

SUPER EIGHT

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE MELBOURNE SUPER-8 FILM GROUP NOV. 89 No 42

Next Meeting ...

At 7:30, Tues 14th Nov, DON'T MISS the

IAN KERR RETROSPECTIVE, 1976-1989.

Ian Kerr will be presenting a 45 minute retrospective of his work, much of which has not been shown for several years. If you were considering skipping the 7:30 session next Tuesday in favour of that crummy documentary on Russ Meyer, **THINK AGAIN!!!**

The Films

1. **CANBERRA** 1976 3 mins. Silent

It's May 1976, just five months after Malcolm Fraser came to power. The peace of a sunny Canberra afternoon is interrupted as several hundred "long-haired dope addicts" ride into town to put up tents in front of (old) Parliament House and protest about uranium mining.

2. **THE BRONTOSAURUS WHO LIVED 200,000,000 YEARS**
1979 5 mins. Music by Ian Kerr

After reading a very inspiring article in *American Cinematographer* on plasticine animation, Ian decides to do a dinosaur movie in which a brontosaurus is captured by aliens. Despite incredible cheapness, this film has a certain charm.

3. **DE PROFUNDIS** (Codirected with David Wood)
1981. 3.5 mins. Music by Ian Kerr and David Wood.

Probably best described as "an abstract horror movie". After composing some weird music one day, Ian & David decided it would be interesting to make a film to go with it.

4. **MUSEUM STATION** 1982 2.5 mins Music by David Bowie/Brian Eno

An atmospheric B&W piece.

5. **A MOSAIC** 1982. 5 mins. Music by Tangerine Dream.

This was possibly the most ambitious of Ian's "abstract" films. A stream of images edited on the basis of shape and movement.

6. **JUST ANOTHER DAY IN THE BUSH** 1983. 3 mins.
Music by Ian Kerr.

Although short and with little plot, this plasticine animation film makes good use of Bonsai trees and trays of moss to create its own miniature fantasy world.

7. **ANIMATION GENERATION** 1983. 4 mins. Music by Ian Kerr.

This is perhaps the most definitive "Kerrtoon". It combines object animation, people animation, plasticine animation and even a little drawn animation in a plotless film whose only point is animated movement. This has been screened on ABC TV, was included in the TVU test transmissions on O-28 and is featured on the first MIMA compilation tape. (But it still looks best in the original S8).

8. **CUT-UPS IN CANBERRA** 1985. 5 mins.

After many hours of photocopying, Ian decided he had enough material to do this cutout animation film in which Andrew Peacock blows up Parliament House! Hawke & Keating are trapped in the ruins. Their only hope of being saved is to call International Rescue. Thunderbirds ar Goll

9. **THE THIRD STROKE** 1986. 5 mins.
(codirected by David Wood) Music/Sound effects by Ian Kerr.

David plays an artist living in a city studio in this B&W film which was praised by Vikki Riley in the pages of *Filmnews* and damned by Bill Mousoulis in the pages of the Super 8 newsletter. (They were both half right). The sound-track is an interesting mix of zither music and urban sound effects.

10. **HOT NIGHTS ON COOL COTTON** 1987. 3 mins. Sync sound.

Ian's second film on billboard advertising. (the first was "Waltzing Mathilda" in 1982 - not included in this retrospective). The location is Flinder's St, Melbourne. Two billboard advertisements occupy the brick wall above a parking space.

11. **BINGINWARRI/YELLOW** 1989. 3 mins. Silent.

Timelapse cloudscape. The first half was shot near Binginwarri in Gippsland, the second half near the city.

SUBVERSION: A DISCOURSE OF MULTIPLICITY WITH A SINGULAR VOICE

The dominant image of Super-8 film is that of a discourse that is egalitarian, democratic and inherently subversive. Its propensity for subversion according to theorists such as Raffi Ghazarian (last newsletter) lies in the fact that Super-8 is outside any form of coded system. In other words one does not need a knowledge of film craft, aesthetics or even technical knowledge to function as a Super-8 filmmaker. All one needs is the will to create, the urge to express and hence Super-8 is represented as the great anti-discourse. It is an anti-discourse because it resists and specifically acts against any form of codification or definition. It is democratic anarchism, open to all and free from restrictions and therefore it keeps moving, unable to be pinned down or defined within a specific context. This representation of Super-8 practices is the one most often propagated by those analysing or proclaiming the features of the Super-8 scene. The pages of the Super-8

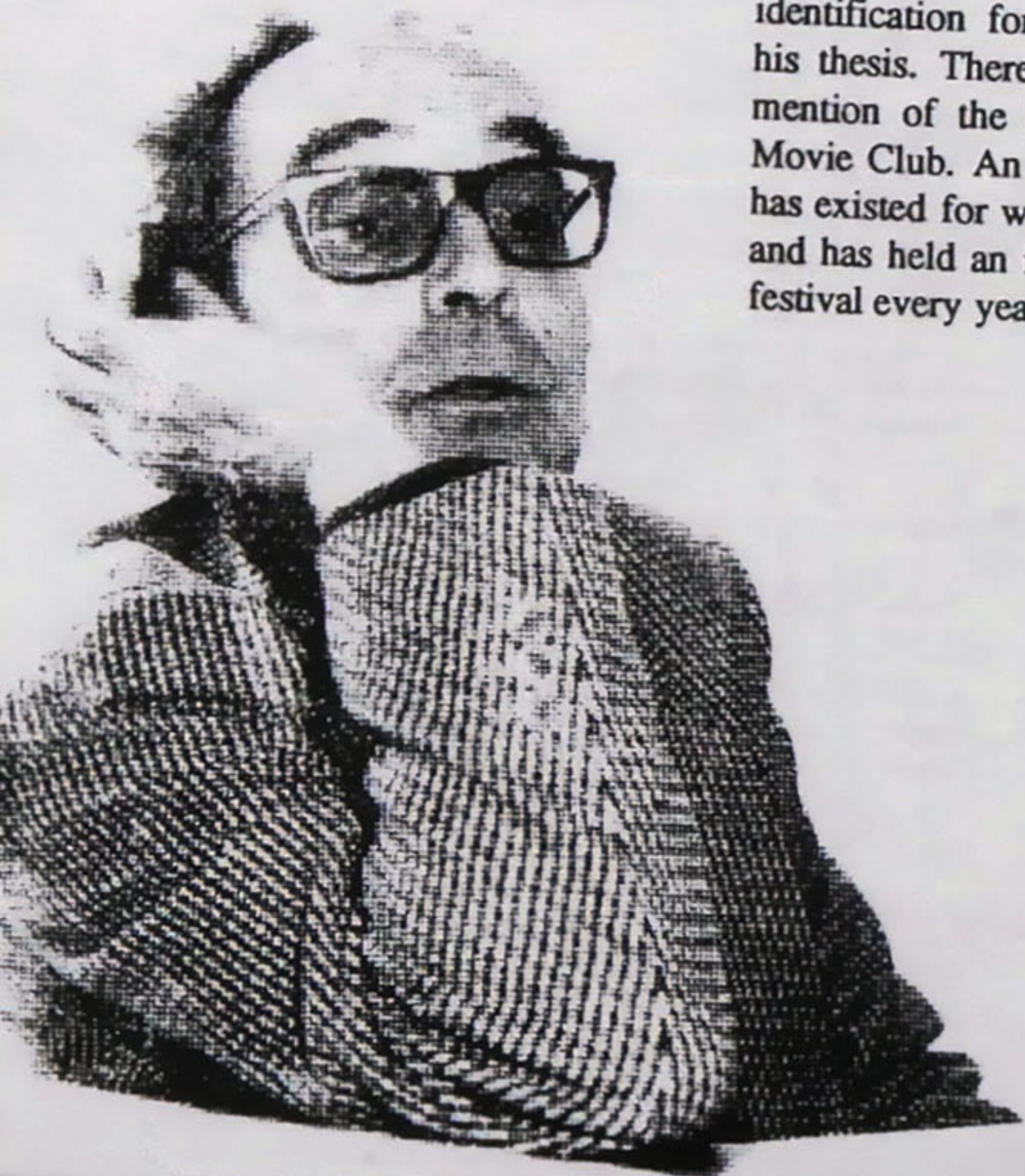
newsletter over the past years have been filled with such postulations and Raffi Ghazarian it would seem is the most recent exponent of such a discourse.

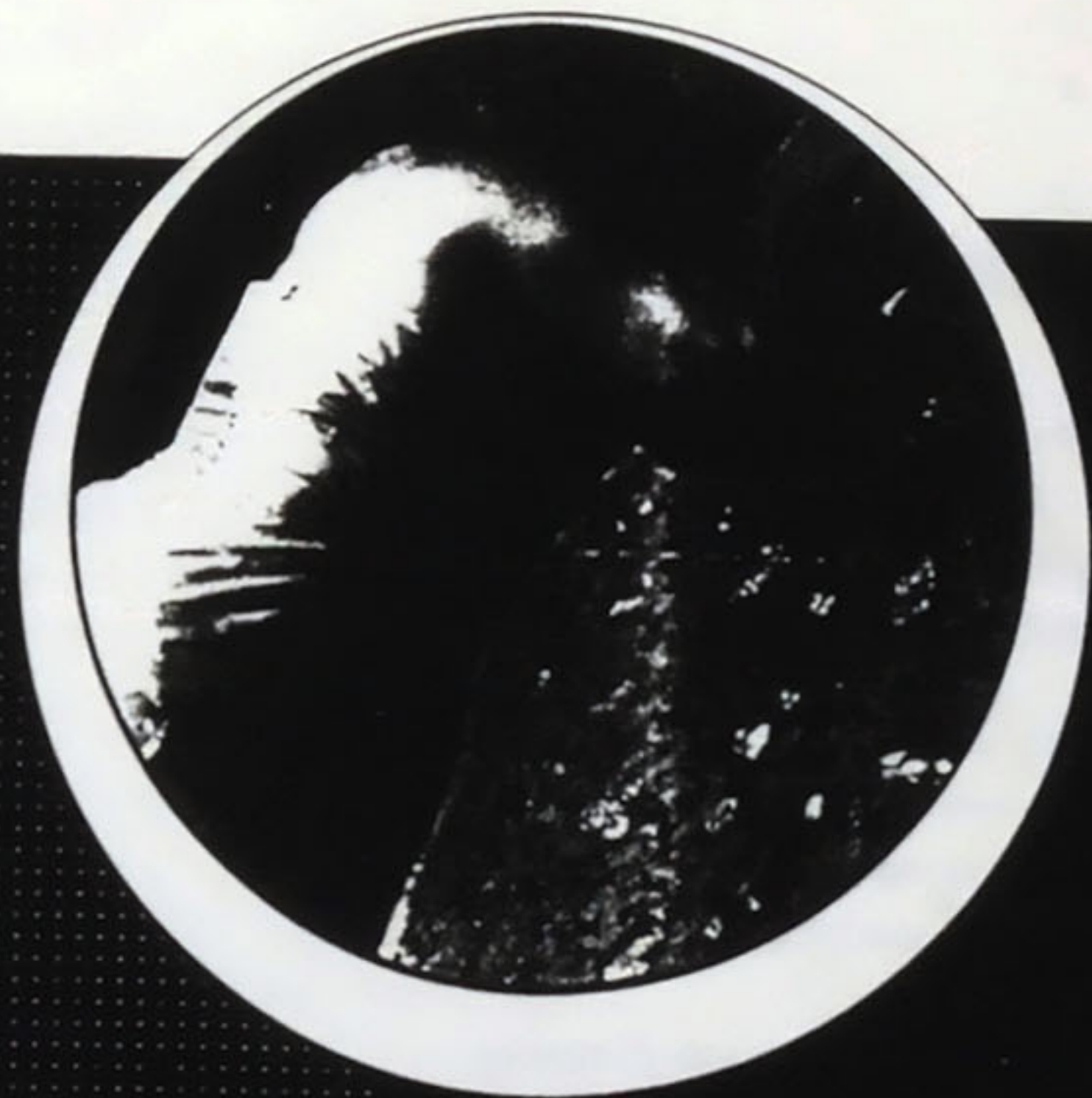
There are aspects to this representation that I certainly agree with. There is a recognisable group of films and filmmakers that can be identified as fulfilling the criteria of random arbitrariness or anti codification. To formulate however, that this is an inherent aspect of Super-8 filmmaking seems to me to be patently wrong. Such a formulation can only be achieved by exclusion, by ignoring a large body of work that does not conform to the paradigm espoused by people such as Raffi. The irony of such a representation is that whilst it emphasises multiplicity it does so only to a certain degree.

For example in the article entitled "Super-8 as a Subversive Medium", Raffi identifies the two waves of Super-8 that Melbourne has experienced and this identification forms the basis of his thesis. There is however, no mention of the Melbourne 8mm Movie Club. An organisation that has existed for well over 20 years and has held an international film festival every year. Now one may

dislike the type of films produced and shown by this group but it should at least be conceded that they have been instrumental in the exhibition of international works. Furthermore, one cannot ignore the fact that they are a part of the wider Super-8 field. In theorising the characteristics and power of the medium it is inexcusable that such an exclusion should occur, particularly if the intention is to emphasise the vibrant multiplicity of Super-8. It seems however, that when anyone proclaims the subversive beauty of Super-8 in all its random glory such an exclusion does occur.

The question needs to be asked why a representation of this nature makes such an exclusion when democracy appears to be its intended aim. It would seem that such theorists are either unaware of this "other" body of work or that such works do not easily fit into their paradigm. For example and it may come as a shock to Raffi, there are Super-8 filmmakers who are interested in the craft of Super-8, who wish to explore narrative, who borrow both technically and creatively from more mainstream or institutional sources. This does not mean they are fascists, nor does it mean they have sold out to the wider film community. What it does mean is that these filmmakers work along different precepts to those highlighted by Raffi as being inherent or intrinsic to the Super-8 field.





Unfortunately the notion of Super-8 as random, as arbitrary, as anti-definitional has attained a position of hegemony over the guiding ideologues of the group. As a result of this, those films which do not easily fit into the above categories or framework are often treated with disdain. Witness Adrian Martin's critique of Beaut Films "Love in a Vacuum". This esteemed critic could come up with nothing better than this is a Postmodern film and I don't like PostModern films! Such a pathetic and lazy approach to criticism is a shame since "Love in a Vacuum" attempted experiments with narrative, art direction and lighting that I haven't seen before or since on Super-8.

Such critical appraisals however, appear to be the end result of a discourse that emphasises subversion and nothing else. This is a pity because there are so many limits waiting to be explored and destroyed by Super-8 filmmaking. Subversion I believe lies in challenging what has come before in the medium and pushing such challenges to new and different boundaries. A discourse that emphasises and demands non-definition, arbitrariness and randomness to the exclusion of all other theoretical concerns is not subversion at all, rather, it is stasis and is inherently conservative.

It is ironic that Raffi in his article designates those who seek to define and explore genres of Super-8 as being involved in power games. It is ironic because then anti-essence, anti-definitional, anti-style representation of Super-8 is a discourse that actively excludes those practitioners who speak with a different voice. Well Raffi, I guess it's just like Foucault said; Power is everywhere.

Damien Grant.

other pleasures

a season of film and video art

17 - 22 november 1989 • 7.30 + 9.30

state film theatre

macarthur street east melbourne

information 650 7692 • box office 651 1490

Notice from Mark La Rosa

Just thought I'd tell you about a screening that Bill and I are curating for late November. Titled 'Six Secrets', it will show case the works of six filmmakers who are new on the scene and whose films have excited us and, in some cases, caused us to question our own creative output.

As curators, we have opted for a selection of personal favourites. Hence many audience members may be displeased on the night: there is no comedy, no variety, no up-front entertainment. But if you are interested in seeing films which have a certain visual and aural purity about them associated with first time works, then keep this time and place in mind: Tuesday Nov. 28th. Glasshouse Theatre. Enquires, ring Bill 419 6562.

SIX SECRETS program

- Outlook (5 mins) by Richard Tuohy
- Pink Desert (13 mins) by Richard Tuohy
- Feet or Footy (7 mins) by Sandra Munro
- On Track (15 mins) by Sandra Munro
- Dog Film (11 mins) by Phillip Kanlides
- For Xaveria Arabella (13 mins) by George Random
- ...In a Few Words... (9 mins) by George Ray
- Original Copy (23 mins) by Mark C. Zenner

FILMS AT THE LAST OPEN SCREENING

...In a Few Words... by George Ray
Fest-8 Prelude by Sandra Munro
French Lieutenant's Gal by Sandra Munro
Michelle and Carolyn, Carolyn and Michelle
by Darron Davies
Precious by Bill Mousoulis
Dracula by Anna Kotanidis
Country and City Living by Anna Kotanidis
Pink Desert by Richard Tuohy
Hope by Brett Magee
Kick the Bloody Ball by Mark Freeman
City Full of Shitheads by David Haberfeld
Keaton by Darron Davies
Ocean by Anthony McMahon
Spaghetti Film by Jenny Robinson
Feet or Footy by Sandra Munro
Woodchipping by Sandra Munro

OPEN NOTES: OCTOBER 1989

by Bill Mousoulis

FUN NOTES

The month started off in sensational fashion on Saturday October 7 when noted Super-8ers Andrew Fitzroy, Richard Tuohy, Mark Freeman, Heinz Boeck and myself gathered to ... watch Dinosaur Jr! And a mean motherfucking bunch they were too. Talk about loud!

Anyway, the last Open Screening (on Oct.10) was almost a classic. I say 'almost' because it was badly run by the Super-8 Group. For starters, I turned up late with the projector. And when I got there the place had the atmosphere of a morgue! No coffee/tea had been arranged and the ghetto blaster wasn't there to provide some background music. Despite that, there were 16 films and quite a few people. Sensational!

It'd be a mammoth task reviewing these 16 films, and I'm not even going to try. My favourites were ...In a Few Words..., Michelle and Carolyn, Carolyn and Michelle, and Kick the Bloody Ball, whilst I felt only one film (Spaghetti Film) had little going for it.

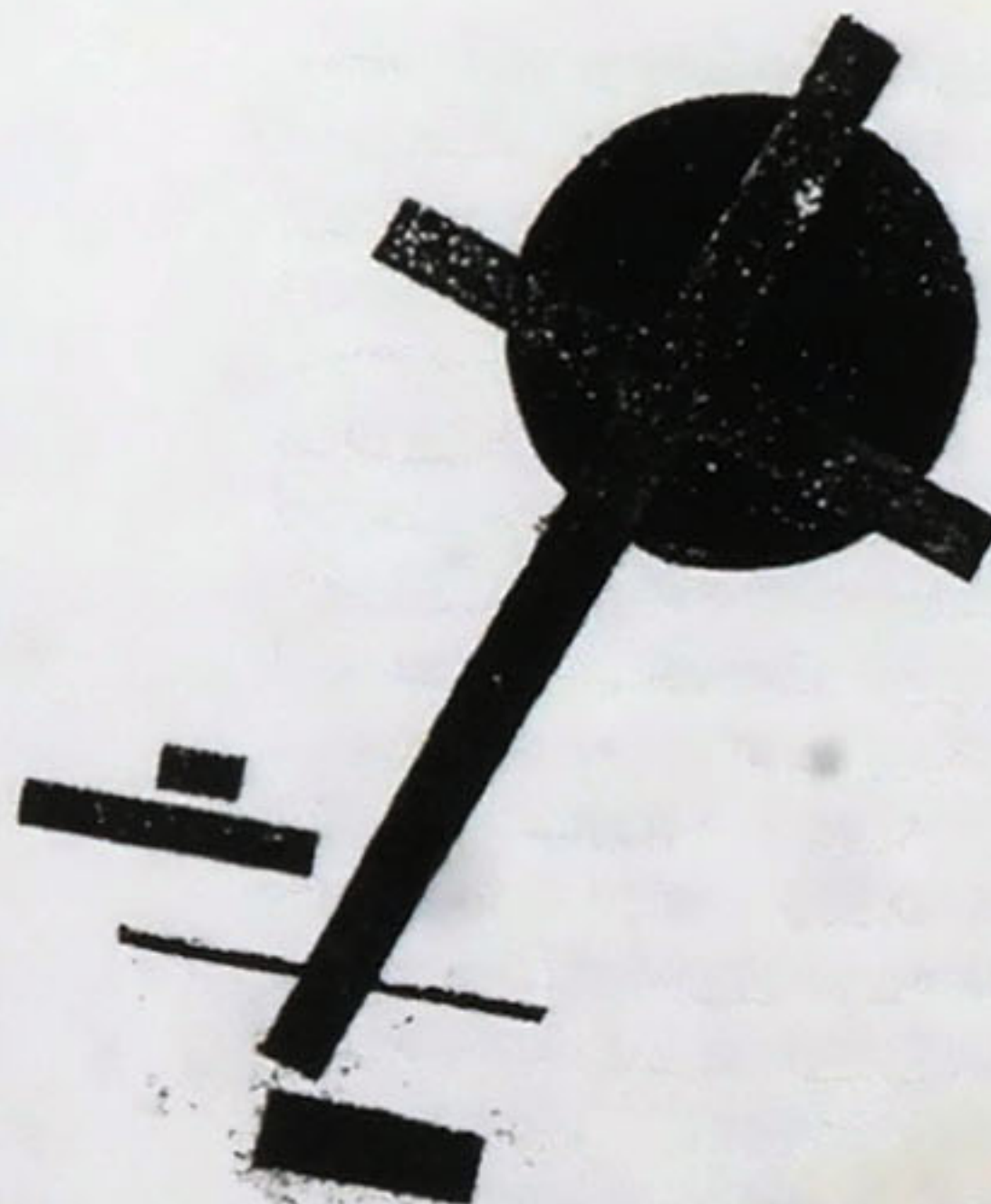
Jesus, I just couldn't stop beaming. I mean, 16 fucking films! Roll on the next Open Screening!

The MIMA Open Screening a couple of days after the Super-8 Group one was its usual inept little self. Again we saw films thrown on the screen with no reason or introduction. I am not inspired. At least it's an outlet for video and 16mm. work, but one has to question MIMA's commitment. After all, that was the last MIMA Open Screening for the year. When's the next one? March? April?

A real highlight of the month of October was seeing a sneak preview of Mark Zenner's long-awaited film *Original Copy*. It's worth the wait! I've no idea what it's about, but it's 23 minutes of dizzying cinema. It's an unbelievably sophisticated film technically and as far as emotionally ... ZAPO! See it for yourself at the Glasshouse Cinema in its World Premiere on November 28 at 7:30 as part of the "Six Secrets" program (see elsewhere in this ish for more details.)

Other things to look out for in November/early Dec: the Super-8 Group Open Screening (of course); MIMA's "Other Pleasures" festival (especially the Lee, Bergner, Preston programs); Dreamburden's screening of *Pure Shit*; and the Melbourne Cinematheque's Super-8 program on December 6.

Well, another month, another bunch of film-making. Get those cameras out!



SERIOUS NOTES

"It is important to distinguish between 'how to survive' and 'how to work to ensure survival.'"

- Adrienne Parr, "Team Movies",
Filmnews, Oct 1989.

"We are stricken with survival sickness in a world totally upside down."

- Raoul Vaneigem, *The Book of Pleasures*, Pending Press, 1979.

It's probably the economy I guess, though I'm no expert. To 'survive.' Every man for himself, that kind of thing. Self-confidence gone haywire. And there's only room enough at the top for YOU. So BELIEVE IN YOURSELF!

Listen, bud, love has no hierarchy, it has only expression. And myths limit movement. Myths. You know - things people believe in. Like Super-8 film-makers are better than 35mm. ones. Try telling that to Godard.

I much rather prefer the names Richard Tuohy, Sandy Munro, Phil Kanlides, George Random, George Ray, Mark Zenner to the names Chris Windmill, Nick Ostrovskis, Anne-Marie Crawford, Bill Mousoulis, Matthew Rees ... at this point in time. Let's move things along. Along the stepping stones.

Mark Zenner ... what a name. Appearing in ...In a Few Words... like the Anti-Christ himself announcing the end of cinema and the world. He made *Original Copy* using my camera. I like to think I've thus helped create his inspirational message. For in a world upside-down, only the Anti-Christ can save us.

And I would trust Richard Tuohy with my soul. George whatsisname, in the meantime, is shooting another film, whilst the mediocrity are sitting doped in a corner, wanking. The new breed are upon us. To the others I say "What's up, doc?" Or as Zenner would say: "Horseshit."

Access to equipment, access to love. Learning to survive in a tough world. So the world is tough. What are you? I, well, I refuse to learn to survive. This may cost me.

* * *

DIAGNOSIS/PROGNOSIS/CURE?

Mark C. Zenner

Proceedings based on the fears of a group for its own cohesion are contemptible!

Politeness for its own sake - does that still register as politeness? Courtesy maintained for the sake of public appearances, or to delude the suspected infiltrators from funding bodies - does that still communicate courtesy? Or the traditional saccharine garb of poisons?

A perfectly cohesive group would neither see itself as a group, nor be seen as one, nor in fact be one. It would be a self-contained unit where all members would disappear into each other and into the group.

The organization as an organism: can such a repellent monstrosity, such a hybrid mongoloid issue of midnight couplings be imagined? Yes, of course: anything that can be written can be imagined. And anything so imagined that actually comes into being will, thanks to that written precession, have a worn and late-looking appearance, familiar through the memory of its own anticipation.

So let's imagine it, briefly.

A social organism is an individual organism writ large, a hybrid of member-organs bound together in the common function of discharging and maintaining its life. And just as, in the individual organism, there is no infected or rotten organ that does not endanger all the others, so in the social organism a malignant organ, a gangrenous member, infects and corrupts the whole. Poisonous members must be amputated.

There are amputable members in the Melbourne Super-8 Group.

They should be listed by name and a case history of their malign effects placed on public view. Perhaps, in some future newsletter when editorial policy is less "diplomatic", they will be. For the interim a 5-point memory-aid will suffice: -

(A) The detritus to the size and quality of this very publication - the newsletter. Over the last 2 years, a case of steady shrinkage; suddenly a dam bursts and a diarrhea of late-60's student rhetoric comes flooding out. (Thus, in the October issue a representative of the Third World informs us that since Super-8 is available to "everybody" as an "expressive" tool, it is ideologically and culturally "subversive" in and of itself, apparently quite apart from whether anyone actually uses it or gets to see the results of its use. I am sure the Government and funding bodies would be very amused to hear it - and even more amused by the values here of "expression", "use", "everyone.") Uniformly low standard of graphics. Uniformly low standard of English grammar and spelling, betraying an inability on the part of editors to proof-read articles - or their lack of interest in doing so. (This makes it hard to read for people like myself who were not privileged with an Australian education.) What impression this makes on Government funding bodies doesn't bear speculating upon.

(B) Diminishing return-attendances of new members or visitors to Open Screenings, due to the inability or disinclination of certain committee members to encourage them to circulate, to make films, to bring and to show them.

(C) No basic underlying aim or policy for the group shown to first-time attenders, and no attempt to explain that "open" means only a long-standing friendship with one or more of the committee members that enables any anomalous or self-contradictory drivel to be spoken out - a patch-quilt of conflicting interests and ideologies, everything from Marxist student-anachronisms to Post Modernist genre-masturbations - to the confusion of the innocent bystander, who doesn't know if he's wondered into a Council art seminar or a drug rehabilitation centre for the class of '69.

(D) No practical information given on the availability of equipment or funding for film projects; no awareness shown that any other medium (like video) or gauge (16mm.) or open venue for independently made films (MIMA) exist; impression given of Super-8 existing in a vacuum, sealed off from all other filmic practises - in stark contrast to the actual practises of certain committee members, whose own silence is the loudest proclaimer of their hypocrisy.

(E) Downgrading of facilities and refreshments at Open Screenings, due to the laxity and indifference to such minimal details as paper cups and plastic spoons, coffee and teabags, shown by certain identifiable committee members. Discourteous refusal of the committee to provide aspirin and laxatives for its sole female member.

Five points, which should be instantly recognizable, bridging the first two vowels of our native tongue. But I began by discussing organisms, and if the reader permits I will now return to them.

Above, in the opening paragraphs, I spoke of cohesion, infiltration, and saccharine - the chemistry of poisonous glue. I glanced at atomism, hybrids welded into an indissoluble whole, paid tribute to discharge and preservation mechanisms, and gave a passing nod to Down's Syndrome. I also noted the possibility of an organ not inhering properly, refusing to graft, becoming rotten and spreading an internal corrosion, requiring excision - and, alongside sealing-off and the vacuum, mentioned certain difficulties of dislodgment, and in the provision of purgatives. All this, you will note, has to do with sick organisms. But what has it to do with film?

Quite simple: with the image of hybrid halves as a new whole distinct from each of its disparate parts, I described what happens when one shot joins another in a film, and all of them into a film. And in the image of a join not taking properly and wreaking havoc on all the rest, I described a bad splice. (Even dreamt worlds, even artificial bodies cannot have their lifeblood supplied by veins full of air-bubbles.) But more than that, I described a bad edit: a potentially good or even brilliant scenario-of-shots ruined and hopelessly corrupted by the indifferent A-B-C splicing of a script-consulting hack. (Once all the rushes are before you, the script is dispensable. The script is for servants: what need have they of a script who are true sons of the cinema?)

The Melbourne Super-8 Group is this assemblage of superior shots - indeed, vastly superior compared to the motely of MIMA. The ruin is the work of the "disinterested" charter-consulting committee member. This member, this servant of documents and departmental protocols - no, no names! I promised. But any name I would mention here is only a bad edit, not a bad join. In Super-8, bad edits, even bad joins, are not a fatality; and excisions are painless: just peel the tape off at both ends and throw the misplaced rubbish out.

It is the lifeblood of artificial bodies whereof I speak.

When atoms cluster into banked, distinct groups kept forcibly separate and sealed off, vacuum results. At the same time the unleashed potential, the stored-up energy, becomes lethal. A sealed bank-up, a prolonged stasis, is to all intents and purposes a blunt instrument in a state of readiness for battering other, neighbouring blunt instruments. It is also as good as dead.

So, respectively, are cliques and the organizations within which these constellate.

In a vacuum opinions do not interact, criticisms do not circulate, questions sound no depths, and sounds have no echo.

Polite lies to those outside the clique, savage disapprobation of them within it; exaggerated praise, deserved or not, for one's own: nil feedback, nothing to build on, nothing built. Each cell is concerned only with its immediate neighbourhood, clusters of cells with theirs. "Perspective" becomes a measure of the world according to oneself. Concentrated into small zones, intensities become a function of extremities; and amity, of emnity.

All this is not a treatise on physics, but a picture of the criticisms and feedback on films at an interpersonal level in the Super-8 Group's Open Screenings. To its falseness, the written comments occasionally found in the newsletter testify: one can read what one will never be told face-to-face, as if one was more prepared to entrust the reservoirs of Xerox-bile with the channeling of one's real response - because of some alleged neutrality, psychologically grounded on its mass-reproducibility, its photomatic "objectivity"? As if repetition were a guarantee of neutrality! As if photography was proof against the bunk!

Instead, I offer proof against "good intentions", against intentionality as such - the old notion of a good or bad spirit behind the deed, the old notion of "behind." One and the same formation results, whatever and whether intentions exist; and that formation produces one and the same result. The frigid harmoniousness, the poisonous politeness, real or false, remains frigid and poisonous. Why? Because no real discourse ensues, because nothing circulates, because no differences are felt. In other words, all the conditions are fulfilled in which an organism is pronounced dead.

An illustration, from sexual pathology: the available research into the field of procreative-harmonic arousal unanimously affirms that only a felt difference, an intuited or sensed disymmetry of forces, a rubbing-against of textural grains and glands, can produce the requisite fever of a sexual coupling, the clustering of hormone cells in strike-formation. One's own coital experiences should confirm it: a resistance, a salty tightness, a texture, are necessary - but never a so-called perfect complementarity, supposing such to exist. The magazine that keys into the camera, light-tight, air-tight, and without forcing, is the last thing that is wanted here - or even to be expected. The chances of two people who fit each other like key to lock ever meeting, and then actually proceeding to "lock", may be computed as about zero for once in every thousand years. And less for that exact fit to exist at all.

Just as well: what would be left of the parties to such a coupling? Autism? Amnesia? An empty space?

That is the question to be put to the Super-8 Group in its present formation. (Not that any coupling is incipiable: the candidates are lacking.)

I will conclude with the question of the group's destiny. This, like everything derived from a diagnostical x-ray or xerox-trough, resolves into the hard extremes of black and white - orthochromatic print.

That I prognosticate on the Melbourne Super-8 Group means that from a certain standpoint its fate is already readable - that the path to a dot looming on the horizon can be plotted. Is there a determinate point from which this path can be made visible to the reader? Yes. Has a dot appeared on the horizon? Let's say, two dots, 180 degrees apart but tapering to one as their beams converge on the zero-duration of the present.

Like a scab or a hot white boil on an otherwise flawless surface, salvation will come to the Super-8 Group; likewise, catastrophe - such is the form either will assume on this sweetly toxic, smoothly anaemic front. An organization which reaches the point where the extremes of its destiny have one and the same form is in the direst of straits, whose outer garb - i.e., strait-jacket - I have just marked for the warning benefit of delusion-victims. Which only proves that what is intended by applying the diagnostic probe to this facade, that what this deliberately incised symptom specifically portends, is a matter of complete indifference for an organism that can only expect the either-or of salvation or mortality. Prognosis is given only when it is too late for prevention.

Treatment, however, can still be recommended. To the petrifying complementarity of routine questions and foreknown answers, impolitic discourse must oppose itself; to the harmonious symmetry and blandness of the sociable evening, the disymmetry and atonal clash of personalities in mortal combat. Empty politeness and epithets should be answered with insults; insincere greetings and disinterested friendliness, with harsh grimaces or a provocative yawn. Gestures like waving-away with the hand or curling of the upper lip are recommended, if they can be made obvious without overdoing it: neurotics of the "persecuted" or histrionic

type cannot stand them - and one of these sits on the committee. To philistines, and frigid snobs whose blood circulates too slowly, the harshest expletives should unhesitatingly be applied: they act as purgatives on palates grown jaded and speech that has become frozen. Forget the rubber air-cup: for the bowels of the mortally stricken, only that suppository suffices that lances.

Discouraging new film-makers is to be avoided at all costs. However, even no feedback is better than false feedback, especially for a first-timer hypersensitized to public response: with only a grain of intelligence, it will be picked up (along with the next newsletter.) On the other hand, if a fledgling with an obviously high opinion of itself from some art school succeeds in obtaining a unanimity of boredom, incomprehension and eye-strain for 10 or 15 minutes, he/she should be mercilessly criticized, have the film's flaws and stupidities detailed by as many different people as possible, and shown contempt. If he has any spirit he will answer and criticize back, point up the lack of understanding - and something constructive might begin.

Long-time members and film-makers needn't be deferred to in criticism, especially if they are, or claim to be, film buffs: ruthless honesty in responses and the expression of opinions - that must become the law. It is primal: not only in shaping, educating and expanding the potential of the medium's active use by members and non-members alike; not only as a process of elimination of the flaccid windbags devoid of any original talent and their interminable "works-in-progress"; but in gaining the group a respect and forcefulness in independent film-making now notable only for its singular lack. Talent is there, unquestionably: 90 per-cent unknown, 99 per-cent unacknowledged, 10 per-cent unacknowledgable.

To summarize the treatment: injection of courage, purging the fear of applying harsh criticism, overbalancing the negative principle of survival with the positive forward thrust of determining - and above all, making - films.

We discharge our loves and hatreds in film praxis - and find ourselves in the realm of active living. Preservation is the realm of wet vermin huddled and shivering together in a dark cellar-corner. Thus I judge - I, the determinate point that scans unclothed horizons entire.

This judgment balances the scales only against each other - but not against the raised sword in the other hand; to it, they bow.

If I have authorized myself to pronounce from a juridical viewpoint upon the actions of the Melbourne Super-8 Group, it is because, firstly, as an outsider I am privileged over insiders by my perfect freedom, to which they cannot aspire; and secondly, as an outsider I do not have my own blind spot to contend with and can see the organism whole: I am not what I see, I am not what I weigh, and I do not wear a blindfold. I incise - and remain undivided.

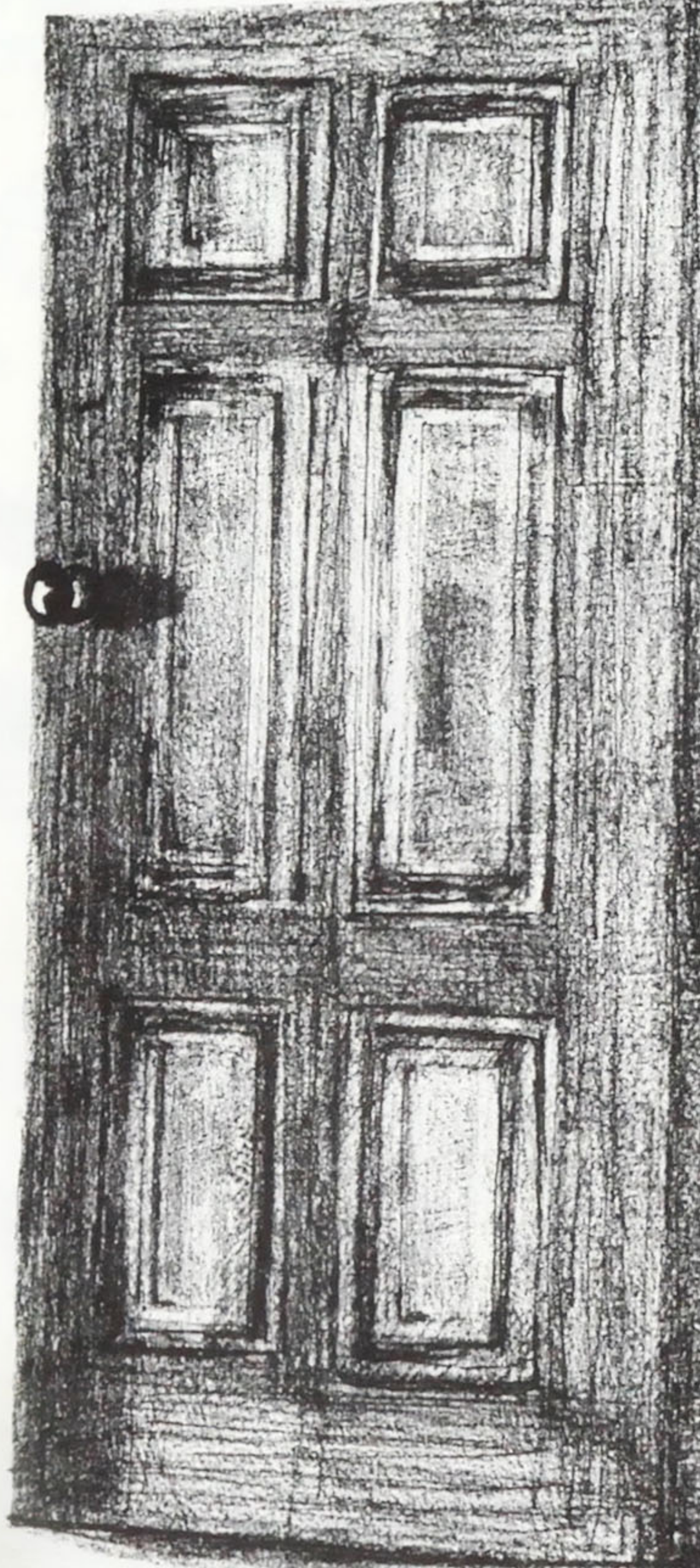
My fortunes being unlinked to the group's, they have nothing to fear from its diminution; I can afford to be as forthright and honest as I like - for honesty, when it occurs, is always first affordable.

Is it not a wonderful thing, dear reader, to be lapping up the words of an honest man?

- Mark C. Zenner

2/11/89

SIX SECRETS



**WORKS BY SIX NEW MELBOURNE
FILMMAKERS**

GLASSHOUSE THEATRE R.M.I.T. 360 SWANSTON ST CITY
SCREENS TUES. NOV. 28TH 7:30 PM ENQUIRES 419 6562

"the most evil film

I HAVE ever SEEN"

— The Herald

Pure Shit

Bert Deling (Aust) 1975
78 mins col/opt



PURE SHIT, a slang term for heroin, charts two days in the lives of four Melbourne junkies — three addicts and one "beginner" — as they cruise round town in an old Holden trying to score. Commissioned by a drug addiction centre, with a script that evolved from the stories and experiences of addicts and ex addicts, the film is a brutal portrayal of the merciless joy and pain of heroin addiction.

Governed by the craving for a hit, the four career from one disaster to the next. They try to score, get ripped off, bungle a robbery at a chemist shop, shoot up, snort cocaine, pop pills, wheel and deal and get busted by the police. PURE SHIT is a blend of harsh realism and black comedy put together in the guise of a street movie that is

entertaining to the last frame. The film's refusal to be judgemental about the scene it investigates led to it becoming one of the most controversial Australian films of the decade.

St. Andrew's Place
East Melbourne

FRIDAY 1st DEC. 7:30
GRIERSON CINEMA

Sales Tax (Exemptions and Classifications) Act 1935

THE FIRST SCHEDULE — continued

Sales Tax Exemption Items	Acts to which Exemption Applies
107. (1) Exhibition copies of motion picture films, including films to be exhibited by televising, but not including— (a) exhibition copies of films for the private, domestic or personal use of the person by or for whom they are produced; or (b) exhibition copies of films that are to be screened or televised exclusively, or primarily and principally, for advertising purposes	Nos. 1 to 9 Substituted by No. 80, 1967, s. 4; amended by No. 175, 1976, s. 4; No. 107, 1978, s. 4
(2) Goods for use, for business or industrial purposes, in the production of motion picture films (other than films for the private, domestic or personal use of the person by or for whom they are produced), namely— (a) unexposed cinematograph film; (b) cinematograph film that has been exposed but has not been developed; (c) negatives, positives and reversals produced on cinematograph film, but not including goods that, with or without further processing, are for use as exhibition copies of motion picture films that are to be screened or televised exclusively, or primarily and principally, for advertising purposes	Nos. 1 to 9
(3) Imported goods consisting of films of a scenic, tourist or travel nature produced or issued by or on behalf of a governmental or travel authority, being films that wholly or mainly depict or describe, or depict and describe, places outside Australia	Nos. 5 to 9
(4) Copies made in Australia of films to which sub-item (3) applies	Nos. 1 to 4 and 9
(5) Sound recordings, being recordings produced for use in conjunction with films to which sub-item (1) applies	Nos. 1 to 9
(6) Motion picture films that are free from duties of Customs, being films that have been exposed outside Australia by amateur photographers, depict matters mainly of interest to the photographer and his relatives and friends in Australia and are not suitable to be screened for commercial purposes	No. 5
107A. (1) Goods (other than road vehicles of the kinds ordinarily used for the transport of persons or the delivery of goods, or parts for those road vehicles) for use exclusively, or primarily and principally, for business or industrial purposes, in the production of motion picture films, namely— (a) cinematograph cameras; (b) apparatus and materials for use— (i) in reproducing or recording sound; or (ii) in editing recordings of sound; (c) apparatus and materials for use in developing, editing or otherwise processing goods to which sub-item (2) of item 107 applies	Nos. 1 to 9 Inserted by No. 41, 1936, s. 4; omitted by No. 42, 1951, s. 4; inserted by No. 80, 1967, s. 4; amended by No. 175, 1976, s. 4
(2) Parts and accessories for goods to which sub-item (1) applies	Nos. 1 to 9
108. (1) Foods for birds	Nos. 1 to 4 and 9 Amended by No. 76, 1960, s. 4

FRACAS IN THE ELYSIAN FIELDS

I walked into the last meeting of the MSEFG while a film was being screened and it was dark and my eyes hadn't adjusted and I bumped while attempting to weave and I forgot my glasses and I sensed I drew some hostility and I eventually found a seat but a pillar was in the way so I attempted to change seats and eventually came to rest up the back and in front of me at some distance was the familiar (though slightly blurry) flickering screen and the credits proclaimed that I had just missed something I ought'n'd to have missed but had anyway.

And I thought to myself; "well had I missed anything?". OK. So a stupid question. This was the first open screening I had attended for a while and I was curious whether the format or type of films had changed. Type of films. Super 8.

The Melbourne S8 group open screening is a great avenue to exhibit films (yours) - You're in a room with others and your film is on the screen and at the end there is applause. You've shown your film and in the next newsletter there may be some feedback from someone who was moved enough to express an opinion. Hm. "Had I

did it any better (technically), only that its use of the technique was in the context of a wider narrative.

Maybe this (the S8 film) was an experimental film... that is experimenting with a technique to be applied in some context later on. Am I putting too much stress on 'meaningful' films? I mean, I think Caravaggio and Francis Bacon rock! But hey! I can appreciate Mondrian and Jackson Pollock as being more than just good wallpaper decorators. What am I saying? Is everything art? Is it all subjective? "I don't know much about art, but I know what I like!" Cliche city here, boy. Oh yes, I many times marvel at the random patterns produced just after the leader; before the actual stuff begins, due to running a new roll in. It can sometimes look bizarre: undulating contrasty somnambulant figures drifting about the frame with oracular though lucid plethoric sexuality. Yes. Then the question of audience comes in. Ok, so I get a video and freeze a frame and play around with the frame advance (and film it). It looks good. You know? It has a rough, non cultured look about it. Natural beauty, yea? So it looks good. But. But now, one shows

begins. Somebody trying to dismantle a bungalow or something. I dunno. Oh God he thinks.

I mean that guy Warhol had it all worked out. Empire and all that. I once saw an exhibition of his posterisation treatment of a Beethoven portrait. Oh yes, very colourful and stuff. And then there was another. Different colours naturally. And another and another. Two rooms full of colourful Beethovens. And I think: Brilliant! I mean, it was. Scale is very impressive. And what about that crazy man Christo who has a wrapping neurosis. Wraps islands etcetera. I suppose the difference here is you can sample parts of the exhibition at your own leisure. In a film you are at the mercy of the filmmaker. For the filmmaker has determined what is the optimal duration to impress a particular feel or effect. But this of course is subjective. A five minute minimal film for someone may be too short if he could comfortably take thirty minutes. Or, on the other hand (it's a bit cliché but what the hell) five minutes may be akin to water torture to someone who thought that the first thirty seconds was enough. I mean the images may be very interesting or beautiful like that cloudy window and Mr. Keaton - but for me, after thirty seconds it was long enough. Ok; so maybe the effect of the film is to introduce a trance-like state on the viewer. A visual interpretation of an African chant for example. Then of course length is important; but also content. I don't know, I just feel kind of guilty when I get bored. And I'm not too sure that I'm the only one.



missed anything?" No, I won't say that I hadn't.

Well there was a film, that evening; a timelapse film of clouds reflected in a window. I was impressed. Initially. And I was waiting for the composition to change. I had been conditioned into thinking that it ought to change. It didn't and I got bored.

I've seen that effect used in both 'underground' and mainstream films. I'm not saying that *Rumblefish* was original or

it in public. And the public look at it. And one member of the public, who can't focus too well, begins to move around in his seat and remembers that his dole form was due in that day. Subjectively one hour later (he probably has no reliable recollection of the duration), he hears a thundering sound in his ears and feels his hands simply oscillating together and apart again joining the sleeping chorus of applause. The lights come up and he searches his pockets to see if he has the fare for the ride home. The lights go down again and another one

I'm confused, is it Art? Film? Political preversion? Somebody tell me, I'm sure I'll agree with you.

There was a film at that screening that I really enjoyed. The one about the kids going to the country. Hey, that was pretty good. Eric Rohmer or what! With the obligatory Pink Floyd soundtrack providing the dislocation technique by just masking out the audibility of the actors. It had charm, innocence, and a kind of logocentric purity. Hi Ho!

L. Sideris

SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN

SEPTEMBER, 1889:

"At a recent meeting of the French Academy M. Lippmann presented a note by M. G. Guerault, in which it is suggested that by the combined use of a phonograph and an apparatus for instantaneous photography and reproduction of the pictures obtained, it would be possible to reproduce at any future time not only the speech of a person but also a vivid picture of the person's gestures and facial expression. A person speaking or singing into the phonograph would be photographed by an automatic apparatus geared with the barrel of the phonograph. The pictures would be instantaneous, and taken at the rate of, say, ten pictures per second. They would then be developed and arranged in a special lantern for reproduction on a screen isochronously with the phonograph."



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Next Meeting

Tuesday November 14 at the
Glasshouse Function room.
RMIT, Swanston St, City at
7.30 p.m.

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