

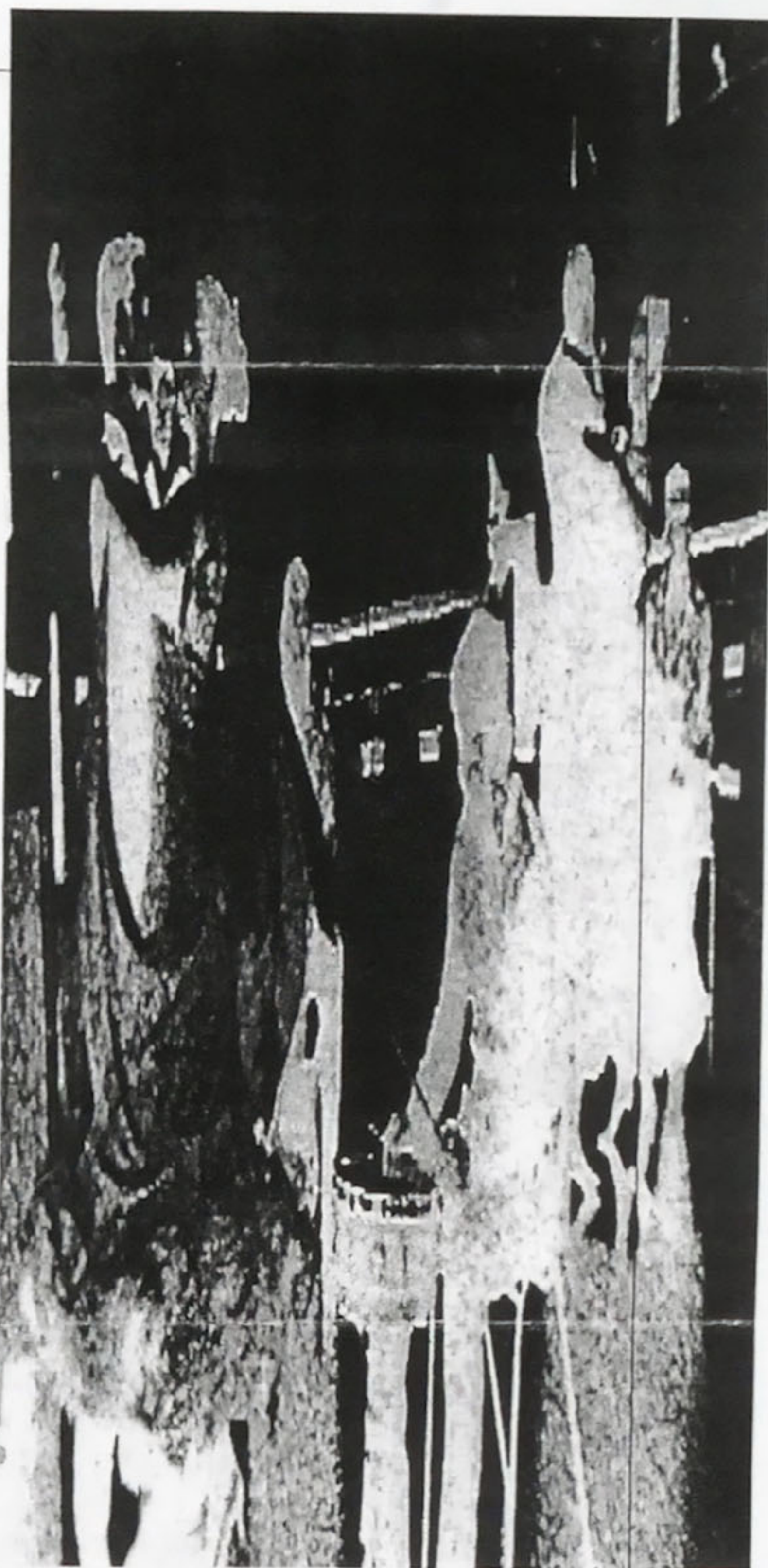
Super Eight

Newsletter of the Melbourne Super 8 Film Group Inc.

ISSUE 156 April 2000



yes-
it's april!



In Brief

Welcome to new member:
Felicity Morgan

Returning Members:
Perry Laird, Moira Joseph, Richard Hyde,
Victoria Armytage.

Internet:
The group web site has experienced almost a threefold increase in traffic since the new site went live last year. A number of new members are utilising the downloadable application form, and feedback has been very strong, with e-mails to the group averaging 20-30 per week. A combination of a regular e-newsletter and enhanced reference section, together with member profiles and occasional video has generated a lot of interest both locally and overseas.

The site has recently been included in the mandy online directory at <http://www.mandy.com/1/filmtvservices.cfm>. The group is listed in the Film Commissions and Trade Associations Section for Australia - Victoria and Tasmania.

The site will also be shortly listed as part of the Pandora archive of online media, compiled by the National Library of Australia, available at <http://pandora.nla.gov.au/pandora/>

Profiled member: **Victoria Armytage** will be featured online in April. Included will be a streaming Quicktime movie made by Victoria in 1996, together with samples of her photographic work.

Gary O'Keefe's Ray Cresswell will also be available for viewing during this time. Given its subject matter, the internet is something of an appropriate medium.

Online credit card facilities have been deemed as being too expensive for the group to cover in its own right. Subsidy of such a facility for a one year trial may be included as part of a funding submission to the AFC later this year.

New Feature: A proposal is presently before the committee to develop a technical resource directory on filmmaking techniques for achieving weird and wonderful effects with Super 8. Initially to go online, in a members only access part of the group web site, it has been tentatively called "Here's one we prepared earlier...". It will feature technical instructions on how to achieve visual effects with Super 8, as well as to make modifications to cameras, home processing, DIY dolly effects etc. It will also include photographic material including stills

from films that utilise these techniques, together with coverage of the process. The site may also include video clips of the effects, and will be published in hard copy, and possibly as a CD-ROM.

Committee:
Gary O'Keefe has recently resigned from the group committee. This now means the group doesn't have a quorum, which effectively means it is paralysed. This means we cannot vote on any proposals presently before the committee. Any member who has been financial for the past six months is eligible to nominate for the committee. The committee meets at 6:30pm on the second Thursday of each month, at the group office in Fitzroy. Anyone interested in nominating should contact the office.

Finance:
Cinemedia have paid the full underwriting grant of \$3000 to the festival. The AFC have acquitted the group's obligations under previous funding contracts with the submission of final reports in October last year. This is largely due to the preparation of two outstanding financial reports, prepared by group member Rob MacLennan, who did the reports free of charge. Our thanks go to Rob for helping us clear the way for future funding applications.

The group is travelling reasonably well to date, having made up some ground as a result of the festival, and decent numbers at some of the Open Screenings. It is also due, in no small part, to Tony Woods' efforts in maintaining the equipment hire. Our income from this facility has increased significantly over the past twelve months. A financial report for the first quarter of 2000 will be published in the May edition of the newsletter.

Forthcoming screenings:
The May 9th Open Screening at the Erwin Rado Theatre will present at 7:00pm, a soundscape by Simon Crews, and at 7:30, a program of animated films curated by Gregg Brown. Gregg won the eatcarpet award at the festival last year, and his film, Chasin' the Fat, will be screened on SBS eatcarpet later this year.

Gerasimos Grammenos

My name is Gerasimos Grammenos, musician and film maker. I've had a love affair that has lasted for over thirty years. The lover in question was a genderless beast known simply as "super 8". My father introduced us at an early age. I was reluctant at first, but I eventually capitulated. The result: dozens of little super 8-lets running around Melbourne at first, later the world. We reproduce at a prolific rate. You know what they say about bald men.

At Nagger Bros Productions, we have been using super 8 in the production of our music videos from day one. Our first video was for the Xylouris Ensemble, who incorporate traditional Cretan & Celtic music resulting in a fusion of international sounds. To simulate a "step back in time" to a traditional village setting in Crete we decided to use super 8 film as our time corridor. We were so happy with the results that we incorporate super 8 into most of our clips now. However, when we shoot 16mm or Super 16mm, we don't feel the need to marry the two different gauges.

Through the "crude" method, which is to project onto a wall and capture the images via a digital camera, there are many variables to play with ie. shutter speeds, iris controls and even the indoor/outdoor/white balance switch can offer some palatable alternatives. We digitise the images onto a big Mac (pardon the pun) and into Adobe Premiere, which is a program that runs with Media 100. Through the editing process of a music video I've come to really cherish the embraceable quality of super 8. Like any film stock, there is a solidity and depth that cannot be supplemented by anything short of the most expensive video-manipulating software. At the end of the day, video spends most of it's time living in the shadow of film, or trying to look like it at least.

I've also, in my short career as a serious super 8-shooter, been exposed to good and bad cameras which I never took into account, naively believing that all cameras were good. Foolish. The Super 8 Group have some lovely cameras, one of them being the Nikon which I have used, and found there to be no substitute for a quality lens! For thirty years I have either been around or shot super 8 film, be it for work or for a family picnic if dad was too busy barbequeing, and to this day a well shot spool, wheather intentional or not, still enthalls me. There are many pros to this medium and I believe that if captured correctly, there are NO cons. The digital world has revolutionised (some say impersonalised) the whole music video industry, making it a very accessible tool for creating and manipulating any kind of image or vision, even the humble, timeless super 8 film. Super!

In regards to super 8: I don't think the gauge has expended itself. After two years of making music clips for established and indie bands, I find myself drawn back to the format that captures for me the images I need.

It is just too easy to lean towards 16 mm or Digital Video. Where as 16 mm does certainly capture a beautiful image and DV is so convenient, 8 mm stock is irreplaceable in as much as it provides (when in focus!) an impression that is almost always "sentimental", or reminiscent of "old times", even if it was shot only a day earlier. For this reason I am going back to super 8 (ektachrome) for one of my next jobs, for a band called Blue Line Medic, on the Sony label. I could easily capture all relevant images via the DV format and indeed I will marry the two, as I have done before. Instead we are committing 1/3 of the footage to 8mm film. This is quite a goodly piece of footage when you consider that in this day and age of High Definition tv and Digital this and that, our footage of this band will be aired (hopefully) back to back with clips that cost 20 TIMES what it will cost us to shoot. And you can bet your bottom dollar that it will hold it's own: not so much what we capture but instead the ability of the 8 mm film gauge to attract and indeed hold ones attention.



Pro8mm

By Ben Ryan



I've recently become the Australian distributor for Super 8 Sound's pro8mm range, a new Super 8 stock that uses remanufactured 35mm negative film to dramatically expand the range of possibilities open to Super 8 filmmakers.

As every Super 8 filmmaker knows, the choices are limited when it comes to Super 8 stock. Kodak have for years, maintained nothing more than a bare minimum in their range, and now even that is once again under threat, with the continuation of Tri-X being reviewed for its 'viability'.

For strong colour there's Kodachrome, but the stock is so slow it needs high lux to get a decent exposure. Ektachrome delivers a bit more range in film speeds but drops out the colour saturation and increases in grain structure. Beyond that, there's nothing but black and white for low light shooting. Despite the various aesthetics these stocks offer, there's no cross over between them. You can rarely attain one quality without sacrificing another, and the fact they're all reversal stocks excludes a range of options when it comes to sound and online editing, not to mention how finicky these stocks are when it comes to focus and depth of field.

While AGFA, Fuji, and now even Kodak have done their best to dispense with the gauge, Super 8 Sound in California have been taking steps to ensure that Super 8 remains a viable option for independent no and low budget filmmakers. In the early 1990's, when video began to take hold and development of the Super 8 gauge was essentially shelved, Super 8 Sound began looking at ways of adapting Eastman EXR 35mm film to the smaller, smarter gauge.

By splitting lengths of 35mm negative, they were able to create three strips of Super 8. Adding perforations and repackaging into 50ft cartridges seemed to be all that was needed to introduce a new range of stocks. Initially however, the films would only transport in specially modified Beaulieu cameras. Continuing modifications soon resulted in the films being usable in all Beaulieu's, but the lack of the ANSI notching system meant all films had to be spot metered, keeping the new stocks in the boutique range.

As more of the old stocks have disappeared, Super 8 Sound have continued to develop their product, and they now not only transport in virtually every Super 8 camera, but they utilise the ANSI notching system as well. This means the electronic eye in

auto-exposure cameras will know the film speed and automatically set the exposure for you. Super 8 Sound have continued to develop their range of stocks, having recently ventured into using the new Eastman Vision range, giving their films an asa rating of up to 800.

This new versatility in Super 8 has brought about a resurgence in the use of Super 8 film as a source stock in independent film production in the US, and the stocks have even made their way into Hollywood productions. Armageddon, Natural Born Killers, JFK, and films as far back as Flatliners have all used the stock to reconstruct historical footage or to create the traditional 'Super 8 home movie' feel. Most notable of course, is Jim Jarmusch's Crazy Horse, shot almost entirely on the new stocks, the raw look of the film when blown up to 35mm fitting perfectly with the raw musical style of Neil Young and his band, Crazy Horse.

All up there are ten different stocks, ranging from 50asa through to 800asa, effectively providing a wider scope than even 16mm, and if exposed correctly, they can render results as good, if not better, than their larger format cousin, for a fraction of the price. They are predominantly Tungsten balanced, however the 50asa and 250asa films are daylight balanced. The stocks all retail in Australia for \$55 (except the 800asa film, which is \$60), which includes processing by Super 8 Sound. The price does not include freight to or from the US for processing, and telecine charges are extra.

I've used just about all of the different stocks in a Canon 814 and it transports perfectly, and gives a semi-decent exposure rating even with standard street lighting. Essentially, it's like taking the best qualities of all the available reversal stocks and merging them together.



Super 8 Sound are dedicated to the Super 8 gauge, and indeed promote it in Hollywood as a professional medium. They've claimed back a lot of ground from Avid and other computer programs that have a 'Super 8 filter' which essentially flares the whites and smudges the blacks, adds some dust and scratches and pretends to be Super 8 film. They are now doing so well from it, that they've been able to set up their own state of the art processing laboratory and telecine facilities.

They process their films the day they receive them, and currently run two Rank Cintel telecine facilities (with Da Vinci Colour Correction), specifically calibrated for transferring Super 8 to video. They can transfer to anything from VHS to DigiBeta, in either NTSC or PAL format. From the telecine, the video can then be edited online (the way all professional level films are done these days), and either output to SP Beta, or printed back to 16mm or even blown up to 35mm, achieving some interesting results.

Turn around, even from Australia, is relatively quick, as they use UPS shipping to return all goods, which generally means the films are processed, telecined and returned inside two weeks. An order form is enclosed in this newsletter, or you can also go to the CannBoys website at <http://www.cannboys.com.au> and follow the links through the 'film' section to download an order form. For prices on video transfer, visit the Super 8 Sound website at <http://www.super8sound.com>

First Films

screened at the March Open

Screening:

Rad Rudd
Equation 1999
3 1/2 minutes, 18 fps,
soundstripe/cassette
sound

Ian Poppins
Melbourne Magazine 1973-
1974
12 minutes 14 seconds,
18 fps, soundstripe

Gregg Brown/Part Two:
Jodi Tobin
Community Walking 1998/
Part 2: Ferals 1999
7 minutes, 18 fps,
cassette sound

Moira Joseph
Faces 1980
20 seconds, 18 fps,
silent

Moira Joseph
Pier Walk 1991
2 minutes, 18 fps,
cassette sound

Anna Hirsh
Jilted 2000
3 minutes, 18 fps,
silent

Rad Rudd
Beer Garden 1999
2 1/2 minutes, 18fps,
silent

Victoria Armytage
The Saga 1993
3 minutes 20 seconds, 18
fps, silent

Tony Woods
Reel Light 1992
7 minutes, 18 fps,
cassette sound

Nick Ostrovskis
Monteith Street 1983
5 minutes, 24 fps,
silent

Perry Laird
4th Birthday Party 1989
3 minutes, 18 fps,
soundstripe

Virginia Fraser and
Dianne Duncombe
An Ordinary Day 1983ish
10 minutes, 24 fps,
soundstripe

Madeline Griffith
Untitled
3 minutes, 18 fps,
silent.

Are you into live Techno?

Ephemeral is a new, live
techno only night of
music. We are interested
in films/loops which
compliment fat, dance
sounds. If you'd like to
show some of your stuff,
contact Joe/Sasha on:
Ph: (Joe) 9419 5182;
(Sasha) 9419 2879 or
0401 176 599
e-mail:
ephemerallivetechnoclub
@yahoo.com.au

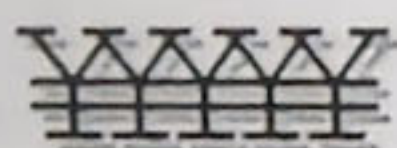
Epilady Republic Presents

The Cutting Room
Film, Video,
installations, live
performances

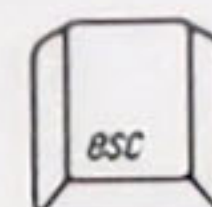
Sunday April 9th at The
Planet
388 Brunswick Street
Fitzroy

Doors open 7:30pm

\$5/\$3 conc.



Could
Paul, who
loaned us his
amplifier for the
the March Open
Screening, please
give the group a
quick ring to let
us know if you
are able to bring
it along for the
April 11th
Screening.



FIDDLE DE DIE 35MIN 1998 C. LINOU

The soundtrack was made for the performance Fiddle De Die, which incorporated super 8 films to support the live action.

I designed the soundtrack to have a driving ambient tension with degrees of abstraction. The mood of the soundtrack reflects the theme of the performance, drug addiction and the AIDS virus.

I made the soundtrack using various CD samples and mixed them on a Tascam 4 - track cassette recorder. The tracks have been multi-layered, giving a deep range of treated sound on a cassette tape, other sound sources were guitar, drum machine and percussive effects.

The soundtrack is primarily for live performance, which also sits comfortably in an audio environment.

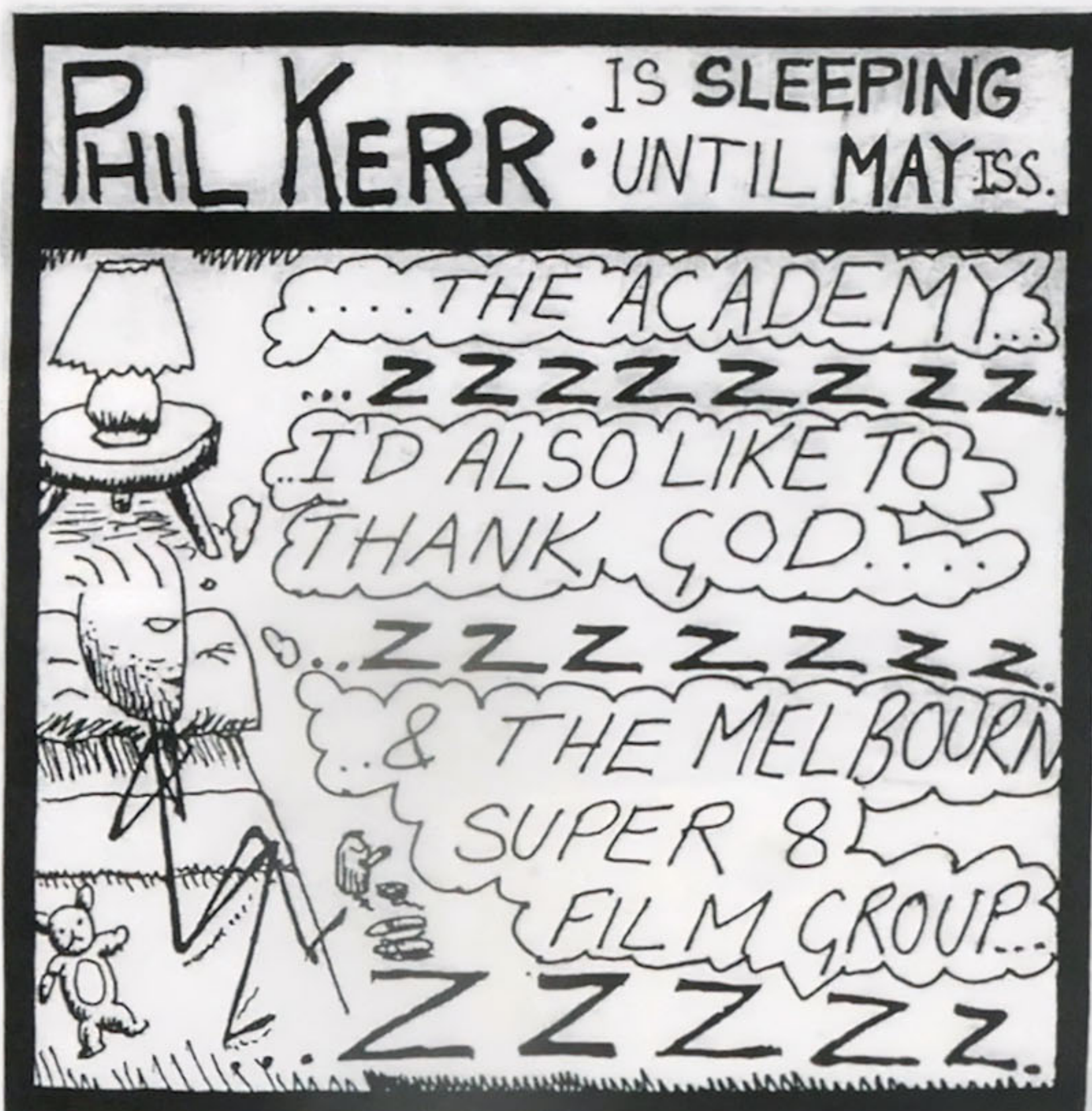
An Apology

By Rad Rudd

I feel that people may have been offended by my "Phil Kerr" cartoon in the march newsletter. To those I offended I offer this explanation:

Although I had a good go at the 'digital revolution' I tried to create a sense of irony in the last cell by having a character (which was meant to be me) type into the computer the 'anti-digital revolution' comments made, and then print them out so that everyone could go home sooner. I realised then that I could have made this contradiction stronger and clearer (and I realise now I should have) but unfortunately, and for this I apologise, it didn't seem that important (do people really read my cartoon? Cool), and I just plain 'ol ran out of cells and time.

This is an extract. The full explanatory letter of apology is at the Super 8 office.



Last Open Screening:

See inside listing

Next Open Screening:

Tuesday, 11th April 2000

7:00pm

Soundscape by: Christos Linou

7:30pm

Films by Gerasimos Grammenos

Followed by the Open Screening

BYO take-up reels please

*ERWIN RADO THEATRE
211 Johnston St Fitzroy*

ISSUE 156

website: <http://www.cinemia.net/super8>

email: super8@netspace.net.au

Become a Member!

For those who are not currently members, joining the Melbourne Super 8 Film Group can provide you with so much more than just a newsletter. As members you will receive discounts on equipment hire, entry to screenings, and the chance to participate in Australia's only film organisation dedicated to the Super 8 gauge. As a recipient of the newsletter you'll receive tips on where to get cheap stock and processing, telecine, forthcoming festivals and Super 8 events from around the world, as well as technical information on equipment use and maintenance.

Membership is \$45.00 full/\$30 concession. Contact the group at the address below for an application form or download one from the website.

Layout by: Musonda J. Katongo

Phone: +61 3 9417 3402 Fax: +61 3 9417 3804

Office Address: Level 1, 207 Johnston Street, Fitzroy

This newsletter is published monthly by the Melbourne Super 8 Film Group Inc. Contributions are welcome. © 2000 the Individual authors and the Melbourne Super 8 Film Group. Disclaimer: The opinions expressed in this publication are those of the individual authors and not the Melbourne Super 8 Film Group. Library subscriptions to this publication are \$50 (Australia)/\$60 overseas and \$35 for other organisations.

The Melbourne Super 8 Film Group is entirely self-funded. Donations and contributions are most welcome.

Super Eight

ISSN 1039-5288

If undeliverable return to:

Melbourne Super 8 Film Group

PO Box 2033

Fitzroy MDC

Victoria 3065

Australia



**SURFACE
MAIL**



Chris Windmill
GPO Box 1690
Darwin, NT 0801