GROUP NO. 14 MAY '87



OPEN SCREENING Tuesday, April 14

The films

- Made by Roland Gallois
- The Perils of Paula by Damien Grant
- Sub 6B by Bundaberg Super-8 Film Group
- Auto-Portrait by Simon Cooper
- Five Worlds by Murray Cadan
- Untitled by Nick Ostrovskis

* * * * *

Auto-Portrait by Simon Cooper

Scraps of film, scraps of a life. B Empty? No disguises. A sincerity arrives through despair. Film-making of the p viewed again, impotent, detached images, th fore silly. Mispent youth. The futility planning, in life and in film. Best to for meanings later, if you can find 'em.

(Mark La Ros)

Five Worlds by Murray Cadan

A longing for the Romantic - the Exot Camera with a tourist's eye, attracted to simple life, seeking out the strange. Nati remain distant, smiling, not speaking.

(Mark La Ros)

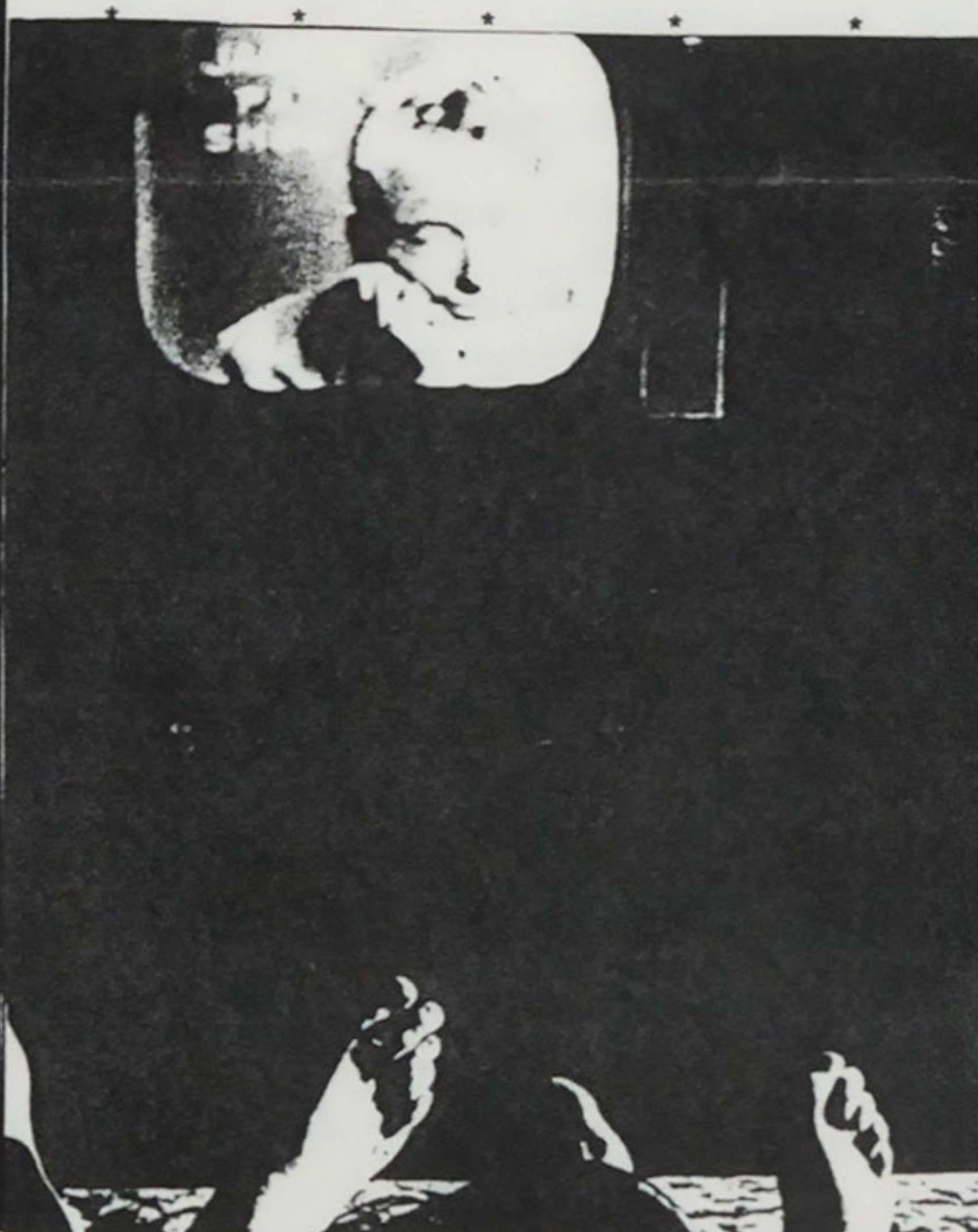
OSTROVSKIS THE MAMMOTH by Bill Mousoulis

There is a mammoth artist in our midst; his name is Nick Ostrovskis. Mammoth because he delves deep and long into his material, an artist because he abhors showmanship and ostentation. Thus, just before showing his new film Concerning the Visual in Art at the last Open Screening, he quickly changed its title to Untitled. That's typical of Nick, of his self-effacing nature and intellectual shyness.

The 25-minute Untitled is at once a work-in-progress and a completed film. Its sameness undoubtedly invites comments like "I reckon it was really a one-minute film looped", and, indeed, the question of length is the one that intrigues the most about experimental cinema. I contend that the films of Ostrovskis, De Bruyn et al should be 30 seconds long each, no more. As they are now, they are too long - too rich, too intense, too much; making me feel like a betrayer even when I blink.

Of course, there is another kind of experimental cinema, which seems to have at its heart the opposite of De Bruyn and Ostrovskis' frenzy; it is the minimalist cinema of Warhol, Snow, Dunkley-Smith. Both these cinemas are concerned with the notion of time (the usefulness of the shot), making the respective film-makers eccentric martyrs, extremist developers who sacrifice all and sundry for a sublime effect. I think of narrative cinema, and wonder if these blokes have any interest in it. Otherwise matters are sad - an avant-garde for its own sake, not for cinema's sake (cinema being every and any film in every and any theatre.)

* * * * *





Joan Crawford, member of the board of Pepsi-Cola.
New York City, 1959.
Eve Arnold.

OPEN SCREENING REVIEW

Made by Roland Gallois

An angst-ridden pastiche of forbidden objects. This film reminded me of the early work of Michael Lee. Echoes of The Mystical Rose. A search for originality - unfortunately in vain. Originality is the last defence to our pervasive cultural imagination.

Autoportrait by Simon Cooper

Who said Super8 wasn't self-reflexive? No-one. This film is very earnest. It has a charming quirkiness that makes it very watchable. There are quite a few people, though, whose autobiogs, I know would be simply unbearable.

Five Worlds by Murray Cadan

This film reminded me of The Leyland Brothers. You know, holding up goannas - staring at the odd indigines. It made South America look so much like paradise that I could almost have been sold on the place. I have heard there is a bit of trouble in paradise though.

John Thomson

IN PRODUCTION

WALLED CITY SHOOT INTERRUPTS APRIL MEETING

Those of you who missed April's meeting will be kicking yourselves for having missed your last chance to be amongst the cast of John Calder's futuristic epic Walled City, which has been grabbing headlines in our newsletter for the last two months. Due to the fact that John is leaving for Brussels, Belgium at the end of April he has been hard pressed trying to bring the Walled City shoot to an end in time to fit in some editing before he goes. Because of this shortness of time John realised the night of the April meeting might be his last chance to get certain members of the cast and crew together at the same time. A lesser man than John Calder would have been too embarrassed to try and shoot a scene for a major film in the ten minute interval between John Thomson's discussion of art direction and the Open Screening program which followed it. But not John Calder, he simply got up at the end of John Thomson's talk and requisitioned half the audience to act as crowd extras in his scene, (which a quick script re-write had moved from a World Trade Centre exterior to a Glasshouse foyer interior!!).

Under Calder's firm directorial hands some of Melbourne's finest super 8 film makers became mere pawns. Chris Windmill (director of The Foxicle and The Bowel Houndromat) was given a sun-gun to hold and told where to point it. Ron Olthof (director of Something to hide) had a white, cardboard, "Guardian's" mask put over his head and given a baton with which he was ordered to beat up extras. Matthew Rees (director of Normal Bias, Birthday boy etc.) slicked back his hair and put on a bowtie to portray a senior public servant who ordered the aforementioned beatings when he disliked being crowded by extras playing reporters. Ian Kerr (director/ animator of Animation Generation and Cut-ups in Canberra) was given a cardboard Video camera prop and told to pretend to film the action until white masked "guardian" Ron Olthof wrestled his camera off him, threw it to the ground, and stepped on it.

Needless to say John Calder was heard to giggle insanely in satisfaction at the footage he was shooting.

With action like this taking place in the Glasshouse foyer it is little wonder that the six or seven films that formed the open screening program seemed pretty much an anti-climax.

PEN-PRICK TOOO



MAKING THAT DIFFERENT FILM by Noel Lloyd



Gloria Swanson, José Ferrer.
Hollywood, 1950.
Burt Glinn.

So you are sitting there with an idea for a film. You think to yourself that you like it, so there must be something in it. No, that idea is not all that imaginative you tell yourself, I might have to use a conventional technique to make this effective. Shock, Horror you shiver in your boots that it may not extend the cinematic bounds and is not experimental enough with the medium, thus you forget it because some of your Super Eight mates will criticise you on it looking too commercial.

Well to you, a person thinking the above, I would say Shock Horror. You have had an idea that could have been very interesting, you must have liked it for some reason, it may make a point that you like preaching about, subtly in the undertones of a story or it may feature a character who has some weakness you can relate to and so it goes on.

I would suggest that you look at your idea (not necessarily how you will present it) objectively and if you believe you are going to make a point that not everyone may have considered, or if you believe that your secret agent character has tricks up his sleeve that are just so different to anything you have ever seen (probably only on the screen) - then you are getting the basis for something different, which is probably why you liked the idea in the first place.

If your objective analysis tells you that you liked the idea because you loved Clint Eastwood's last movie and your plot is exactly the same, of course this idea has already been presented in its best form - so then I would recommend a cold shower with a fan on.

So you love your idea. It will entertain you. It has different set-ups, or it is a fantastic statement about some problem that you feel has not been made before or whatever. Guess what?

People have done heaps of footwork for you and discovered so some great ways of communicating your ideas, most effectively in the visual media. They have discovered how to keep interest going. How to make the audience feel they are watching the event, as opposed to recreation by inventing such things as effective storyboarding technique, continuity standards etc. In fact the people I am referring to here are generally people who have had a vested interest in communicating ideas to the masses (commercial film-makers).

It is not to say of course that improvements can't be made and innovations introduced. To draw an analogy, would you improve a vehicle by considering square wheels, when someone has already discovered the best wheel shape, or use a better material for the wheels.

I think, too however that as Super8 film-makers we are under no pressure whatsoever to make stories or documentaries that are going to be immediately liked. If we wish to stage scenes which we believe challenge morality completely, or would be seen as unethical by the general community, we can - unlike our commercial counterparts who require an audience. Yet these scenes would be clearer to an audience by using the commercial style.

I would suggest that whether your films objective is to thoroughly entertain your audience for its duration, or something which you hope will have a more lasting impression by stimulating the mind, if the content of what is on the screen is very different, stuff how it is presented. If it is a conventional narrative, for example, the point will be clear if presented in this style, but not boring because of the interest the content creates.

I think my point must be clear, having expressed it three different ways. There are many films I have enjoyed that are nothing more than fantastic visual experiences, but to be quite blunt, if I wanted to make a point about industrial waste to demonstrate to as many people as possible, my objections that I believe are not the usual obvious ones, but comments about the more longterm worries it has for me I would not attempt to make my point in double-Dutch or ancient Chinese, so as to be seen as different or unusual.

If you have an idea that you want to make, as a Super8 filmmaker you can just go out there and record it.

Next Meeting

FILMS ALL NIGHT

If you normally get in at 8.30 step on it this time because we are showing films at 7.30 with our usual break around 8.00 (call it intermission at this meeting if you like).

If you are always the one who is swearing at the end of the night because your masterpiece did not get on this is your meeting with heaps of screen time available. Everyone bring at least one reel.

Pre booking service available for real peace of mind. Contact Bill Mousoulis 419 6562 NOW!

~~THE MEETING THIS WEEK WILL BE HELD IN THE BISTRO ON THE FLOOR ABOVE THE NORMAL MEETING ROOM NOT IN THE USUAL ROOM!~~

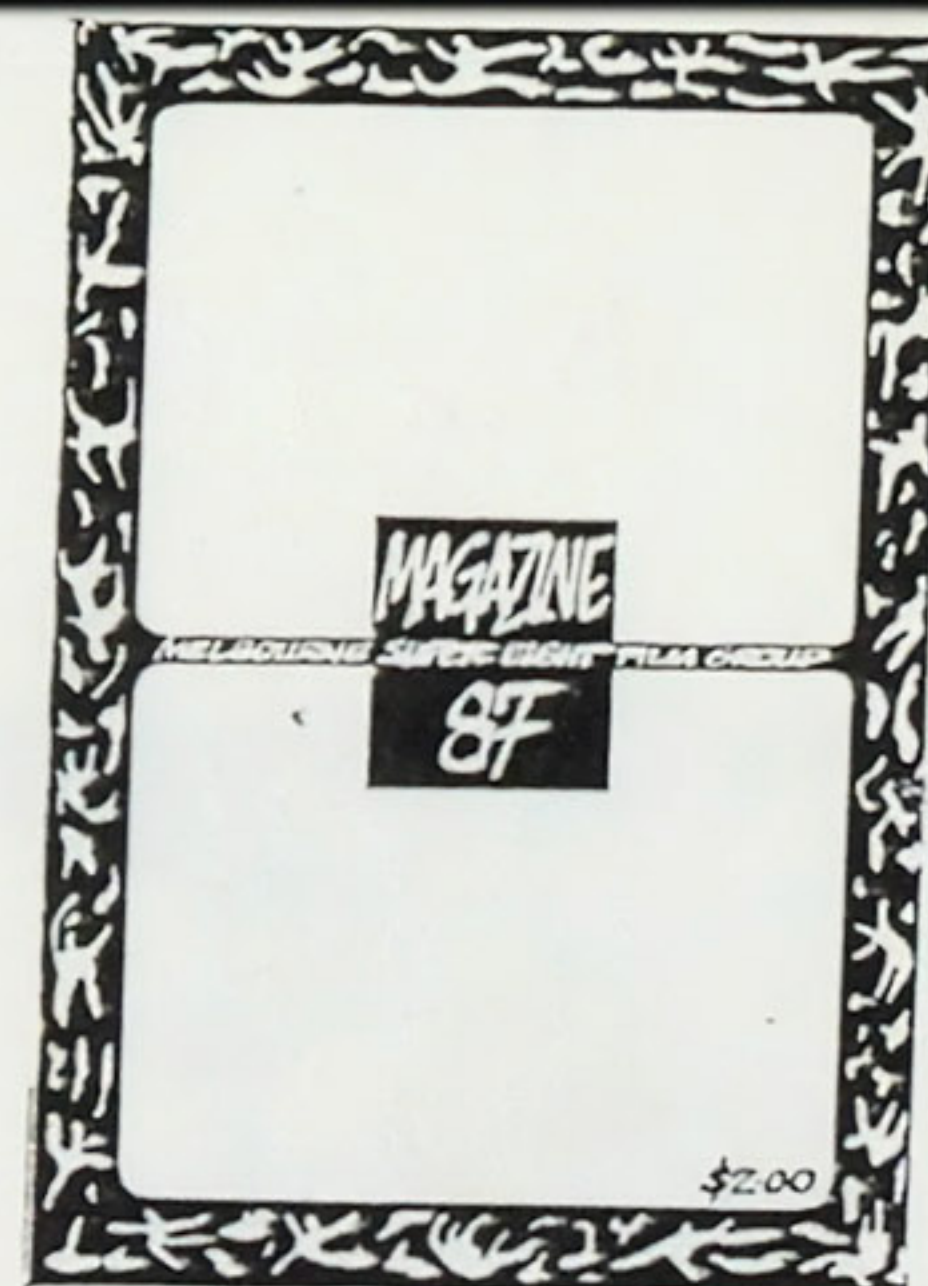
Normal room - Mon May 11

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Read articles by Bill Mousoulis, Anne-Marie Crawford. Interviews with the Marine Biologists and Paul Cox. Plus much more. Support Super 8, support the group for only \$2.00.



FILM * * * FILM * * * FILM * * *

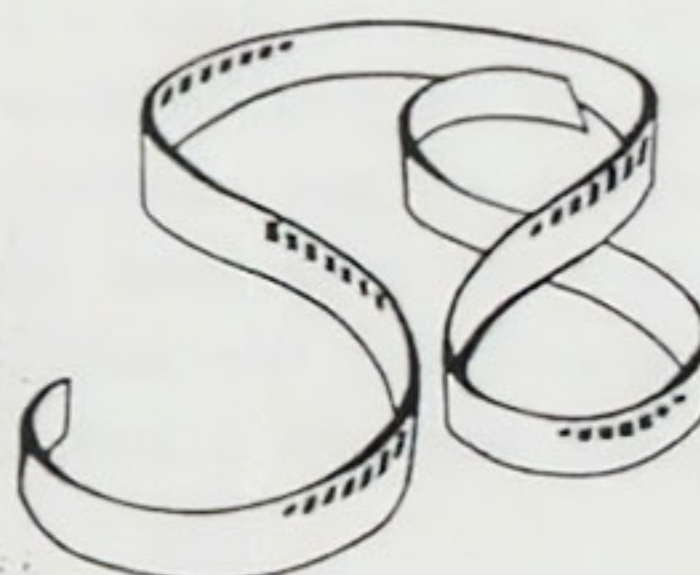
11 rolls of Kodak 40 Sound film for sale, no worries on expiry date, refrigerated, \$120 the lot. Contact Brian Jones on 531 9505.

FILM * * * FILM * * * FILM * * *

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RESOURCE POOL

Equipment (Bill)
Crew (Bill)
Actors (Matthew)
General (Sarah)

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