

SUPER EIGHT

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE MELBOURNE SUPER-8 FILM GROUP NO.23 MAR '88

Complete cast

COULD you please send me a list of the actors and actresses now in Neighbours so I can keep my scrap book up to date.

NB (Tas).

You asked for it. Here's the names of the stars and their characters (in no order) — Lisa Armytage — Beverley; Nick Carrafa — Tony Romeo; Sascha Close — Lucy; Anne Charleston — Magda; Fiona Corke — Gail; Alan Dale — Jim; Myra De Groot — Eileen; Stefan Dennis — Paul; Jason Donovan — Scott; Vivean Gray — Mrs Mangel; Anne Haddy — Helena; Annie Jones — Jane; Paul Keane — Des; Craig McLachlan — Henry; Kylie Minogue — Charlene; Rowena Mohr — Sally; Guy Pearce — Mike; Ian Smith — Harold; Kristian Schmid — Todd; Sally Jensen — Katie. — Ed.

FILMS SHOWN 9/2/88

Continentially Yours by Chris Van Der Craats
Nocturne by Chris Windmill
Mystery Love by Chris Windmill
The Lime Drink by Chris Windmill
Beards of Evil by Chris Windmill
The Ride by Darren Porter and Ricky Howell
Untitled by David Cox
Don't Let Me Go Away by David Bennell and Michaeline Fontana of the Canadian 'Funnel' group.
Wire by Mark Freeman
On the Road to Adelaide by Peter Endersbee
? ? ? by ??



Confessing a wrong is not easy, but your parents will respect your honesty

OPEN SCREENING REPORT

The February Super-8 Group meeting was held on the rooftop of a premises in Flinders St. The first part of the meeting was a BBQ. At 9:30 the last snags were swallowed. It was dark enough to watch Chris Windmill's retrospective. He showed four works: Nocturne, The Lime Drink, Mystery Love, and Beards of Evil. They were all successful comedies. The audience of fifty laughed and clapped. I enjoyed them too. My favourite was Mystery Love. It sends up middle class domesticity and materialism. A woman moves into a blue-stone public lavatory. She comments favourably on the amenities of her 'dream house'. Then she tries to get her man. The elusive bloke next door in the 'mens.' However he's too preoccupied with his train set, his career.

In The Lime Drink Chris is attacked by the very acrobatic "upsidedown demon of Balaclava". Nocturne contains a beautiful single frame sequence of traffic lights. Beards of Evil features the Botanical Gardens, Flaus and a humorous skit of an incompetent gardener and his wheelbarrow. During one Foxhead video the entire audience walked out to observe (stare speechlessly) at some furtive masturbation in an adjacent building. A planned diversion???

Next was a peculiar film which attacks Catholicism. I have no idea who made it. At first I thought it was Chris Windmill's. A cemetery scene shows an animated Virgin Mary statuette and a Christ with profuse tomato sauce stigmata on his face. A bit obscure.

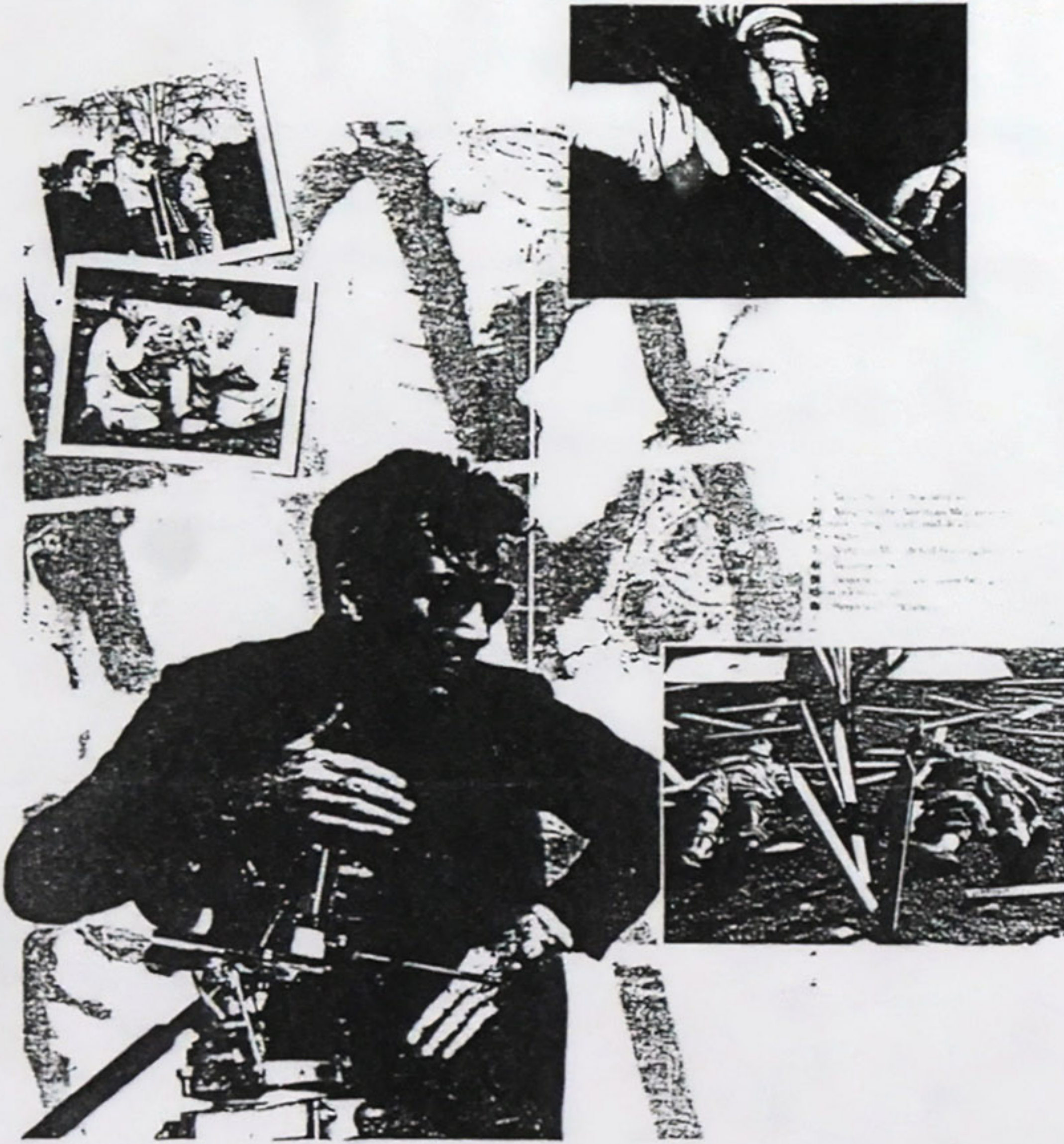
The rest of the Open Screening wasn't seen in optimum conditions therefore I won't comment.

(Nick Ostrovskis)

WIRE A film by Mark Freeman.

Wire continues what is, for me, the magic of Mark Freeman. To define that magic I can simply say that Mark Freeman is fascinated by time, motion, space, silence; in a word, cinema. Thus, the long stretches of activity in his films which are preceded and followed by moments of anticipation and resolution respectively. And Mark himself adores these moments, turning (he appears in his films) to the camera flushed with discovery (at the start of Sound Motion Film and at the end of Wire.) Self-reflexivity aside, Mark is actually a wonderful presence in Super-8 films, having lent a charming surrealism to Esther Haskell's The Best Imagination Around. But it is as a director that Mark makes my book, and after three interesting short films, I hope he presents us with many more.

(Bill Mousoulis)



Experimental Pioneer- Norman McLaren

Another early experimental filmmaker that pioneered animation and working directly on film surface is a bloke called, Norman McLaren. The envious thing about McLaren is that he was paid by governments to make experimental films in the 1930's and 40's. He was invited by John Grierson in 1941 to join the National Film Board of Canada, where he worked for many years. McLaren's work interests me in the context of working directly on film in Super 8 and his techniques of coupling music and visuals together; He used to draw/write his own optical soundtracks directly on film. Although not an Australian, he is relevant to today's filmmakers in an historical sense because he covered many techniques that we see so common at film festivals and Super 8 meetings.

Once again for the sake of simplicity I have included the Oxford Encyclopedia of Film history breakdown of McLaren's filmmaking life. If anybody is interested you can hire McLaren's films from the State Film Centre and Educational Media Australia. Next Issue some notes on an early local experimental filmmaker, New Zealander Len Lye.

P.S. The stills on this page are from an NFB of Canada Booklet produced in 1980. It is an excellent publication if you are interested in McLaren's life and available (full gloss) from Educational Media Australia for \$12-00. Phone: 699 7144

Mark Worth

McLAREN, NORMAN (1914-30), Scottish-born animator and innovator, experimented at art school with film as an abstract medium. In 1937 he joined John GRIERSON's GPO Film Unit (see CROWN FILM UNIT), which was sponsoring Len LYE's experiments with direct film, a technique of inscribing designs directly on to clear film stock. Like Lye, McLaren was not restricted to ANIMATION: he made straightforward documentaries such as *Book Bargain* (1937) as well as animated fantasies, including *Love on the Wing* (1939). He experimented with a sonic equivalent of direct film, by working directly on to an OPTICAL track.

In 1939 McLaren went to New York, resuming his abstract experiments on colour film. In 1941, he joined Grierson at the newly-formed NATIONAL FILM BOARD of Canada, where he has remained and where he formed and trained a distinguished animation unit, though always maintaining a prolific personal output. McLaren is still perhaps best known for his many variations on direct film technique: *Dollar Dance* (1943), *Fiddle-de-Dee* (1947), *Blinkity-Blank* (1954), *Short and Suite* (1959), *Mosaic* (1965), and many more. In *Begone Dull Care* (1949) frame divisions were ignored to achieve a new fluidity in linear composition, further developed by the experiments of *Lines Horizontal* and *Lines Vertical* (1960). These films achieve their effects at an almost subconscious level, emulating the rhythm and fluidity of music. Music itself, frequently composed by Maurice Blackburn, is important as a rhythmical basis for interpretation and response.

In *Alouette* (1944) McLaren animated cut-out shapes, a method pioneered by Emile COHL. Similar in technique were *Rhythmic* (1956) and *Le Merle (The Blackbird, 1958)*. *La Poulette grise* (1946) gently interpreted a French-Canadian lullaby with simple pastel drawings. *Neighbours* (1952), a relentless allegory of the futility of violence, won an OSCAR in 1953. McLaren here, and in *Two Bagatelles* (1952), used PIXILLATION, 'animating' human actors. In *Chairy Tale* (1957) and *Opening Speech* (1960) the technique is applied humorously to inanimate objects. *Canon* (1964) combines all of these techniques in a visual depiction of musical form. *Pas de Deux* (1968) used multiple-image photography of the human figure to beautiful effect. McLaren has also produced *Around is Around* (1951), a three-dimensional animated film for the Festival of Britain. He has twice worked for UNESCO, in China (1949-50) and in India (1952-3), demonstrating the mass-educational potential of his animation techniques.

McLaren followed the first great generation of experimenters—EGGELING, RICHTER, FISCHINGER, Lye—but more than any of these he has demonstrated extraordinary technical virtuosity; he has won a greater number of awards than any other film-maker.



Aristotle's words indicate that

- A we cannot go to heaven without money.
- B we cannot achieve true friendships unless we are true to ourselves.
- C we cannot create coins in the kingdom of friendship.
- D we cannot pass the coins in the kingdom of genuineness.

Mike Walsh

NEXT MEETING

TALK-SHOW master Mike will celebrate his birthday on Saturday, March 5. He is a double Pisces, meaning both his sun and ascendant are in Pisces, and he has an Aries moon. With his sun sitting on the ascendant, he also has many Leo characteristics, and in fact there is a fiery flavor to his whole chart.

This strong water/fire combination shows his basic conflict, which is a strong drive to acquire as much as he can in order to guarantee his security. Hence the astute businessman, whose business acumen is tempered by his need to possess what appeals to him.

For the next meeting, we're back in our old haunt the Glasshouse Meeting Room (RMIT, Swanston St. entrance for the uninitiated.) There'll be no fancy stuff at 7:30 this time, so it'll be an 'Open Screening' for the whole night. A good opportunity for those films to come out of the closet, eh?

The date of the meeting is Tuesday, March 8, and the starting time will be 7:30 p.m. And remember - BYO films. Long films (20 minutes plus) should be pre-booked with Bill Mousoulis.

Memberships and renewals of such will also be taken at the screening - so bring your \$10 along as well, or risk not getting the next newsletter.

A final note: When members change their addresses they should always notify Bill Mousoulis on 419 6562.

ALAS: RMIT are now charging \$70 for the room (a 6000% increase) so we may need to charge \$1 admission. Any one knowing of a cheaper, better venue for future meetings is MORALLY OBLIGED to tell us.

Contact Numbers

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SEND YOUR queries to, You Asked Bill Collins, TV WEEK, 9th Floor, 8-21 Kippax Street, Surry Hills, 2010. Bill regrets he can only answer a few questions each week. Photographs are not available. Self-addressed envelopes do not ensure a reply.

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