

# SUPER-8

THE NEWSLETTER-MAGAZINE OF THE MELBOURNE SUPER-8 FILM GROUP No2 APR 86

## March Meeting Reported

About thirty to thirty-five people were treated to an informative talk on camera technique by John Calder, adding interest and dimension to last month's meeting.

For an hour or so John covered, in a sometimes humorous, sometimes frenetic and always enthusiastic way peculiar to this expatriate Kiwi, these topics:

- focus and how it is affected by the zoom.
- correct indoor/outdoor settings.
- exposure and how to cope with areas of high and low contrast.
- the use and abuse of the pan
- editing long shots to close-up on a movement - the 'D W Griffith cut-on-action', according to John.

John used an actual camera in a practical demonstration, as well as good and bad examples on film of the subjects discussed.

The common errors often not noticed until after a shot has been taken, or worse, until the film is viewed, were touched on in the hope of reducing their occurrence in the future.

Comparison of John's grin in person and on film, alone, attested to how much camera exposure can alter teeth tones, something I had never thought of before.

If you have a particular problem that needs ironing out, give John a call on 428 1072.



The second part of the meeting was devoted to film screenings.

Faster Faster Faster by Stephen Mackerras, Maxamillion Fass producer, sets and people by God (his terms), showed the streets of Brisbane from being deserted to buzzing with a fast motion pace never seen before nor since. Over this was fast garbled music. The film, for all its activity, seemed to last a little long.

In Body Talk Bill Mousoulis, that doyen of the Super-8 scene and editor of this newsletter, used (over)long images of magazine stills as visuals to a bouncy tune. After more than enough time to absorb the detail of each picture, the faces were still there haunting us like a Gandhian sit-down demonstration of passive resistance. This seems a clear example of how the medium can be under-used. (Hi, Bill!)

Fleas (is the word). John Calder presented another pictures-to-music film with this very entertaining animation filmed in New Zealand, with Duncan Stuart and the students of (year 7) 1A film. We see stylised fleas jumping off the screen and

invading all sorts of places. Makes me itch just to think about it.

Mark La Rosa showed an untitled exploration of reflections in water and water droplets on a car. This was a study of textures with close-up scans of unexplained surfaces which were only identifiable when the camera pulled back later in the film. This element of mystery could be put to good use in a longer narrative film.

The very graphic Mustapha/Banana by David Cox had squashed bananas and bloody massacres in a tragi-comic style which touched on the surreal. Some quite inspired direction gives us a sort of Laurel and Hardy combination which works well in establishing an almost psychotic relationship between the two, while somehow retaining a child-like innocence throughout the bloody slaying. This was a silent film with a cinematic-like music score fitting in well with the action.

The last film of the evening was a home movie by Bill Mousoulis entitled Glass Darkly. Using Ektachrome 160 film, some of the daylight shots took on a sort of sepia tone. The rest of the film had a number of unrelated sequences. The street scenes at night came out clearly. The unfortunate cat stuck up a gate was cute. Beyond that the film was difficult to comment on in a critical way.

None of these films used direct sound. The majority used music to supplement the action in much the same way as those of us did in our silent camera days when we had no choice. I leave you with this question. Is no-one making films with dialogue or at least live sound these days?

Barry Branchflower

# NEXT MEETING

Glasshouse Meeting Room, RMIT; Tuesday, April 8, 7:30p.m. - 10:00p.m.

At 7:30 p.m.

"Lighting For Film"

A practical demonstration on basic lighting techniques for film.

Presented by Matthew Rees.

At 8:30 p.m.

Super-8 films, to be individually introduced by their makers.

To be guaranteed that your film will be shown on the night, it is advised you contact Bill Mousoulis on 419 6562 beforehand.

## A Plea by BB

When Bill asked for new members to sign up during the last meeting (we only ask for \$10) someone piped up "What do we get for our money?" We do offer assistance in making your films, cheaper film stock, and information on Super-8 activities. But the truth is we need your support if we are to continue. It costs money to hire a venue to hold screenings. It costs money to print and distribute these words you are reading now. At present the committee is covering these costs but that cannot continue indefinitely. If you are a phantom member who reads the newsletter and turns up to more than one meeting in the year, then you, like the club, are doing so on borrowed time. We ask for your support so that we can continue to offer Melbourne access to the Super-8 scene and vice versa. So that is what you really get: the Group's continued existence. Is that not worth ten dollars? So the next time the question of membership is mentioned, ask not what the M.S.E.F.G. can do for you, ask what you can do for the M.S.E.F.G.

Barry Branchflower

### Members of the Melbourne Super 8 Film Group

Michael Borenstein	Graeme Hare
Barry Branchflower	Matt Holden
Adrian Brown	Peter Jamieson
Murray Cadan	Sarah Johnson
John Calder	Mark La Rosa
Brett Cameron	Bill Mousoulis
Paul Cody	Peter Nathan
Nicholas Elliot	Greg Nelson
John Flaus	Mehmet Raif
Rohan Forster	Matthew Rees
Janetta Green	Michael Siu

### The Executive

Sarah Johnson	president	417 2916 (o/s for April)
Barry Branchflower	vice-president	818 7442
Bill Mousoulis	secretary	419 6562
Matthew Rees	treasurer	481 6443
John Calder		428 1072
Brett Cameron		569 5142
Murray Cadan		

## CHEAP STOCK

AVAILABLE TO MEMBERS

Kodak 40 Sound \$15, Silent \$10  
Order now through the Super-8 Group

## ATTENTION WOMEN S8 FILMMAKERS

IN FORMING THE MELBOURNE S8 FILM GROUP, THE PRIMARY IDEALS OF THE COMMITTEE MEMBERS WERE TO ENCOURAGE S8 FILMMAKING, TO PROVIDE AT SOME STAGE A VENUE FOR SCREENINGS, AND TO ACT AS A SUPPORT GROUP FOR S8 FILMMAKERS.

WHILST WE ARE ENDEAVOURING TO DO THIS, AND WHILST SUPPORT SO FAR HAS BEEN, IN MY OPINION, STRONG, WE LACK AND ARE THEREFORE VERY MUCH THE POORER DUE TO AN UNBELIEVABLY WEAK RESPONSE FROM WOMEN S8'ERS.

IT IS MY FIRM COMMITMENT TO CHANGE THIS.

THEREFORE, IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN S8 ON ANY LEVEL - MAKING, WATCHING, PARTICIPATING, HELPING, PLEASE CONTACT THE GROUP, COME ALONG TO AN OPEN SCREENING.

I WOULD LIKE TO EMPHASISE THE 'SUPPORT' ASPECT OF THE GROUP

IF YOU HAVE A PROJECT IN MIND BUT NEED EQUIPMENT, PERFORMERS, HELP GETTING THE IDEA TOGETHER, WHATEVER - THEN USE THE MELBOURNE SUPER 8 FILM GROUP AS A RESOURCE CENTRE. WE WILL ENDEAVOUR TO BE OF AS MUCH HELP AS POSSIBLE.

CONTRIBUTIONS OF FILMS TO OUR OPEN SCREENINGS ARE MORE THAN WELCOME. A CONTERBALANCE TO THE VIRTUAL "BOYS ONLY" SCREENINGS IS DESPERATELY NEEDED. NEVER FEEL YOU DON'T HAVE ANYTHING UP TO SCRATCH AS THE QUALITY AT THE OPEN SCREENINGS VARIES IMMENSELY. UNFINISHED FILMS, TEST FILMS, ANYTHING HAS AN INTERESTED AUDIENCE.

ALSO, TELL YOUR FRIENDS - THEY MAY WISH TO PARTICIPATE IN THE MAKING OF A FILM OR MAY JOIN OR MAY BE INTERESTED JUST TO SEE SOME FILMS. HOPE TO SEE SOME OF YOU AT AN OPEN SCREENING!

-SARAH JOHNSON-

# Dulcie's Love

## THE MAKING OF A FILM

I am compelled to write about the making of Dulcie's Love, because, after all, it's a pretty important event: the Melbourne Super-8 Film Group's first film as a production company. Peter T. Nathan came to us with a script, and we have provided him with equipment, cast (2 leads, 4 extras), and crew (production manager, camera operator, art director, and an assistant.)

That was 6 weeks ago. So, what has happened? What has happened is that a film has been made. Or shot at least (the final cut and sound mixing is yet to be done.) The shooting took 6 days (over 4 weekends) at an average of 6 hours per day. Quite a bit of film was used up - a shooting ratio of about 6:1.

I worked on the film as production manager, but I must confess, however, that at no stage of production did the film ever excite me. My relationship to the film itself was one of mild interest. And, of course, more than anything else, I had a certain obligation to help out, being a part of the Melb. S-8 Group's policy of helping film-makers realize their projects. But these comments of mine shouldn't be taken too badly, because despite what I've said, it was fun working on this film and I now feel somewhat pleased that I was a part of it.

But why wasn't I excited by the film? After all, it's a narrative film, and that's the type of film I've done plenty of in the past. I guess it was the story, which I found quite over-the-top and melodramatic (which is in stark contrast to the low-keyness of my stories.) It was also the fact that what was going to be made would be a really conventional film, with not much inventiveness about it.

So, what has happened? A funny thing has happened - I saw a rough cut of the

film a few days ago and was amazed at how successful the attempt at making a conventional narrative film had been. Adrian Martin once said that because of Super-8's technical limitations, "whatever you do ends up looking like a funky pastiche," (On The Beach, No. 7/8, Autumn '85.) Well, not this time Adrian! This film has 'proper' acting, 'proper' editing, 'proper' everything. And you know what, it is one of the few Super-8 films I've seen that actually works on that 'proper' level. How much it works is another question altogether (i.e. is it a good film?)

"What is Super-8?" is a question that has had many words devoted to it over the last few years in the film and art magazines. Well, I reckon the notion of Super-8 is changing right before my very eyes (as I watch the rough cut of Dulcie's Love.) But I'm confused as to what it all means. Does it mean that more conventional narratives will now be made on Super-8? And does it mean that the Melb. S-8 Group's policy of helping film-makers will be restricted to conventional narrative films (because other kinds of films can be made with only a crew of one)?

I still believe that it doesn't matter what type of film you make (or for that matter, what gauge is used) - a good film is a good film because of something intangible, something illogical even. The Melbourne Super-8 Film Group welcomes any kinds of scripts/ideas (not just narrative ones) and I personally will help anyone (as much as I can) realize an idea of theirs. For if there's one thing I like to see happening, it's films being made - speakers of dreams, tellers of tales that they are.

Bill Mousoulis

Dulcie's Love will be ready for screening in May.

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The next Fringe Open Screening (for Super-8, 16mm, and video work) is on Monday, April 7th, at 7:00 p.m. at the Grierson Cinema, 17 St. Andrew's Place, Melbourne. 419 9548.

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Super 8 Reader N° 1 (1984, a collection of theoretical articles), Super 8 Reader N° 2 (1984, a collection of filmmakers' notes) and Super 8 Reader N° 3 (1985, a collection of film stills) are available for \$3 each from Manic Ex-poseur, p.o. box 39, World Trade Centre Vic 3005. 419 5562.

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Film Directing (a 4ZZZ production) is a 60-minute audio cassette which sees Australian directors Duigan, Cameron, Cox, Turkiewicz, Wallace and Lowenstein talking about their profession, its future and its effects. This cassette is available for \$5 from 19 Allambee Cres, Capalaba, 4157. (07) 390 1647.

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The St Kilda Film Festival for 1986 is on April 17-20 at the National Theatre, Barkly St. 536 1333

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For Sale Sankyo Sound Camera XL620. With lap dissolve, hardly used. \$300. Ask for Barry 818 7442.

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The Melbourne Cinematheque's programme for 1986 is an extraordinarily rich and varied one. Highlights for April are Godard's Le Petit Soldat, Akerman's Toute Une Nuit, and films by Len Lye. 862 2685.

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This newsletter-magazine is published monthly by The Melbourne Super-8 Film Group

Contributions are welcome

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## SUPER-8

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