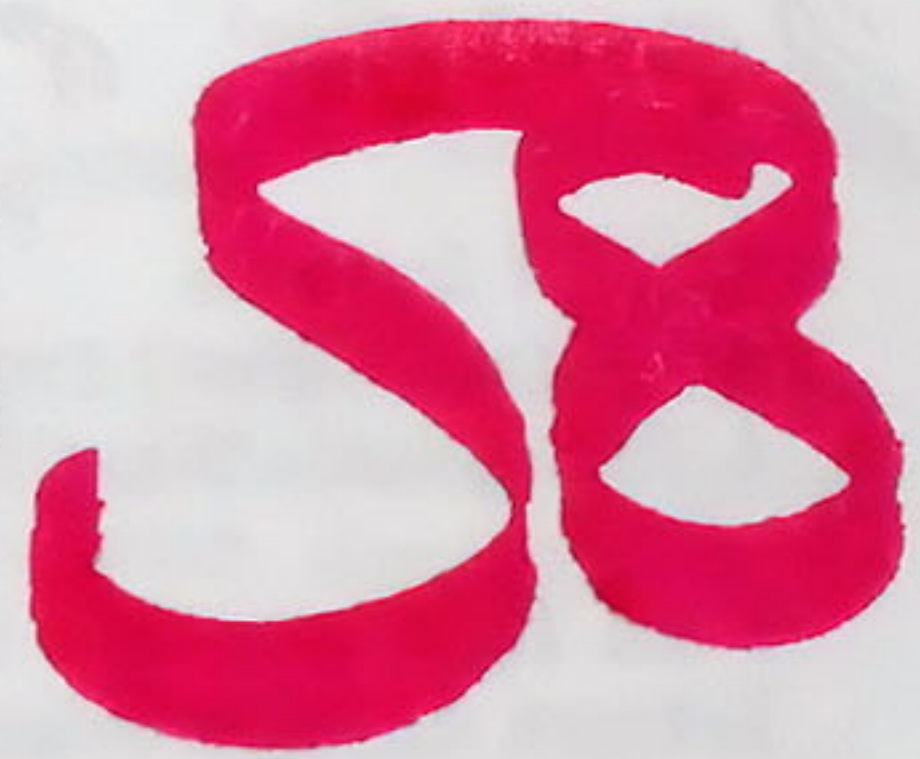


Super Eight

Newsletter of the Melbourne Super 8 Film Group Inc.

ISSUE 164 December 2000



Hand Processed

HAND PROCESSING- 12/12/2000- RADO THEATRE 7.30pm

An eclectic and exciting programme, showcasing the diversity of effects that can be achieved with hand processed and chemically altered film.

Combinations of photographic developer, bleaching, toning and fixing chemicals, along with assorted inks and dyes (clothing, food, citric acid, etc.) can alter in varying degrees, the final look of the projected image.

The use of these chemicals can cause a stripping away of the emulsion, which in itself creates an unusual effect. Or, by adding dyes, toners or letraset directly onto the film, a build up of fine layers can be achieved, adding an extra surface dimension.

Hand processing is not for the faint hearted—results can be unexpected (more often than not, surprisingly pleasing). Much depends on the age, condition and exposure of the initial film to be processed as well as the selection of chemicals used, temperature, agitation and length of developing and bleaching time.

Different film stocks tend to produce an individually unique appearance when processed, and my advice for filmmakers searching for something a little different is go ahead, be brave~~~~~experiment! *Moira Joseph*

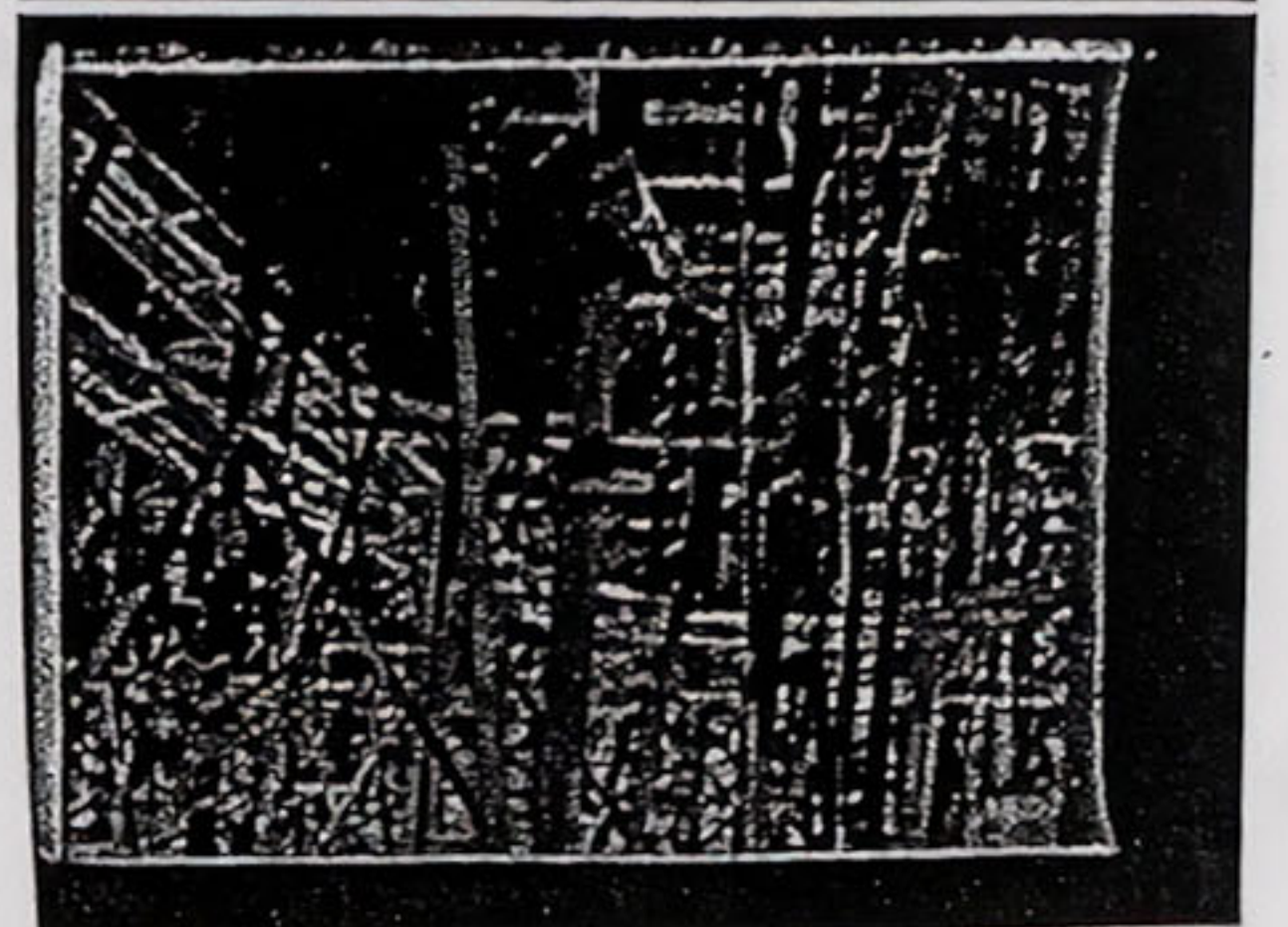
HAND PROCESSING PROGRAMME 12/12/2000

16mm films

- Dirk de Bruyn~~"VISION", 5mins, sound by Michael Luck, 1984.
- Michael Buckley~~"WORK", 12mins, sound by Arf Arf, 1985.
- Marcus Bergner~~"HANDBERG", 6mins, silent 1985.
- Moira Joseph~~"THE LIGHT", 3mins, sound cassette 1999.

Super 8

- Nick Ostrovskis~~"Graveyard", 3mins, silent, 1983
- Peter Lane~~"Green to green" 3mins, sound cassette 1995
- Christos Linou~~(excerpt from work in progress, as yet untitled)
3mins, silent, 2000
- Chris Knowles~~"Welcome", 13mins, sound cassette 1986
- City Walk-----3mins, sound 1992
- Paws-----3mins, sound cassette 1993
- Moira Joseph Interiors-----3mins, silent, 2000
- Mad Mouse----3mins, sound cassette 1995
- Black Monday—10mins, sound 1993
- Chase-----3mins, sound cassette 1991



* This article originally appeared in *Release Print*, the magazine of Film Arts Foundation. Reprinted by permission. check out 'www.filmarts.org'

Shot of Solitude

Hand (and Heart) Processing at Film Camp

A Filmmaker's Diary by Ken Paul Rosenthal

I am flying on Air Canada to Phil Hoffman's Independent Imaging/Filmmaking Retreat on a farm northwest of Toronto, where I will spend five days shooting, processing and editing 16mm film, learning tinting and toning, and viewing contemporary experimental films. It's been 11 years since I was first introduced to the tactile universe of hand processing movie film at the San Francisco Art Institute. Watching the beautiful mess of images tumble from a stainless steel womb for the first time entirely changed the way I make films. Hand processing is a practice where serendipity is the rule rather than the exception, and I found it an antidote to conventional methods of filmmaking which emphasized image control. Whereas new technologies moved me away from the medium, I could use my own hands to embrace the film material more directly and intimately. Over the years I have hand-processed hundreds of rolls of film and shared my experiences in dozens of workshops. Now I'd have an opportunity to learn recipes and techniques from other passionate practitioners and work in 16mm for the first time.

The stewardess offers me headphones for the onboard movie, but I decline and turn my attention instead to the film unraveling outside the cabin window. The changing contours of the clouds allow me to reflect on the ways hand-processing movie film can be like playing in a celluloid sandbox. It can also be quite terrifying. You discover your heart isn't as malleable as the medium, and you start scraping away at it until only the most precious cell is left. That frame, that naked grain, is your silver soul.

Mount Forest, Canada

I am standing alone in an open barn door. In front of me a tree traces the grass with tender brushstrokes. I turn and enter the barn, where pillars of light ring the space like a motionless Zoetrope. It is the morning after film camp has ended, and I'm still nursing my last shot of solitude.

Although the 11 other campers have departed, the after-effects of five days of nonstop filmmaking are evident everywhere. Glistening strips of hand-processed film drip-dry and flutter from a 15-foot clothesline inside the barn. My own footage wraps around the line in impossible tangles. Short, crazy-colored pieces of film swim in bowls of toning solution. Half-eaten bits are stuck to the fridge like a proud child's schoolwork. Sheets of opaque plastic cordon off the darkrooms. Just yesterday those same plastic curtains barely dampened the giddiness of fellow campers, who emerged from the darkrooms like proud parents, shouting, "Oh my God, look at *this!*" and people scurried over to see their newborn images, launching into a chorus of "Oohs," "Ahhs" and "Wowwws."

Film camp was a carnival of creativity, and the barn was the funhouse. At least it was for most of the campers. Looking back, I can't help thinking, What was I doing in the farmhouse cellar futzing with my Bolex's rex-o-fader for two hours while the resident sparrows were pooping on my head? How did I expose an entire day's shoot to a 100-watt light bulb before it hit the first developer? And why the hell did I go ahead and process it anyway?! Instead of producing images,

I made a series of increasingly catastrophic mistakes. Why was it so difficult to practice what I'd long been preaching to my hand-processing students: dissolve prescribed ideas and embrace the process from which the most elegant visions arise?

When I arrived six days earlier, I was prepared to make a dance film. That ambition quickly dissolved when I took on a Bolex Rex-4 as my shooting partner. Having only shot with highly mobile Super-8 cameras for the past 15 years, I found the 16mm Bolex a beast to handle. Using a Sekonic to read the light, stopping down the aperture and then recomposing before shooting didn't feel spontaneous. Instead of embracing the Bolex's noble weight and its economy of functions, I kept wrestling with it. The camera didn't fight back, it just sort of went away, piece by piece.

Over the next two days I lost the backwind key, the filter slide (thus fogging an entire day's shoot) and a 24-inch cable release, and I stripped the threading in the crankshaft. With each additional piece of equipment lost or broken, I was forced to peel back another layer of intention. I let go my idea of making a dance film, and I let go my desire to leave camp with a finished film. After all, I was always reminding my students that film is less about making a film than it is about experiencing the making. And that the texture of the gesture becomes the film. Now I needed to take my own advice.

However, abandoning the images and ideas I had developed in my mind filled me with a kind of loneliness. Without a script or a preconceived vision to guide me, I felt crippled and blind. I did not know on which side of the camera to put my attention, and I collapsed to the ground. It was at that moment that an image came to me—my hand reaching through the lens and fondling the sun. I thought about my little focus-free 35mm still camera (which had slipped out of my pocket into a bucket of water that morning) and how liberating it felt to point it and just shoot whatever I found beautiful.

I stood up and immediately began filming in the same way I had made still pictures, without any camera movement, simply framing my subjects for their texture and the way they embodied the light. I shot burlap riding the wind. I shot barbed wire choking wild straw. I shot a newborn calf's placenta until an irate bull chased me headlong through the electric sting of a charged fence. As the Bolex and I moved arm in crank through pastures and forests, I realized I was making a dance film after all. Only the dance wasn't taking place in front of the lens, but in the space between the camera body and my own. And I realized that my struggles had not been about making mistakes or knowing what to shoot, but about how to compose my self. Now I had taken a shot of my solitude, and it was a good fix.

On the fifth and final day of film camp, the activity became ever more feverish, since the day was to be topped off by a screening of everyone's work. Campers darted from pasture to darkroom to flatbed in frenetic circles, with pit stops at the tinting table, optical printer or homemade animation stand. The camp's Steenbeck had a wonderful malfunction, which caused the plates to clang like a locomotive pulling into a station. That clanging also served as a sort of dinner bell, calling everyone to our celluloid feast.

An hour before showtime I chose my selects, drew up a paper edit and assembled a rough-cut. As I hastily sifted through 800 feet of misfortune, a few

silver jewels began to emerge. After my piece screened, a warm shivering welled up in my chest as I shared the details of my innumerable mishaps. Although everyone applauded my work's photography, for me, the images of my solemn, distended shadow hugging an endless road, of rotting barn shingles and a lonely leaf framed against a setting ball of sun were documents of my solitude.

Now it's the morning after film camp has ended, and I am standing alone in the barn wondering what to do with my film, with myself. Should I return to the fields and re-shoot all my fuck-ups? Should I bury my film in front of the barn, where we dumped all our used chemicals? Or should I just chuck the whole mess into a vat of blue toner? The answer gently materializes when I stop asking questions: continue filming what I find beautiful—the film material and the process of making film. I shoot film images rising out of a chemical bath, film stock spilling into a discarded porcelain sink, film strewn across a long row of bushes and negative film reversing to positive under a light bulb.

With only two hours before my departure, I find the courage to pull off my fantasy shot with the help of Christine Harrison, a camp assistant. We leave the farm and head toward an enormous field of daisies, where I plan to have Christine film me in slo-mo prancing naked with an armload of film. We arrive and knock on the door of a private residence neighboring the field to ask permission, but no one answers, so we get right to it. I strip down, then leap and roll about, trampling daisies with blissful abandon. Each time a car approaches on the road, I duck down into my robe of blossoms. As a comic counterpoint, I decide to stand center-frame with a ball of film covering my genitals while I peer about timidly. We are setting up the shot when Christine alerts me to an approaching truck. I figure an 18-wheeler will consider my daisy cheeks worth no more than a toot of his horn. Instead he slams on the brakes and screams bloody murder. This draws out the woman from the nearby residence, who we thought wasn't at home. She begins to scream about there being children in the house and threatens to call the police. (Could it be they don't appreciate dance?)

We gather up clothing and equipment in such haste that my glasses get left behind. When we dash back to retrieve them, we find nothing among the yards of smashed blossoms. Christine seems particularly unnerved. I'm not sure if it's because our equipment might be confiscated by the authorities or because the reputation of the film camp could be irreparably damaged. Regardless, she promises to return that night to search some more, and I drive off to Toronto with the entire world looking like a four-laned fishbowl.

So went my experience at film camp. I danced with my dark side, my light side and all the other gradations of my silver soul. I lost my eyesight in one sense and gained insight in another, as corny as that sounds. I know deeply and intimately that film is (for me) fundamentally not about recording a picture. It is a process even broader than the developing of images. It is about dancing with stillness and manipulating a novel posture for my heart. Phil Hoffman, the compassionate angel who manages the camp, says that film is about the moment of transformation, and that making love for your self is a reason to make film. Words to shoot by indeed.

I have yet to process the film I shot on my last day at the farm, but that's OK. I only exposed it as a means to a beginning. □

Ken Paul Rosenthal is currently teaching Basic 16mm Film Production and Experimental Projects at the Center for Film and Media Studies in the Ngee Ann Polytechnic in Singapore.

4 layout,

Editing On your Home Computer

By Richard Hyde

With all the talk about digital video, multimedia and the like I thought I would write this article on editing one's films on the home computer. As there can be many technical aspects, I will endeavor to give a broad overview of the basic process and equipment needed. (Note: I do not profess to be an expert, just put forward the knowledge I have and my experience).

Onto the basics:

Editing on the computer is fun and creative, however it does require some patience, a bit of computer know how and the right equipment. I would like to start by outlining the equipment one will need.

1 The basic computer: depending on exactly what one wants to do, personally I think this should consist of the following—a 17 inch monitor, a cd writer, (you will then be able to "burn" your movies to cd), and a hard drive that is dedicated to your video work. Most gurus will say it's best to have a separate scsi A/V drive (a/v meaning audio, video) that has an r.p.m. of 7200 and as for size, well that's up to the individual.

2 Speakers: a pair of decent speakers.

3 A soundcard: (normally part of any computer), hopefully with line and microphone inputs.

3 The Video capture card: (discussed below).

4 An Internet connection: For support, be it email, forum or program/driver updates.

5 A Printer: Most Video capture cards will allow the user to "grab" any frame/s from video footage allowing the user to then use this in any way they want (great for producing promostills).

Of course most of the above depends on money and some things can be substituted (a 15 inch monitor for instance, as shipped with most PC's these days) but as a minimum one needs 128Mb ram and least say 5—10Gb hard drive space for storage and the editing. I myself have only 2 gig spare which means I can only do projects of about 5 minutes maximum in length with cd quality stereo sound, captured and output with the best settings of my capture card.

The Video Capture Card:

When I started to research about capture cards, the main factor was the same as most things, I wanted the best I could get without spending too much. It also helped to know what I actually wanted to do. Now, this is where the frustration begins, weeding out the bad, summing up this product against another and so on. I urge all readers to thoroughly research the products they are looking at and probably one of the better places to start is on the Internet. The other point to remember is to make sure the capture card is compatible with your system. This includes your video card (for the monitor) and your processor and motherboard. There are many different capture cards on the market at the moment, all aimed at different user types and they can vary in cost from \$200.00 to the thousands. Again the main criteria is to work out what you want to achieve and how much you want to spend! At the moment there are analogue and digital cards and ones that can perform both. The inputs and outputs can be composite, svhs or digital.

The card that I opted for is made by Pinnacle Systems and is called the DC10 plus. It has svhs in and out as well as composite in and out (these are the standard av connections most common on vcrs and tvs etc.). Now the interesting thing about this card is that it uses your existing sound card to feed the audio into the computer. For the price (around \$550.00) this card represents excellent value for money and presented me with the normal Windows hiccups but once up and running, the quality is excellent.

The Editing Process:

The basic process is to capture your selected footage, edit, perhaps apply effects, titles, sound and then to print back to videotape or perhaps record to cd rom. This process of capturing can be different depending on the editing software. It can be a simple matter of selecting your inputs and outputs then walking away and let the

computer do the rest. Or it can be done manually by capturing each different scene, one by one. Depending upon what quality you select to capture at, this is where hard drive space comes into the picture. If you were doing a project for cd rom, you may not need to capture at the full Pal resolution of 768 x 576 @ 25 frames per second.

Each capture card generally comes bundled with editing software. This software can be basic or extremely complicated, but generally it's not long before one has the hang of it. Some cards (as is the case with the one I purchased) will only allow you to edit your captured footage with the software that came with your capture card. If this is the case and your software may not have a particular effect you can export your footage out to another program, modify as you wish, then re-import the clip back to the original editing software.

In summing up, to edit on your home computer, it will need to have a bit of grunt, be it PC or Mac, and you will need to have a bit of technical knowledge or confidence in opening up your computer to install the capture card. As always before installing anything new on your system, be it software or hardware always back up your system. There are also companies out there that will either build you a computer to edit video on or configure/install a capture card for you.

I've had great success in transferring my super 8mm footage to video and then editing it in my computer. Producing sound in other programs, titles and importing animations, it gives one the control to perform all aspects at home.

Feel free to contact me for further advice or whatever either via email: jeckyl@start.com.au or mobile: 0413 767 342. I hope this has been of some help.

TONY WOODS.....

I will visit the office once a day during latter part of December to check the phone and collect any mail etc. Same goes for January, up to the planning meeting at the Group office on 21st Jan. FOR EQUIPMENT HIRE during this period you can phone the office 9417 3402 or Tony Woods on 9419 6504.

HELP WANTED!!

CREW MEMBERS WANTED FOR DV FEATURE

Production Manager: part-time work from Feb - April
Assistant Director: full time, two weeks in March and three weekends in April, plus pre-production meetings.
No payment, but costs incurred will be reimbursed.

Contact Mark La Rosa on 9304 4906

JANUARY MEETING

PLANNING MEETING***21st JANUARY '01

THE MEETING TO MAP OUT THE SCHEDULE FOR NEXT YEAR, WILL BE HELD IN THE M.I.F.F OFFICE (LEVEL 1, 207 JOHNSTON STREET FITZROY) FROM 11.00am ON SUNDAY JANUARY 21st '2001. ALL MEMBERS ARE ASKED TO ATTEND TO ENSURE THE M.S.8.G. GETS OFF TO A CLEAN START FOR OUR 16th YEAR PROMOTING SUPER 8 AS A VIABLE CREATIVE FILM MEDIUM IN THE DIGITAL ERA. BRING ALONG SOME IDEAS AND INFORMATION get set go!

The talkfest will last most of the day with a break for lunch.

+ VEG-IN: Watch video installation & S8 films 8-9-10th Dec @ North Melb. Town Hall. Cntct MS8FG for details.
6 know.

THE COMMITTEE

As of this moment we have 3 new nominations for the committee in '01, Ingrid Horton, Moira Joseph and Shane Lyons. The present committee would like to thank Nick Ostrovskis for attending most comm. meetings as a member eager to help in any way possible. Also well earned praise to Moira's continued C.A.E. classes promoting Super 8, as a viable film medium to one and all. Finally can I mention how much I have enjoyed all films screened by Peter Lane, Nick Ostrovskis and Christos Linou during '00.
T.W.

BEN RYAN MOVES ON

On behalf of the committee and group may I express our gratitude to Ben Ryan for his dedication, magnitude of tasks undertaken, and aims achieved; just think about the '99 Festival, the current Group website for starters! We on the committee know only too well the amount of extra hours, week nights and weekends, Ben spent in the office attending to Group business. It will take more than one person spending time in the office to fill his shoes. Ben has agreed to continue developing the Group website, and will spend time in Dec. topping up Victoria and Rad's computer knowledge that will enable both to cover his absence. We wish Ben all the best as he completes his own film projects, and health, and happiness as he travels over seas and lands.
T.W.

IMAGINE A RED LIGHT FLASHING--some shared thoughts.

During the past weeks, Rad Rudd and I have had many discussions concerning the past and future of the M.S.8.F.G. and our part in that future. With Ben Ryan not standing for the committee in '01 and at that point no other nominations we strongly felt that the three present committee members (Victoria Armytage the 3rd), could not continue carrying the load for members, and that if we did not get 3 or 4 new nominations for Dec. that the Group should close. Among our concerns were: the financial situation (relief came from City of Yarra grant of \$1500 to cover the open screenings at the Rado during '01, thanks to the hard work on the application by Rad Rudd), falling membership (at present 69), newsletter; number edited by comm. Rad&Tony 3, Ben 1, T&Victoria 2, R&Nick 1, B&N 1, B&Dirk 1, Musonda Katongo(member)1. Despite requests, a lack of member contribution to n/l, I can remember previous years' n/l's full of articles. Also from personal knowledge quite a few mem. do not seem to read it! Irene P. has suggested less n/l's, say 6 a year. Members have always been encouraged to edit a n/l. As I handle the n/l to and from the printer, then spend several hours getting them ready to post, I could do with some help!. Open Screenings : after spending several hours each Open Screening setting up, Rad and I are busy, R. projecting (finds that he can not really enjoy the films, let alone remember each one), I am on the door taking the money, handling membership, plus enquiries wondering why people are not paying for their refreshment etc. I don't have time to converse with friends, we do not need the stress. Something has to change! Now that we have 3 new comm. nominations we feel that we can confidently continue into the Group's 16th year, the committee will meet once a month during the year, possibly Sunday arvo, and the O/S may also move to a Sunday. This option will be discussed at the important January planning meeting '01. I do not have time now to go into details. The present committee are most eager to do all they can in the next year with pleasure, as long as all members put in! Due to the lack of interest in outside Group activities, apart from the O/Ss, eg. the Argentina and Yugoslavia M.S.8.F.G. screenings, Sun Theatre O/Ss, Federation Square proposal and the Footscray Arts event etc, we may have to limit our participation in this area as the few same people who do contribute could burn out!

There are other things I wanted to say but if you think I am laying it on a bit thick, think about what you did for the Group during '00. Tony Woods.

NOTICE OF:
THE MELBOURNE SUPER 8 FILM GROUP

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

TUESDAY 12TH DECEMBER 2000
7.30PM SHARP
AT THE ERWIN RADO THEATRE
211 JOHNSTON ST FITZROY

AGENDA

Annual Financial Report
Committee Report
Election of committee for 2001
(if nominations are seven or less no election is required)

All current seven committee positions will become vacant.
To be eligible for a position on the committee you need to have been a member of the group for 6 months, and are currently a financial member.

Please find below a nomination form; to be completed and delivered to the office of the Melbourne Super 8 Film Group 7 days prior to the AGM, ie the 5th of December.

You must be nominated and seconded by current members of the group.

I _____ (print name)

NOMINATE _____

TO A POSITION ON
THE COMMITTEE OF THE MELBOURNE SUPER 8 FILM GROUP

SIGNED _____ DATE _____
(current member of Melbourne Super 8 Film Group)

SECOND SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____
(current member of Melbourne Super 8 Film Group)

SIGNED BY NOMINEE _____ DATE _____
(ACCEPTANCE OF NOMINATION)

Last Open Screening:

Tuesday 14th November

When Chicks Attack—Dylan Kelly

3 mins, telecine, 2000

9999—Peter Lane

5mins 30 sec, 18fps, cassette, 1999

On the Fringe—Tony Woods

10 mins, 18fps, cassette, 2000

Shift—Nick Ostrovskis

7 mins, 18fps, silent, 2000

Next Open Screening:

Tuesday, 12th December, 2000

7:00pm

Soundscape by: James Stewart & the Four-Door
Shit-box.

7:30pm

A.G.M

followed by

Handprocessed films curated by Moira Joseph.

**Followed by, if time permits, the Open
Screening**

BYO take-up reels please

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

email: super8@netspace.net.au

ISSUE 164

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: Rad Rudd

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

Office Address: Level 1, 207 Johnston Street, Fitzroy

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welcome.**

Super Eight



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