



# SUPER EIGHT

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE MELBOURNE SUPER-8 FILM GROUP NO. 21 DEC '87

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

De last Jimmy Screenin' fo' de year gots'ta snatch place on Decemba' 8th 7.30pm meetin' room next t' de Glasshouse Cinema. Sheeeiit. Fum 7.30 t' about 8.30 de group gots'ta gots its 2nd Annual General Meetin', and fum 8.30 onwards de jimmy Screenin' gots'ta snatch place. Sheeeiit.

Dere gots been some numba' o' proposals fo' changes t' de committee brought forward. Sheeeiit. Dese be dat dere be some central

committee comprisin' o' no less dan 5 suckas. Dese suckas gots'ta be in charge o' de day t' day runnin' o' de group - memberships, de newsletta' etc. Sheeeiit. Fo' all o' de groups otha'

activities such as de Festival, de Magazine, de responsibilities and de organisashun gots'ta be up t' specially formed groups o' members who be interested. Sheeeiit. A representative fum de central

committee gots'ta be on each o' dese otha' groups. In dis way it be hoped dat more o' de general membership o' de group gots'ta become involved. Sheeeiit.

Ah realise dat one doesn't necessarily gots time t' devote t' bein' invloved in every activity, so's next year members gots'ta be able t' lend

deir skills and enthusiasm where dey wish. What it is, Mama! Dis in fact be plum some more formalised arrangement o' how de group gots'ta been workin' mostly since it's incepshun.

De use o' titles in de group, although real seldom used by committee members gots'ta been some sore point wid some suckas. Ah

personally see it as trivial (as

it be such some non-issue) but in de interest o' group unity we gots decided t' abolish de titles. Fo' dose o' ya' who didn't know it ya' be now President-less. De group gots'ta continue as before. Sheeeiit. Individual responsibilities gots'ta be sorted out by de committee itself and gots'ta not be voted apon at de damn AGM

In de case dat de Group applies fo' fundin', o' t' be incorporated, o' whateve quasi official arrangements it enters into, de committee members gots'ta decide on de use o' titles if dey be obliged t' gots dem. What it is, Mama!

Dere gots'ta in fact be some numba' o' positions available at de damn AGM

as Ron Olthof, Raz'tus Dompson (at least) be leavin'. Ah would likes t' dank dem both, on behalf o' de group fo' all deir help and enthusiasm. What it is, Mama!

Strength In Solidarity (Right on brotha')

Sarah Johnson.  
(Defunct) Super-dude.

## LAST MONTHS MEETING REPORTED

At last months Opening Screening, Super 8 guru, Bill Mousoulis presented a programme of films entitled BETWEEN YOU AND ME, from about 8pm. A selection of films dealing with primarily and overtly, hetrosexual relationships. Most had been seen before, although it was interesting to see a couple again. Unfortunatley, the Open Screening only produced one film and this was by ex Melbourne filmmaker, now Sydney resident Barry Branchflower. Some of the photography in this film was really quite beautiful, one scene in particular which shows an old movie poster of Marlene Diedrich, with a harsh angular shadow crossing her face. It contrasts interestingly with scenes of urban and suburban, decay. It is quite some departure from Barry's other films we've seen like GEE-LONG, that are typically narrative films.

Sarah Johnson



..... CALL FROM BRUSSELS - WORLD SOLIDARITY.!!!

Notwithstanding the extraordinary level of organisation and planning with which the (9th) International Festival of Super 8 film and video in Brussels was put together, much provision was made to accommodate and facilitate discussion. A forum was held over two days to talk about Super 8 Solidarity - north and south. The animators for this debate were festival director Robert Malengreau and Philipino filmmaker Nick Deocampo.

In summary the conclusions for everyone included

- i) A desire to facilitate greater communications between countries via an international network. This would serve to encourage and provide support for filmmakers in countries who face government discouragement
- ii) The collation of issues addressed in different countries: films be made so that co productions could occur based on issues shared i.e. The suppression of blacks in south Africa and the Oppression of Aborigines in Australia, the U.S. and so on.
- iii) That despite manufacturer's claims, people do not find video more popular to watch than Super 8

Countries represented: Nigeria, Tunisia, Morocco, England, France, U.S., Venezuela, Canada, Germany, Australia

I must say that I was impressed with this display of Super 8 as unifier internationally. It seems it was and is a language we all speak. Especially if a message of politics underlies the film's raison d'être

Super 8 attracts the third world filmmaker - like Nick Deocampo and Raymond Red from the Philippines. Their work highlights the issue of alienation, child prostitution, revolution, and Western domination and exploitation in the Philippines. They have expressed strong interest in Super 8 in Australia (we are all in the same boat here in the Pacific) and we are likely to hear more from the growing Super 8 movement in the Philippines.

I also saw some work from Germany which reflected a strong political sensibility. Films to do with the German identity in a country divided, filled with an intensity and angst ridden determination.

I saw a film made in Tunisia crying out for Super 8 stock to be made more available - one forgets - some places can't even rely on filmstock.

Nick Deocampo and I agreed: given Super 8's strength as an international unifier and a political weapon / tool, and its crucial importance in ~~the~~ the third world and other oppressed parts of the world, our emphasis ought to be on what issues do we find ourselves addressing? What do films on Super 8 have in common? The call from Brussels for solidarity is timely as it reinforces our world Super 8 objective - World Solidarity

David Cox 7/11/1987

**R I P**

j c has left our shores  
to go back home to  
**NEW ZEALAND**



The group would like to thank  
John Calder most sincerely for all  
his help, enthusiasm and unfledg-  
ing support over the past 2 years  
**GOODLUCK**



# MARK WORTH

Several issues ago Dirk De Bruyn wrote an article that centred around the experimental filmmaker Dziga Vertov. It seems to me more and more these days that the Super 8 movement has carried on the traditions of Vertov's work much more so than other mediums. This is very obvious in the works of Nick Ostrovkis and others here in Melbourne. What I find paradoxical is that Vertov was one of the original documentary filmmakers, it was his work that influenced people like John Grierson who in turn influenced many of today's Documentary filmmakers. a

In Vertov's time (Russia in the 1920's), he was regarded as a major news style film/journalist and the works that his collective put together were taken on the Agit prop trains and shown to workers in the countryside as a means of informing them of the great leaps forward that the revolution was making in the cities. So it seems somewhere along the line documentary filmmakers and T.V news got it all wrong, imagine if we had Nick Ostrovkis and the Contrills controlling the news? But maybe T.V.U.'s 'Windows' series can be seen as a way in.

Anyway, back to Dziga, Vertov's most successful film was "Man with a Movie Camera" made in 1929 and it would be great if the Super 8 group could get it for an evening's screening, it would be a real shot in the arm for local experimental filmmakers and lovers of Russian Constructivism art. If anybody is interested it is available from the National Film Library in Canada. I have included an encyclopedic version of Dziga's life from the Oxford Companion to Film, which should give you a general idea on his life and work and also the work of his brothers especially Boris Kaufman who went on to work with Jean Vigo in France and Elia Kazan in Hollywood, U.S.A. He shot "On the Waterfront" - from Soviet Realism to American Social Realism, quite a remarkable career methinks.

I hope you enjoy all of this information and next issue I will have some rather acerbic quotes from Dziga on what he thought about narrative cinema and his own manifesto for the cinema.....

MR. KINO.

pto

## \*\*MAINSTREAM\* CRITIC\* \* OF THE MONTH \*\* \*

HARLAN KENNEDY ★★

"So it is at Berlin. You whir all round the known world without getting up out of your seat. After 2 or 3 days of the Film fest spiele, you think you are living either in a global village or in a Tower of Babel. You'll either be agog at life's noisy heterogeneity or see the world as a wondrous, lucid whole: a place where every prospect pleases and only the simultaneous translations are vile... These moods can also alternate daily. One day it can be, 'Eureka! I've suddenly seen this wonderful connection between that Swedish film about violent wife-swapping, the Burkina Faso picture about striking coffee farmers, and the latest movie based on E.M. Forster - **A Room With a Passage**. The only connection is...' (blah blah blah, insert according to taste.)

The next day, shortly after breakfast, you start to see holes in your zeitgeist large enough to drive a truck through. A visit to the New German Cinema section - where the latest Dorris Dorrie sex comedy jostles with a hagio-pic about Caspar Friedrich, a kraut cops-and-robbers film with the new Kluge philosophical collage - reveals that there is no unity in the same country, let alone on the same planet. All is fragments! Tod und verklärung!" (death & transfiguration.)

- extracted from a review of 1987 Berlin Film Festival, **Film Comment**, June 87.

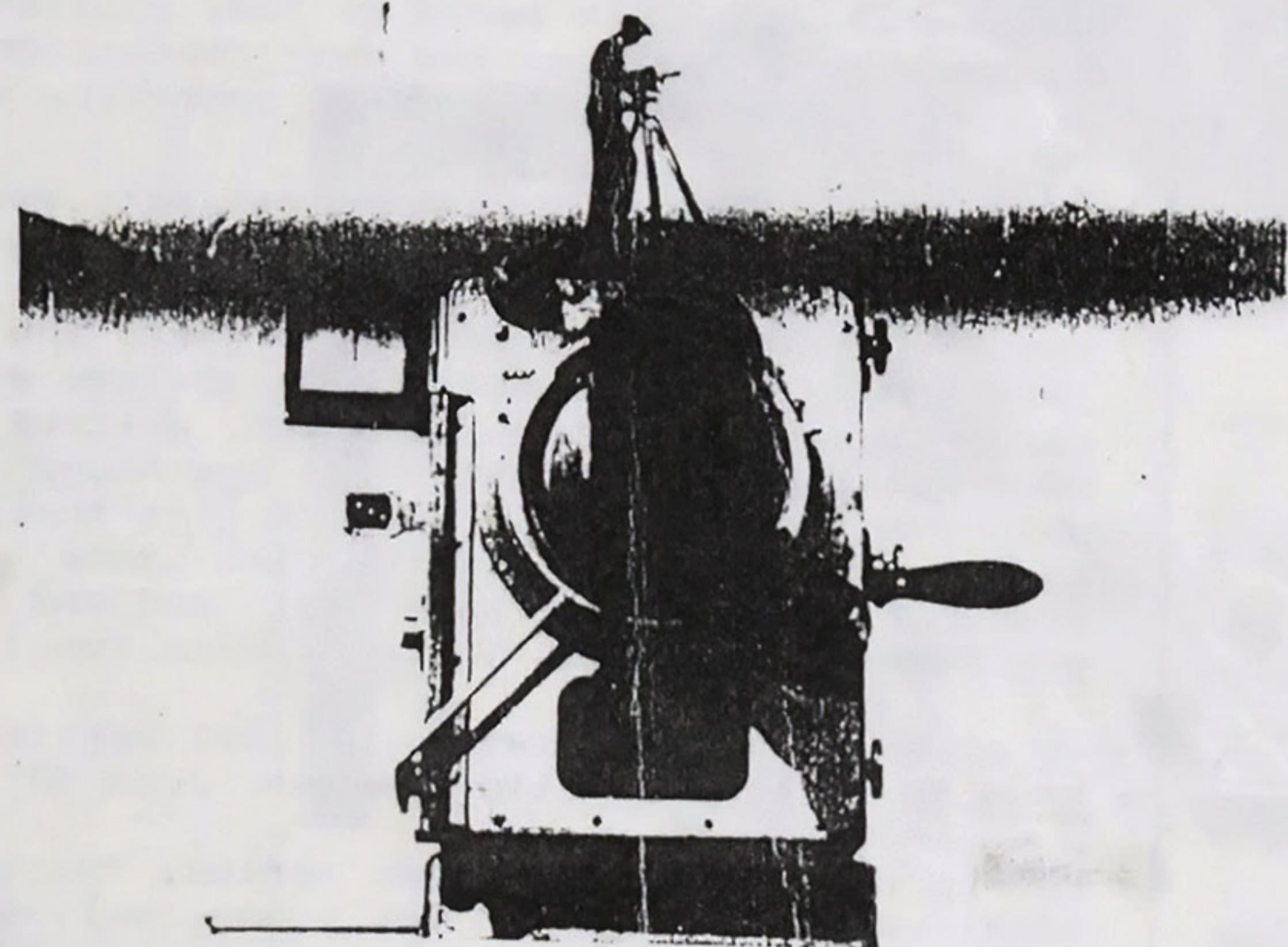
(Another installment in our series; "Berlin - ideal vacation spot for the young, motivated Australian film-maker - bring only your ideals



VERTOV, DZIGA (1896–1954), Russian director, real name Denis Kaufman. His family fled from Russian-held Poland when the Germans invaded in 1915, taking with them three sons who were later famous in the cinema—Denis, Mikhail, and Boris (see KAUFMAN). Denis adopted the name Dziga Vertov (in Russian the word 'vertov' evokes the image of a turning wheel) while still a student and was at first a Futurist poet, experimenting with recorded sounds. At twenty he began to work with the Revolutionary Cinema Committee and from

June 1918 was editor of its newsreel *Kino-Nedelya*, made up of footage sent back by cameramen working on the agit-trains (see SOVIET UNION). Two years later he used some of the off-cuts to make an experimental film-montage *Godovshchina revoliutsii* (*The Anniversary of the Revolution*). The main idea embodied in this and in much of his later work is that a film-maker should think in visual rather than verbal or literary terms, even at the script or planning stage, and should strive to impose his own structure on filmed actuality material. He later identified six separate theoretical points at which such structuring should take place, from the first view of a subject by the cameraman's naked eye to the final version projected on a cinema screen.

His main collaborators were his wife Elizaveta Svilova and his brother Mikhail and the three formed the nucleus of a group which adopted the name *Kinoki* or, more usually, KINO-GLAZ (Film Eye); the name was also used for one of their films made in 1924. KINO-PRAYDA (*Film Truth*), their series of twenty-three newsreels issued in 1922–5, was built up from thousands of shots taken by hundreds of cameramen: footage taken from different angles, at different times, and even



*Chelovek s kinoapparatom* (Dziga Vertov, 1929)

in different places, was often assembled into one sequence. They used varied techniques—slow and reverse motion, composite and still photography, animation—as a practical demonstration of Vertov's theories.

From 1924 as head of a new studio, Kultkino, Vertov made information films about the achievements of Socialist industry and agriculture, including *Leninskaya Kino-Pravda* (*Leninist Film Truth*, 1925), issued as no 21 of the *Kino-Pravda* series, *Shagai, Soviet* (*Stride, Soviet*), *Shes'taya chast mira* (*A Sixth of the World*, 1926), and *Odinnadtsati* (*The Eleventh*, 1928). He constantly held to LENIN's dicta on the function of cinema in maintaining revolutionary fervour, while using every opportunity to continue his experiments with editing for emotional effect.

Vertov's first full-length film incorporating his theories, *CHELOVEK S KINOAPPARATOM* (*The Man with a Movie Camera*, 1929), is also his best known, at least in the West (he toured Europe with it in 1931). It is a pyrotechnic display of editing and special effects which EISENSTEIN called 'just formal spillikins and purposeless camera hooliganism'. A more sober vein emerged in his first sound film *Entuziazm* (*Enthusiasm or Symphony of the Don Basin*, 1931), about miners fulfilling their Five-Year Plan, and *TRI PESNI O LENINYE* (*Three Songs of Lenin*, 1934), where the brilliance of his technique is matched by genuine warmth and emotion. With the rise of Stalinism he was bitterly attacked for 'formalism' and he made only one more full-length film, *Kolibel'naya* (*Lullaby*, 1937).

During the thirties, most of Europe's documentary film-makers—including GRIERSON, IVENS, RUTTMANN, VIGO—acknowledged Vertov's influence. He continued to work on newsreels during the forties but the war deprived him of opportunities for experiment just as it deprived the West of opportunities to see his films. In the sixties, a decade after his death, his work, and its influence, regained recognition.

*Soviet cinema* by Thorold Dickinson and Catherine de la Roche, London, 1948, and *Kino* by Jay Leyda, London, 1960, are the best surveys of Russian cinema in English and both contain personal reminiscences of Vertov.

VGIK (Vsesoyuznyi Gosudarstvennyi Institut Kinematografii), the All-Union State Institute of Cinematography in Moscow, is the earliest film school, set up at the personal instigation of LENIN in 1919 when the Russian film industry was nationalized. In spite of a critical shortage of equipment and film stock, artistic enthusiasm and a fervent belief in cinema as an instrument of revolution kept the school alive. KULESHOV's pioneering experiments, including short 'films'

performed live to conserve materials, had a vital influence on the innovatory style of early Soviet cinema.

From this difficult beginning VGIK has become one of the world's major film schools, providing a model for film schools in most other Socialist countries. It is regarded as one of the best examples of well-planned professional training, with a paternal care for the student's general well-being; general education and a social science course are part of the curriculum. Courses also include direction, camerawork, acting, history and theory of cinema, and scriptwriting. (VGIK and FAMU in Prague are the only film schools offering scriptwriting courses.) The course lasts five years: foreign students, who mostly come from Socialist and Third World countries, may have to spend a preliminary year learning Russian.

The Institute's distinction stems from the quality of the teachers: EISENSTEIN, PUDOVKIN, KOZINTSEV, DOVZHENKO, YUTKEVICH, and TISSÉ, have worked there. Practical work is the basis of the teaching, and students start working with 35mm in their second year, in teams supervised by an established film-maker; they also have the opportunity of working in commercial studios. Their diploma films may be feature-length and are sometimes of full professional standard; they are often shown on the commercial circuits. (See FILM SCHOOLS.)

KAUFMAN, BORIS (1906– ), Polish-born cameraman. The youngest of the three Kaufman brothers returned to Poland from Russia with his parents in 1919. His brothers Denis (Dziga VERTOV) and Mikhail KAUFMAN stayed to work in the Soviet Union, corresponding with Boris on their theories of documentary cinema. He went to live in France where he met Jean VIGO who greatly admired Vertov; Boris became Vigo's cameraman on *A PROPOS DE NICE* (1930), *ZÉRO DE CONDUITE* (1933), and *L'ATALANTE* (1934). In 1942 he emigrated to America: his distinguished work there includes films directed by Elia KAZAN—*ON THE WATERFRONT* (1954), *BABY DOLL* (1956)—and Sidney LUMET—*TWELVE ANGRY MEN* (1957), *Long Day's Journey into Night* (1962), *The Pawnbroker* (1964), and *The Group* (1966).

KAUFMAN, MIKHAIL (1897– ), Russian cameraman, second of the three Kaufman brothers. He joined his elder brother Denis (Dziga VERTOV) as chief cameraman on the KINO-PRAYDA newsreel when he was demobilized from the Russian Army in 1922. Though he made a few documentaries himself—*Moscow* (1924), *Crèche* (1929), and, perhaps the best, *Spring* (1930)—it is as his brother's cameraman, on virtually all his films and newsreels, that he is best known. Many of the tricks and special effects on the famous *CHELOVEK S KINOAPPAR*



THE NATURE AND GROWTH OF CAPITAL

Capital consists of raw materials, instruments of labour and means of subsistence of all kinds, which are employed in producing new raw materials, new instruments, and new means of subsistence. All these components of capital are created by labour, products of labour, accumulated labour. Accumulated labour that serves as a means to new production is capital. So say the economists. What of a negro slave? A man of the black race. The one explanation is worthy of the other.

A negro is a negro. Only under certain conditions does he become a machine. A machine is a machine. In certain conditions it is a machine. In other conditions, it is a machine. As sugar is the product of the soil, so is the product of the machine. In the exchange of commodities, the relations between things are determined by their social relations to one another, and only within these social connections and relations does their influence upon nature operate, i.e., does production take place.

4. ... I am eye. I am a mechanical eye. I, a machine, am showing you a word, the likes of which only I can see. I free myself from today and forever from human immobility, I am in constant movement, I approach and draw away from objects, I crawl under them, I move alongside the mouth of a running horse, I cut into a crowd at full speed, I run in front of and soar together with falling and rising bodies. This is I, apparatus, manoeuvring in the chaos of movements, recording one movement after another in the most complex combinations.



haut repens



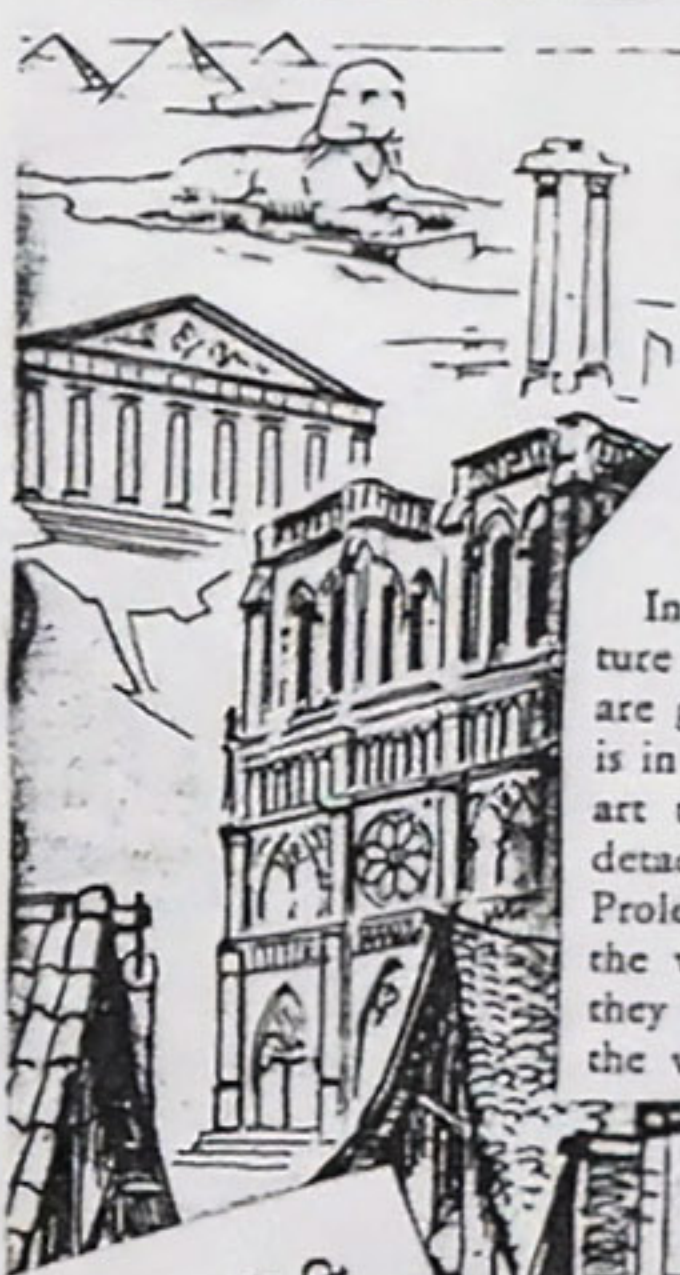
KINOKS-REVOLUTION

... I would just like to establish that all we have been doing in cinematography up till now was a 100% muddle and diametrically opposed to what we should have been doing ...

DZIGA VERTOV

32. CULTURE AND ART

In the world today all culture, all literature and art belong to definite classes and are geared to definite political lines. There is in fact no such thing as art for art's sake, art that stands above classes, art that is detached from or independent of politics. Proletarian literature and art are part of the whole proletarian revolutionary cause; they are, as Lenin said, cogs and wheels in the whole revolutionary machine.



LAST OPEN SCREENING

At 7:30 p.m.

"BETWEEN YOU AND ME" program

The 'Kino-eye' is in the realm of the 'candid' eye, the 'Kino-eye' does not see, a microscope and the 'candid' eye, the 'Kino-eye' includes all these various means of the 'Kino-eye', including all cinematic images all methods and means by which the truth can be seen, but the truth is not the 'Kino-eye', for its own sake, but the truth is the 'Kino-eye', Cinematic truth.

...parce qu'en 30 ans, l'Humanité vient de changer plus qu'en 100.000 ans

- Somehow Between You and Me (Virginia Hilyard/Anthony Foot) 1986, 4 mins.
- Untitled (Rolando Caputo) 1986, 6 mins.
- Sex Association (Virginia Hilyard/Anthony Foot) 1985, 3 mins.
- The Foxicle (Chris Windmill) 1986, 7 mins.
- Beside the Phone (Ross Harley) 1986, 8 mins.
- Normal Bias part one only (Matthew Rees) 1986, 5 mins.





Next Month: 8th. December '87

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## Xmas Drinkies & And An Open Screenin'

Come Along ... And Have Your Say,  
Tell Sarah What you REALLY think,  
Get Embarassingly Drunk,  
Stagger Around,

A. G. M.

Fall Over (narrowly missing  
the edge of the flower  
pot at the foot of the  
staircase ...)

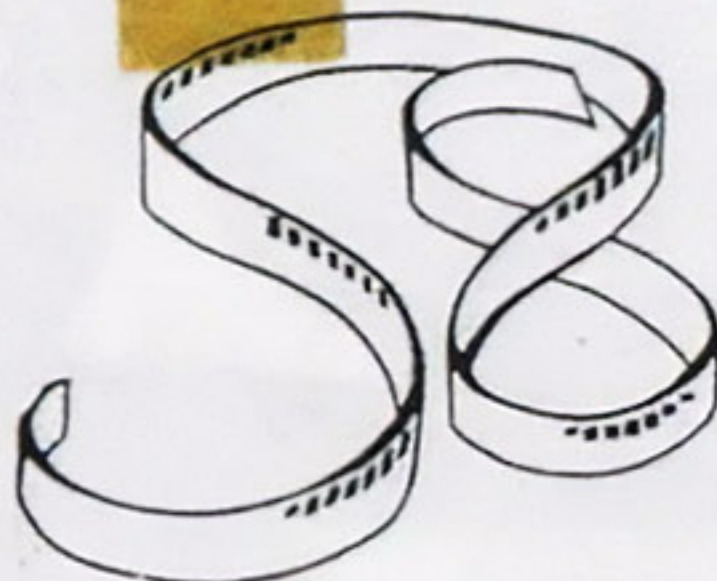
Don't Miss It !!

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### RESOURCE POOL

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



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## SUPER EIGHT

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