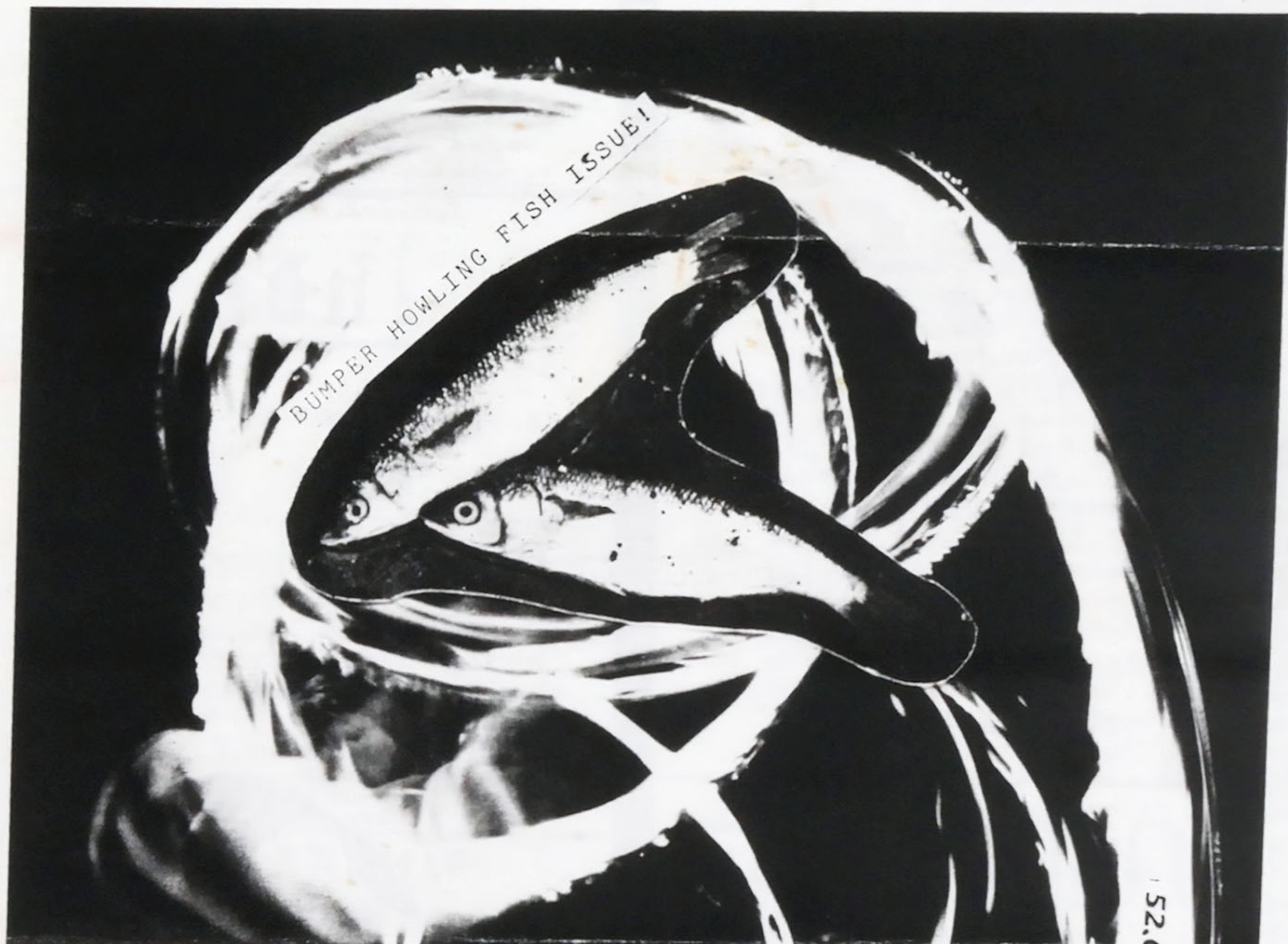
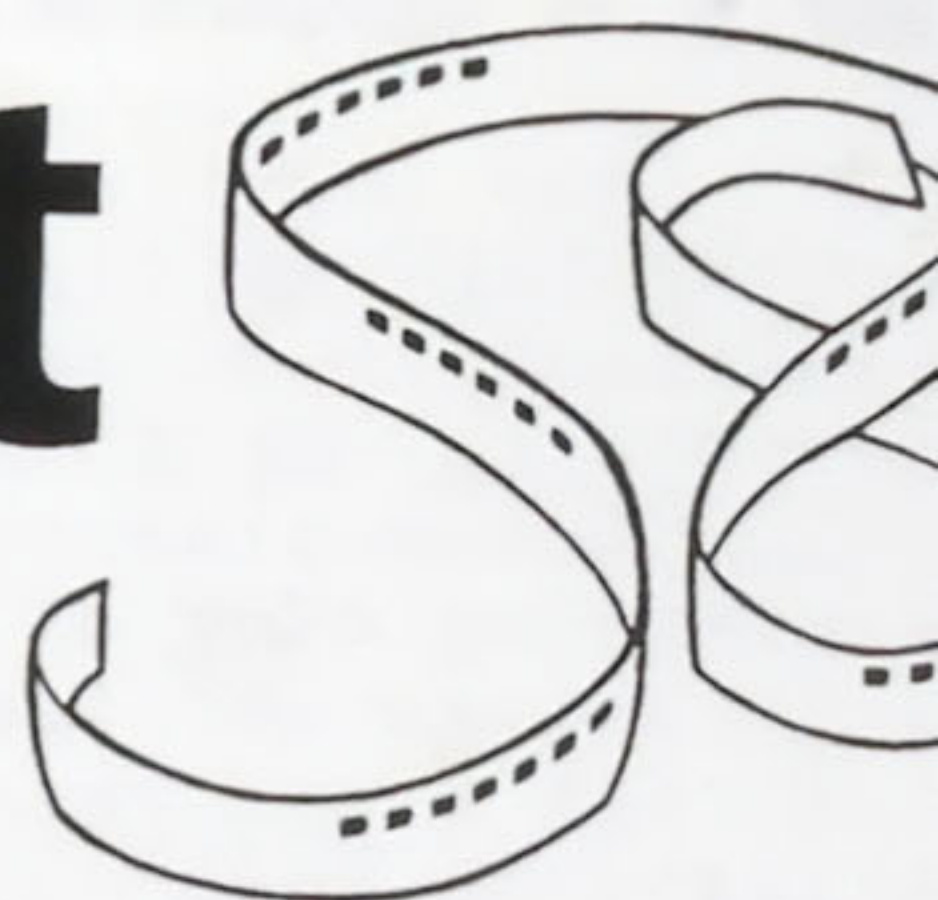


# Super Eight

Newsletter of the Melbourne Super 8 Film Group



BUMPER HOWLING FISH ISSUE!

52. October 1990

## In This Issue

- FESTIVAL PHOTOFILE
- FESTIVAL REVIEWS
- INTERVIEW: SIMON COOPER
- WAY OF SEEING FEATURES

# EDITORIAL

The duration and aftermath of fervent Festival levity has finally subsided and we can now turn to our 8 babies.

I was piqued, bored, and inspired by many of the Festival offerings and (perhaps naively) feel a new zenith of 8 activity is impending. Most of the eight milimetre people I spoke with felt this festival was the best ever. Evening screenings were packed with over 90 people attending. Afternoon sessions drew over 70 optic auteurs.

The Film Maker's Forum was also an outstanding success. I found this particularly surprising as a 'forum' demands a flight from inertia, an established interest and active participation. This standing-room-only Festival feature chaired by Bill M with a panel of three experienced film makers proved to be a rich arena of discussion and enquiry, as well as being a fillip to MS8 Film Group membership. A recording of the Forum will be serialised in forthcoming issues.

Congratulations to Steve Ball (Festival Director), Big M, the MS8 Committee and all voluntary helpers. Strange Trade, Michael Timcke (sax) and Steve Rossel (Double Bass) also provided original intermission entertainment. And if you missed the end-of-Festival debauchery, just wait 'till next year!

Steve B has left for Sydney with 14 Festival films\* for a special screening on Oct. 10 at Harold Park Hotel, Glebe. This is a good example of the kind of creative symbiosis which I would like to facilitate.

STAY TUNED for overseas festivals and publications, 8 in Sydney and "Opportunity Knocks: Public Television and Super-8", which will appear in the next issue.

The response to the last newsletter has been positive and I have been forced to hold over some contributions for MS8 No. 53. Graphics and photos received are terrific. All you bathroom darkroomers and B&W artists- fear not to

bring your creative works into the light! The COVER of MS8 is open to all.

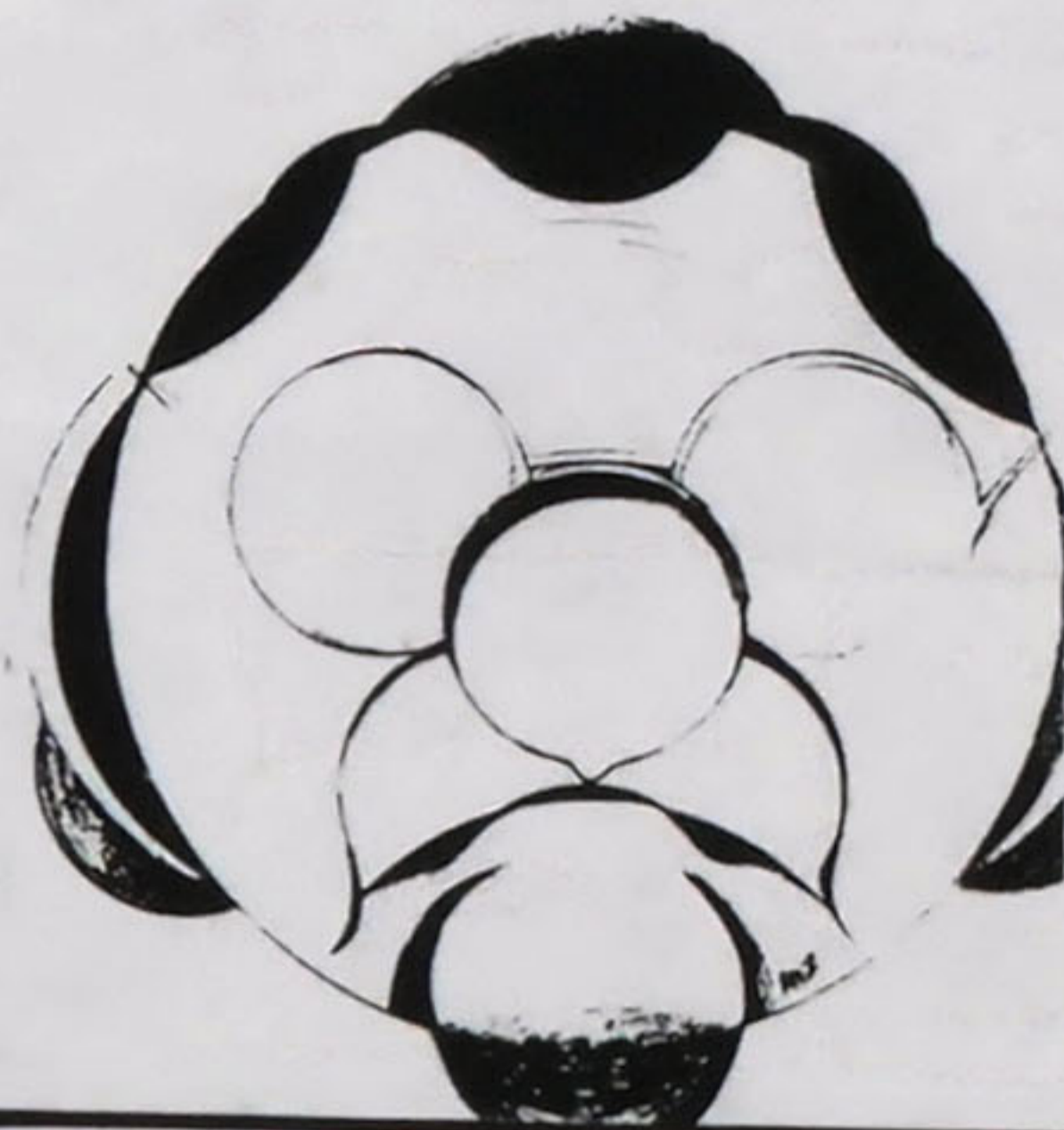
May your retina dream new elastic epilepsies.

Julian Dahl.

\* Films chosen were: The Cutoff Heads (C Windmill), Enter Frame/Exit Frame (D Grant), Vignet (D Spence), Pause (R Ghazarian), Aerial (E MacLennan) Luna Park (R Long), Sucked (M Freeman), Pravda Krapel (K M Macarow), I Think I Just Killed Max (L Sideris), The Mystery of Life (D Mason), Plumbers Come To Town (D Haberfield), GRRR! (H Boeck) and Earth and Channel Part Two (S Ball).

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COVER photo J.D.	
"JACK'SBACK" Brian Ward.	



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Dear Editor,

I have just read the September issue (No.51) of the Super-8 newsletter. I must say that I enjoyed it, more than usual. And it's not just because of the creation of new selections, etc.; it's because of your desire, your naive enthusiasm.

It is in the spirit of the Super-8 Group that the editorship of the newsletter has always been open, changing. I hope, however, that you get to do everything you want with the newsletter - your love and desire to be rewarded.

I can see no conflict here, actually. You could co-edit with others, or relinquish it completely sometimes - everyone to be happy. And, the golden rule: nothing to be discouraged, everything to be open. (The magical essence of love.)

One of the great joys for me these days, as an eight-year veteran of the independent film scene, is the witnessing of the emergence of younger (or newer) people. It is too much to expect older ones to change their ways. Without wishing to sound too unrealistic, these younger people (perhaps better educated?) will pave the way to a better future. (At the least, they give us a livelier present.)

I hope I can contribute to the newsletter as much as your enthusiasm deserves. I guess I've created a new section anyway - 'Letters to the Editor'.

Yours in naivety, love and enthusiasm,

Bill Mousoulis, 4/9/90.

**CANTRILLS FILMNOTES IS OUT NOW!!**

Issue nos. 61/62 is currently available from Readings Bookstores or cinema foyers.

Of particular interest to Super-8 group members would be an article by Bill Mousoulis on his non-narrative films, an article by George Ray/Random on his films, and a review by Adrian Martin of the "Six Secrets" film program (films by Richard Tuohy, Sandy Munro, George Random, George Ray, Phil Kanlidis, Mark Zenner.)

**m EMBERSHIP**

Thanks to Matthew Rees for providing this list of current members. Bill is meant to send out renewal notices to people, but can't find the time! If your name is not on this list, it means you're membership is due, so do the right thing!

List of current Super 8 Members

- |                    |                  |                  |
|--------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Adrian Martin      | Angie Porter     | Anna Zigliinis   |
| Bill Mousoulis     | Bree McKilligan  | Brett Maore      |
| Brian Prichard     | Bruce Armstrong  | Charles Jameson  |
| Chris Windmill     | Chris Leahy      | Damien Grant     |
| Darron Davies      | David Coultion   | David Haberfeld  |
| David Bonaiorno    | Doug Mason       | Ellen MacLennan  |
| Emily Nixon        | Flora Georgiou   | Francois Bernard |
| Greg Olsen         | Heinz Boeck      | Ian Poppins      |
| Ian Kerr           | Jacqui Ward      | James Lee        |
| Jennifer Pionataro | Joanne Carachael | Johanna Hauser   |
| John Calder        | Julian Dahl      | Laki Sideris     |
| Leesa Soencer      | Loren Daniel     | Maeve Woods      |
| Marie Craven       | Maris Roche      | Mark La Rosa     |
| Mark Freeman       | Matthew Rees     | Michael Siu      |
| Michael Buckley    | Michelle Ryan    | NINA             |
| Nic Maclean        | Nick Ostrovskis  | Nicola Abel      |
| Nigel Buesst       | Noel Lloyd       | Perry Laird      |
| Peter Schuller     | Peter McLennan   | Phil Heffernan   |
| Phillip Dean       | Rebecca Young    | Robert Jankov    |
| Robert Spaldino    | Ross Ferguson    | Sabrina Schmid   |
| Sandra Munro       | Sarah Johnson    | Sonia Leber      |



**PACKAGED FILMS AND LIBRARIES**

by Ian Poppins

From time to time, I receive phone calls asking where Packaged films may be obtained, and if there are any Super 8 Film libraries in Australia.

The answer is yes, and for those who may be interested here are the details. The main outlet in Australia is:-

The Home Talkie Co of Aust Pty Ltd  
PO Box 200,  
Strawberry Hills 2012 NSW

The actual address for visiting is:-  
268 Cleveland St Sydney.  
Phone Nods 02 6981758 02 6998777 or  
02 6997082.

Home Talkie has a library of over 3000 Super 8 Films ranging from shorts to full length features. They will ship the film interstate.

They are also the agents for many overseas distributors of Super 8 packaged films. They also sell reels, including the hard to get 800 ft and 1600 ft super reels. (The 1600 ft reels are the same size as 1200ft reels).

They have a striping service. At present balance stripe is hard to obtain, but they are still doing main stripe. The cost is \$24 for 400 ft (minimum 400 ft). Extra 100 ft is \$6 plus packing and postage. Postage at present is \$6 up to 500 grams anywhere in Australia. Over that I suggest you ask the Post Office.

They also have splicers, tapes, globes, etc. Video transfers are done by their \$25000 telecine machine. If you are looking for anything in Super 8, including projectors and cameras they are the people to contact.

Another Australian firm which seems to have just started up is :-  
Filmland Cinema Services  
PO Box 101 Strawberry Hills NSW 2012.  
They have a striping service. The cost of main stripe (minimum 200 ft) per 100 ft is \$7.50. Main and balance per 100 ft is \$15.00

CONT'D P5

**EQUIPMENT**

All items are for borrowing unless otherwise stated.

Everything to be booked with Bill on 429 9847.

BRAUN NIZO 6080 sound camera (\$15 per day)  
sharp lens; intervalometer; wide angle lens; crystal sync pulse; various speeds.

BRAUN NIZO 6080 sound camera (\$15 per day)  
sharp lens; intervalometer; wide angle lens; crystal sync pulse; various speeds.

SANKYO sound camera  
basic sound camera, 18 or 24 fps.

DAWN BROWN MEMORIAL CAMERA:

CANON 814 silent camera  
excellent camera, but silent

ELMO ST-180 projector (\$5 per day)  
twin-track. basic, but solid, machine.

MILLER Junior tripod  
currently without pan handle

small tripod

screen

2 editor/viewers

2 WURKER splicing machines

WURKER splicing tapes, 50 per pack, \$6 per pack.

Julian, I found these. Can you print as is. My favourite film of the festival was PRAVDA KRAPEL. I also liked VIGNET, I THINK I JUST KILLED MAX, MYSTERY OF LIFE and ENTER FRAME/EXIT FRAME.

Those who were there will have their own opinions. Hope you enjoyed it. Steven Ball.

MONDAY 3rd SEPTEMBER 8am

Wake in panic. Alarm that screams. I notice with relief that the fever has subsided. Check pulse. Check breath. It's raining. Gag the alarm and sink into dull slumber.

FRIDAY 31st AUGUST 7pm

Glasshouse Foyer. Twos and threes do the snuffle dance of waiting. Elius up a ladder. I inflate balloons. Heavy head. I can breath. avoid talking to them. they smile... I laugh... nervously and cough out globs of inanity.

SUNDAY 2nd SEPTEMBER 3.45 pm

Richard Tuohy's despair over technical S8 draw-backs. wonder why would any-one want to make S8 film. Forum is packed. Several people join the S8 Group after.

SATURDAY 1st SEPTEMBER 2.30pm

Enter St Kilda TAB to change \$100 note into coins for float of cash. Put it all on a greynound. Walk out with \$2452. Purchase large quantity high grade Cocaine. Thanks for the tip Cuttock-Head.

SUNDAY 2nd SEPTEMBER 10.05pm

Man in cap and black apron fills my cup. David Cox animated: Brothers Quay and Marxism (?). I try: Guy Dubord and Situationists. Instead recite nursery on Melb. Bitter. 3 blind mice.

SATURDAY 1st SEPTEMBER 4.05pm

Wake to pink/brown Flinders station. pan L-R. CU Taxi-driver's face. "No wurries myate, you sleep, traffic slow down. Swanston nun" Fade to black.....



## FESTIVAL FEVER Steven Ball

SUNDAY 2 SEPTEMBER 6.30pm

Wake to dream. Lines of light. Clashes of flesh.

FRIDAY 31st AUGUST 1.30pm

Festival cash float empty, begging starving. Sarah Johnson flies in from Katmandu to sign cheques. relief- the festival can eat again.

SATURDAY 1st SEPTEMBER

Notes on last night's films: "Love Life"...over ambitious... main character dull... 'ordinary' suburban life?...never this hum-drum surely?...even in mundane: strangeness, mystery. Not in this...another boys film from the suburbs that wants to grow up to become a feature...limitations of sound, editing, unreliable depth of field, poor acting... no excuses for this, no apologies, it's down to the film-maker, if there are gauge-specific limitations incorporate them as part of film. Know your ceilings and your flaws. However 'I Think I just killed Max' strength of acting and script convinces in spite of/because of limitations of gauge with sophisticated simplicity. the colour bleed at the join enhances the sense of direct to camera honesty. (tricky concept honesty.now can a medium reliant upon artificiality be described as honest.intention and execution maybe,not entirely.)" -better to stop here. don't want to turn into criticism/theory (too late?) or indulge in chummy buddy back-slapping.

SUNDAY 2nd SEPTEMBER 1.30am

Bill Mousoulis and Simon Cooper play pinball arcade. What am I doing here?

FRIDAY 31st AUGUST 10am

Half page article in E.G. about a Super-8 festival. Some-one called Ball enthuses about the gauge's ease of use and lack of theoretical baggage (!?!). Puts me off going.

SUNDAY 2nd SEPTEMBER 6pm

A fly lands on a dog turd before paralysing a bride.

FRIDAY 31st AUGUST 8.10pm

A Tati-esque figure 15ft high scoots across screen in glorious Kodachrome. I tell Mark Freeman that I don't remember this film. He smiles, I'm serious.

SATURDAY 1st SEPTEMBER 9.15pm

Simon Cooper paces Glasshouse foyer. A Distant Relation is being born. His lop-sided grin twitches nervously, engulfed in tense, expectant boredom. I waste a few words of badly chosen cliché.



FRIDAY 31st AUGUST 7.30am

Wake in panic. Alarm that screams. Heavy head, can hardly breathe. It rained last night. I leap from bed, fall flat on my face.

peacock scream rabbits bray  
i seek to know you  
netted words and plastic stamps  
a snotgun blast approximates the sun

words blocks scaffolds to the gods  
relax relax we're all Enlightened and OK  
jacketed capped slapped  
the smallest waking finch suffices strapped

gingerbread games of real believe  
decreed verisimilitude rendered paste  
pulp pap bangers and mash  
don't chew with your mouth full  
just let it glide

all about dancing beasts  
unnameable dreams secret feasts  
bloated chasms howling fish  
i walked on my hands  
lands bands stands slands  
stilettos grind  
is not hands or words i need to  
madness find  
freedom's whore

CONT'D from P3

They also have reels and cans, film cement, and other Super 8 goods. Their phone number is 02 6981470. Packaged Films are also sold by them.

Another Australian firm selling packaged movies is Reel Memories PO Box 248 Bondi Beach NSW 2026. They only sell these films and they will send you lists if it is requested.

If you wish to deal with the main distributors of packaged films in the world directly, write to:-

Derran Film Services,  
99 High St, Dudley,  
West Midlands, DY1 1QP ENGLAND

They send out a newsletter every two months packed with details of new and secondhand films. The last issue was 28 size A4 pages. The newsletter also has lists of equipment for sale.

They also bring out a 64 page catalogue of all their Super 8 films.

I have dealt with them over a period of years and have found them, in the -ir dealings with me, to be reliable.

If you are looking for equipment, feature films, shorts, or trailers on Super 8 it may be to your advantage to contact one or more of these suppliers. Good hunting.

**For Sale For Sale**

FOR SALE .... FOR SALE ..... FOR SALE .....

3 Kodak 40 200' sound cartridges  
(they fit in the Braun R120, or R117B E100.)  
Only \$60 each - 2 for \$100.  
King Mark La Rose on 429 9847.

## 10 MAGIC MOMENTS IN SUPER-8 HISTORY

by Bill Mousoulis

The 5th Melbourne Super-8 Film Festival provided, for me, many moments - special ones, distressed ones, etc. A lot of these were personal, so I won't really go into them here. But I will go through some of my favourite films of the festival.

Long live the festival!

### 1. Love Life by Richard Tuohy

I still remember the first time I met Richard, in November 1987, when he'd just turned 18. He was keen then, and he's keen now. Three years down the track, he's made a film (this one) that John Flaus, on radio, has called "the most sensitive, perceptive Australian drama I've seen for some time." I love Richard, but I worry about him. Not many people like his film, and he lets that upset him. But he will learn. And he will keep making great films. Sure, he dived in the deep end with this one, but that surely is an indication of his passion, ambition, and sense of adventure.

### 2. Darling For A Day by Mark La Rosa

People will think I'm being totally subjective by talking about and praising films like *Love Life* and this one, but I'm not. I'm being as honest and subjective as possible. Mark's latest production, *Even A Dog Can Lead the Way*, another long drama, will never see the light of day though, because of a major technical fault. That's a pity, because he is quite a sophisticated and engaging film-maker.

### 3. A Distant Relation by Simon Cooper

Simon has just had some bad news from the Film Commission: two applications for funding (one for 30min, 16mm production, one for feature script development) have been turned down. He sounded quite disappointed about it over the phone when I spoke to him, but I believe he is destined (like Tuohy and La Rosa) to go on and make film-making his career. Cooper is a world away from flashy, glitzy Sydney film-makers like Moffatt, Lowing, etc. He is a 10-year survivor, so far, and he will go on.

### 4. I Think I Just Killed Max by Laki Sideris

The first time one sees this film one has a sense of revelation, well I did anyway. It's like *Dreams Come True* by Jane Stevenson. It's magical, absolutely, but I'm getting a bit conscious these days of a certain type of 'magical' film, with particular elements always in it. If something is to be truly magical, shouldn't it surprise?

### 5. Filming Tuohy's 'Love Life' by Sandy Munro

To think the selection committee decided to show only 6 of the 22 minutes of this film! What can be more fascinating than watching a film director at work, especially in real time? Shame, shame, shame.

### 6. Face Job by Jennifer Pignataro

Jenny has certainly captured my imagination at the moment. What I like about her and her films is the incredible enthusiasm apparent. Her next film is almost finished. Watch out for my article on her in the next newsletter (if I still feel inspired to write it, which I probably will.)

### 7. A Dozen Shades of Green by Darron Davies

Darron is certainly experiencing a dozen shades of green at the moment, in his travels all over Europe. He's really not holidaying though - he'll be settling in Southern Ireland shortly. He says he will make a film and send it to us. I'm looking forward to it.

### 8. The Mystery of Life by Doug Mason

### 9. Pravda Krapel by Keely Macarow

### 10. The Cuttock-Heads by Chris Windmill

I've run out of time (to talk about these films) and I've also run out of places (many other worthy films played in the festival.)

See ya later.

CONT'D from P14.

say "Love! You've got to have love!"

I'd like to finish with an idea, something I believe in, something I live out all the time: Be yourself, but make sure you let others be themselves too. Powys knocks the shit out of religion in his book, but he says that Christ expressed "the startling doctrine of the immeasurable and equal value of every living human soul."

[Written quickly, seemingly irresponsibly (well-argued or smartly-worded writing is well down my list of priorities) in Cafe Tramonto, Lygon St., late at night on September 17, and dedicated, with much love, to Jenny and Sandra.]



# INTERVIEW: SIMON COOPER



Simon Cooper's first budget feature-length film, A Distant Relation, appeared in the recent Melbourne Super-8 Film Festival and was enthusiastically received. Film Group members were introduced to works from this experienced film maker through a special retrospective of his films shown at the pre-Festival monthly screening.

MS8 sought out Simon in the Festival melee to ask him a few questions about his life and work.

PROFILE: Born Canberra 1960. Degree in Film Studies at Sydney University of Technology 1987-9. Travels regularly between Canberra, Sydney and Melbourne promoting his work.

Has made scores of S8 films over the last ten years, from silent comedy to biographical narrative. Currently works at Canberra's National Library in the Film Section.

JD: When did you start making films?

SC: I made my first film in 1976 at high school which were kind of muck around films I made with three other people, my school friends. The first one was animation. And then in '77 we made a comedy which involved a bit of pixilation but mainly silent comedy. We were influenced by the old Buster Keaton type of stuff.

JD: When was your first budget film?

SC: I've only made one that had a budget and that was the last film, A Distant Relation (ADR) which was \$34,000. Every other one I've done has been less than \$1,000.

JD: How long did ADR take to make?

SC: I made an autobiographical film in '87 (Autoportrait) which was screened quite widely.

It was a rough sketch for everything. I started thinking about doing a longer film, and in January '88 I got the grant from the Film Commission (AFC).

"IT WAS THE NATURAL THING TO DO. I NEVER THOUGHT ABOUT USING ANYTHING ELSE. I BOUGHT A CAMERA AND EVERYTHING I NEEDED WHEN I WAS ABOUT 18 AND JUST TOOK OFF!"

JD: After how much lobbying time?

SC: Not much. I had applied for grants previously in 1981, '83 and '86 unsuccessfully and I'd been around for a while making Super-8 so they knew who I was...

JD: To what extent was the gauge a factor in your choice of material for Autoportrait and its derivative, if I can call it that, ADR?

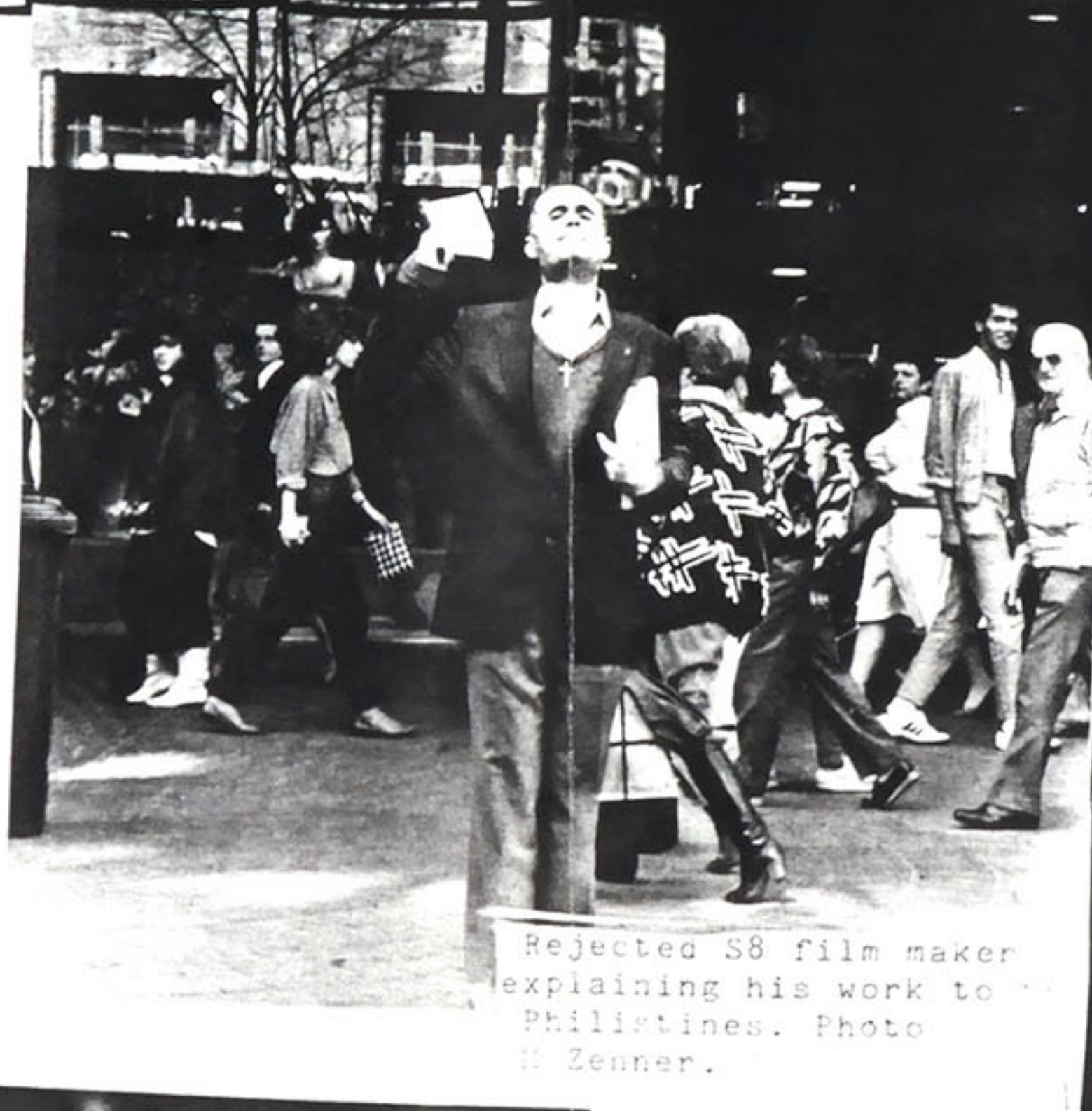
SC: I slipped into Super-8 anyway because in the 1970's it was the thing to do. Nobody thought of making 16mm because it was too

# FROZEN Festival Fragments

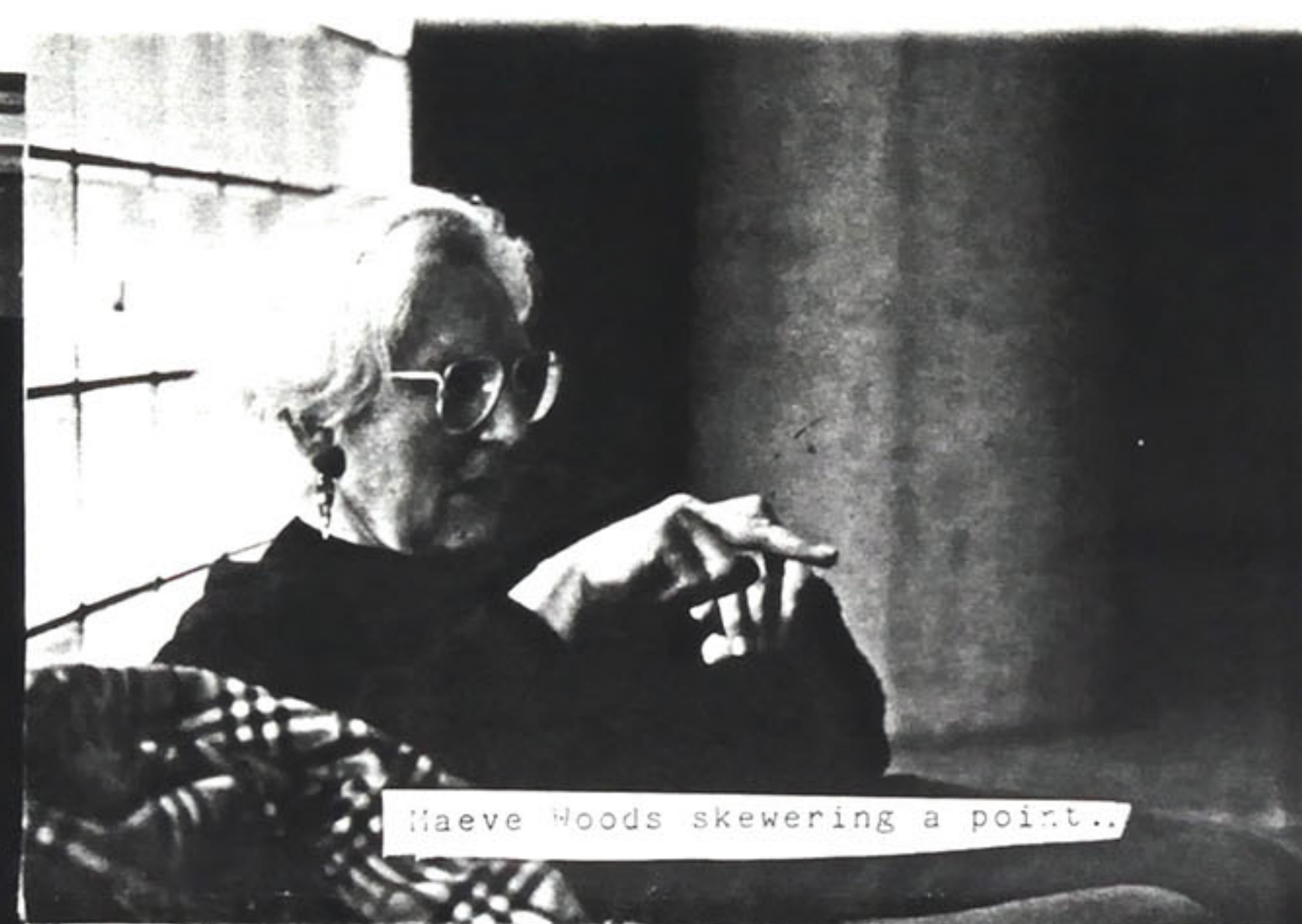
PHOTOS: Sandy Munro.



Synchronised socialisation.  
Steve Ball and Laki Sideris.



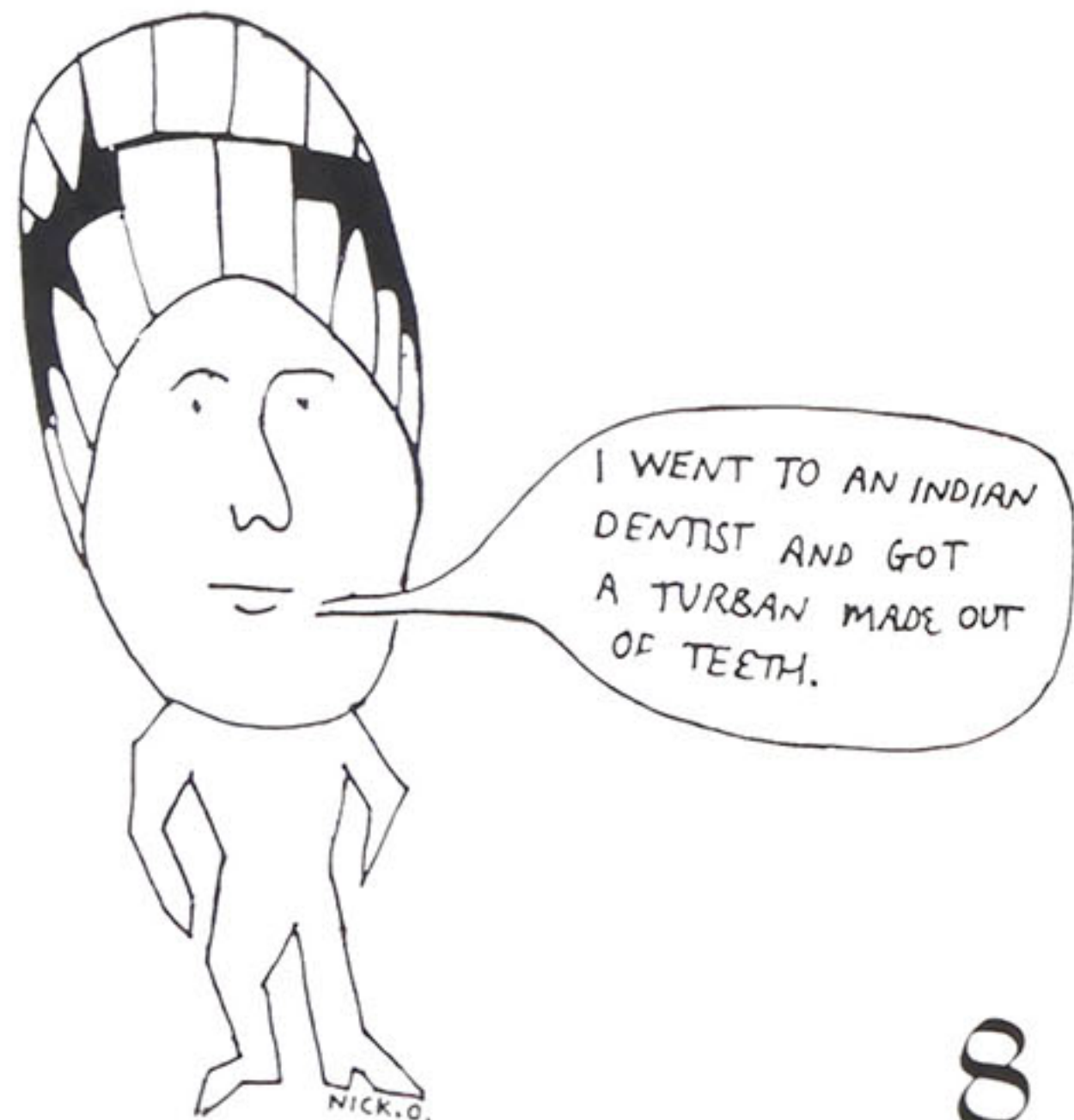
Rejected S8 film maker  
explaining his work to  
Philistines. Photo  
© Zenner.



Maeve Woods skewering a point..



Bill in party mode.  
Coccolossal!



8



Peace through struggle!



Strange Trade with digits.

9



expensive. Super-8 facilities were very prevalent in those days. There was never any question of being able to get stock. More labs. It was the natural thing to do. I never thought about using anything else. There was no video then. I bought a camera and everything I needed when I was about 18 and just took off!

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"IT REALLY LOOKS LIKE ONE PERSON WENT OUT AND SHOT IT. IT REALLY LOOKS VERY PERSONAL SO YOU DON'T QUESTION WHAT YOU'RE SEEING IN A FILM LIKE THAT".

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So I never really had to spend much money from then onwards. I collected a lot of footage. I started filming bits and pieces in the early '80's...When I moved to Sydney after living in Canberra until I was 25 I started investigating memory. As I was in a different place, different environment altogether. It (ADR) just grew out of that....

JD: Do you think that what is often said of Super-8, its revelatory, personal aspect is somewhat of a cliché - not really endemic to the medium itself but the uses to which its put?

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"SUPER-8 IS MORE INCLINED TO BE ACCEPTED BECAUSE OF ITS HONESTY".

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SC: Yeah. Its the uses to which its put. It does lend itself to that. I quite consciously used Super-8 in ADR because it has that immediacy about it. It really looks like one person went out and shot it. It really looks very personal so you don't question what you're seeing in a film like that. If I'd made it (ADR) on 16mm it might look different. People might think, 'Is he lying, is he making something of a narrative about his life?' Super-8 is more inclined to be accepted because of its honesty.

JD: So the technical limitations (of Super-8) imply some kind of real voyeurism happening?

SC: I suppose so. Yeah. It has that immediacy you can tell one person shot it...If you compare some 16mm autobiographical films that were made in the 1960's in America or Australia, they're different...

JD: So what are the strengths and weaknesses, in your opinion, of the 8mm filmic eye?

SC: Well, the strength is that kind of personal thing. And the fact that you can shoot so much footage. I could go out with my camera and just pick up interesting things that happened in the city. Whereas with 16mm I always find, especially if you're hiring the camera, obviously you have to plan a schedule and shoot it all in one week or something. You have to

know exactly what you want. Whereas with Super-8 you've got that freedom. You don't have to know what you want...

JD: So mobility is a pretty key aspect?

SC: It is to me.

JD: And limitations?

SC: Its obviously got a huge amount of limitations. Depends what kind of film you're trying to make. For me it isn't very limiting because you can blow it up to 16mm. And because I do most of my sound post-production that's not a problem. Whereas Super-8 has big limitations with sound. Direct sound is usually poor.

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"SO YOU REALLY HAVE TO BE DOING IT FOR SOME KIND OF PERSONAL DRIVE, LIKE YOU JUST COULDN'T LIVE WITHOUT MAKING THE FILM. IT HELPS YOU TO ARTICULATE THINGS THAT YOU COULDN'T ARTICULATE ANY OTHER WAY".

---

JD: You're quite happy with ADR's blow-up to 16mm? Good actuanace?

SC: Generally. But that was the first time I'd done one...I'm planning another one at the moment where I'll blow-up Super-8 to 16.... The only thing you gain from shooting on 8 and blowing-up to 16 is if you're shooting on a fairly high ratio as the cost of blowing-up is fairly expensive.

JD: So why do you make films?

SC: I don't know. Its hard to say with these things. You never have a direct reason for doing it. Its something like the old line authors used to use in the Nineteenth Century...they said that you should only write if you can't not write.

JD: The Romantic perspective?

SC: It is in a sense. Depending on what type of film you're making. Some films you can make a good living out of. Making the kind of films I'm making, obviously they're not going to make money. You have to struggle to raise the money to make them. So you really have to be doing it for some kind of personal drive, like you just couldn't live without making the film. It helps you to somehow articulate things you can't articulate any other way. That's the only reason to do it for me.

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"I THINK PEOPLE ARE BARKING UP THE WRONG TREE WHEN THEY SAY THAT SUPER-8 CAN BE USED IN COMMERCIALS ON TV OR YOU CAN SHOOT A FILM ON SUPER-8 AND BLOW IT UP TO 16mm AND PEOPLE WOULDN'T KNOW. IT ISN'T TRUE. THEY WOULD KNOW".

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JD: Do you think its necessary to leave the baggage of 16mm and 35mm at the door before entering the world of Super-8? Are they applicable at all?

very different things. If you're going to make a 16mm film, that's one thing. If you're going to make a Super-8 film, that's something else altogether. If you're going to make a video, that's something else again. You really can't try and compare them. I think people are barking up the wrong tree when they say that Super-8 can be used in commercials on TV or you can shoot a film on Super-8 and blow it up to 16mm and people wouldn't know. It isn't true. They would know. And it's not really the point. You're either making a Super-8 film or you're making a 16mm film which is more oriented towards narrative and kind of more mainstream ideas. There's no point in bringing the gauges together in that sense or carrying around the baggage of 16 and 35mm as you call it. But on the other hand, there is a reason to know what film is and why. Therefore you should study film, I think, before you make things...

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"I THINK THE FILM THAT IS DRAWN FROM LIFE IS ALWAYS GOING TO BE A LOT MORE INTERESTING TO A WIDER AUDIENCE".

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JD: It has been said by some directors... that there is an excess of films which get their inspiration from other films rather than from life. Could you put that into perspective with your ideas about studying film?

SC: Well, it's true. I think a lot of filmmakers, particularly film students, will go through a stage where they're quoting from other films. I don't think it's a bad thing but you can only take it so far. And in the end I think the film that is drawn from life is always going to be a lot more interesting to a wider audience. But it's not a bad thing to draw from other films. It's inevitable that every art form goes through this stage. Film is only a very young art form, only been around in the Twentieth Century so this was bound to happen...

JD: They seem to be getting more and more common.

SC: Yeah. That's right. It's kind of an easy thing to do in a way because it's fun and it's interesting and people often feel like they're doing something clever.

JD: What do you think about the ethics of found footage or images used from TV, pop songs?

SC: I don't have an ethical problem with that. Material should be usable.

JD: Even if they're other people's artistic

---

"FILMS YOU SEE ARE AS RELEVANT AS PEOPLE YOU SEE IN TERMS OF MATERIAL YOU COULD USE FOR A FILM".

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# CONTRIBUTIONS

- are sought for the following:

BOOK REVIEWS (past and present)

TECHNICAL Q&A - Have your problems solved!

READER'S FORUM- Vent your mind, not your spleen.

FILM REVIEWS- 8mm and beyond.

WAY OF SEEING FEATURES- What is Super 8, where is it going, what could it become?

TECHNICAL FEATURES- eg. "How to Make Quality Direct Sound on 8mm".

FILM NOTES- Let the Philistines know what your film really means!

FESTIVAL REVIEWS

FASCINATING FILMIC FACT FILE- or 'Interesting 38 Facts I Heard on the Bus One Day'.

ALSO- STILLS, PHOTOS, GRAPHICS, POEMS.

AND REMEMBER- We're open to suggestion!

Send your CONTRIBUTIONS, typed, single spaced A4 split columns (if possible) to:

The Editor

Melbourne Super 8 Film Group  
Newsletter

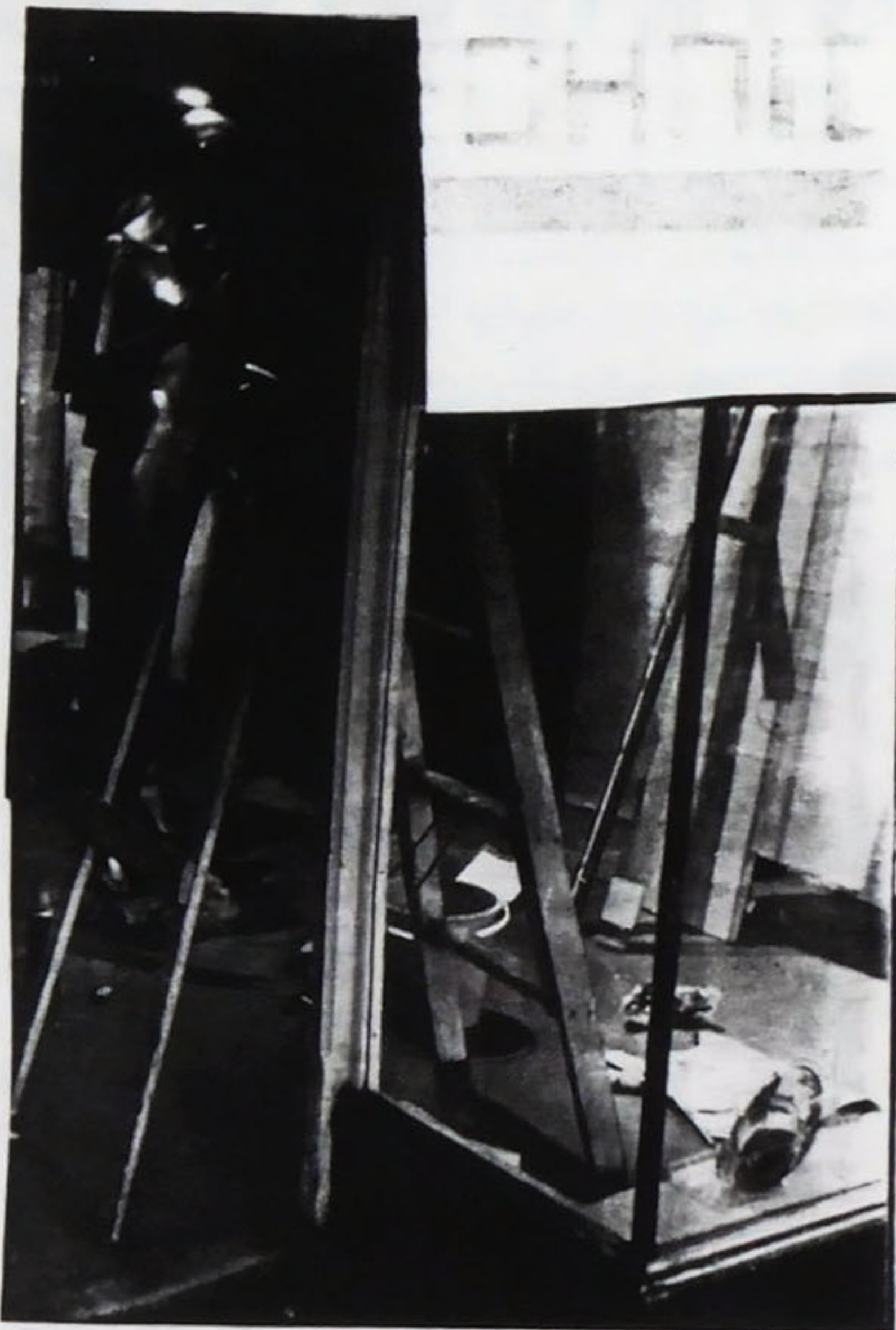
PO Box 1150

Richmond North, VIC 3121.

EXPRESS YOURSELF!!!

endeavours, and not your own, but you're using pieces of them to form your own mosaic?

SC: Well, you're using pieces of found footage to create your own films...Unless you're straight ripping it off, using it fairly whole. In the long run if you're releasing a film you should pay the rights to use. But I don't find it's an ethical problem for Super-8 filmmakers...I don't find a problem using images from television as much as you would using material from the street. To me it's no different...It's all part of your world ex-



perience. Films you see are as relevant as people you see in terms of material you could use for a film.

JD: Have you used the technique of transferring rushes (unedited shots) onto video tape and editing from that?

SC: That's what I did on ADR.

JD: Why was that a useful technique?

SC: Partly because you want to screen or edit the film as little as possible. I always edit on paper or in my mind but ADR was even beyond that. I really had to see some images juxtapositioned together, but its the duration...video editing is really annoying. Its not like film where you can just slot pieces around as you feel. You can't do that with

---

"...A LOT OF PEOPLE JUST FORGET ABOUT IT AND DO REALLY ROUGH EDITS AND JUST STAY WITH THAT AS PART OF THE SUPER-8 MEDIUM BUT I THINK THAT'S A BIT OF A MISTAKE".

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video. Its all electronic.

JD: Do you think that because you have to cut the raw stock on Super-8 that it makes you more careful about handling the film?

SC: Yeah. That's the problem most Super-8 filmmakers have is poor editing. Same problem video people have too, because they're reluctant to re-do things. On video, if you want to cut it around or cut it a few shots shorter

thing...The same thing with Super-8. Because people are a little reluctant to edit the original footage too much, or to try and get around the whole problem of the 24 frame delay (ie. the location of live sound in relation to the projected image in S8, Ed) a lot of people just forget about it and do really rough edits and just stay with that as part of the Super-8 medium but I think that's a bit of a mistake.

JD: Do you think audiences are too forgiving of Super-8, given that it does have considerable foibles even in the hands of an experienced filmmaker?

SC: Yeah. I don't know. I think some people expect Super-8 to look rough. They get a bit alarmed if its trying to look good. They're actually more critical of a film that's trying to look better rather than one that doesn't even attempt to smooth the rough edges...

JD: Do you see film as something of a perpetuation of the self?

SC: Yeah. I'm interested in what each age or generation responds to, what art it creates... That's my great interest in film history in general. Its quite interesting to see what kind of statements can be made at a certain time or what kinds of things are considered avant-garde or whatever. If they popped up five years earlier, they wouldn't have been. They would have been discarded. If they popped up five years later they would

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"BY THE TIME ITS FINISHED, THE FILM IS MADE, ITS A VERY CONSERVATIVE MEDIUM BECAUSE IN THE END PEOPLE END UP PLAYING IT A BIT SAFE"

---

also have been discarded.

JD: Do you think film, perhaps more rapidly than language sinks into cliché?

SC: It probably does, but I don't really know whether that's a good or bad thing.

JD: Maybe it impells you a little further to try the different, the totally new...?

SC: I don't think it does. I think film's probably a more conservative medium.

JD: Why is that?

SC: I think that people use it more conservatively. Its a very difficult medium. Say you're working with certain ideas, or you might be working with actors and other people so you're not just a solo artist...and you've got all these technical issues that you've got to tackle. And then you've got to try and get it shown, and that's harder than getting artwork shown or getting short stories publish-

ed in some ways. But, by the time its finished, the film is made, its a very conservative medium because in the end people end up playing it a bit safe. They might experiment more with other mediums. Film has this relation to reality. Its always a question in people's minds because film can be very realistic.

JD: How would you compare video to Super-8 as a means of expression?

SC: Its too different. Its a very different business.

JD: Why is it (video) a different business?

SC: It just is. The image is substantially different. The electronic image is not the same as a film image.

JD: What does 'nt it give you that the film image does in Super-8?

SC: Well, on a technical level it doesn't necessarily give you as much clarity or- it just looks different. It doesn't give you the depth as well but somehow there's just something different about the electronic image and the way people have grown up with it on TV and so on. Its psychology is very diff-

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• "IN FACT, IF PEOPLE WANT TO MAKE TRULY SUBVERSIVE STATEMENTS THEY'LL DO IT IN THE MAINSTREAM"

---

erent.

JD: Its psychology? What are the assumptions behind that?

SC: I just think people have a different relation to the electronic image than they do to the film image...a different attitude in the way they consume it, the way they respond to it.

JD: Why is Super-8 ostensibly a fringe activity?

SC: The standards are well and truly set in Hollywood's illusionist cinema- the mainstream. Therefore Super-8 can't hope to do that, therefore it has to go somewhere else, therefore it is automatically a fringe activity.

JD: Are people too willing to tar Hollywood with naive avant-garde contempt?

SC: Yes. People have got wise to the Hollywood stuff and they know there's much more to it than you would think, and also in Hollywood there's a lot of subversive things that happened in mainstream features- a much more subversive activity than your avant-garde film which is really only preaching to the converted... In fact, if people want to make truly subversive statements they'll do it in the mainstream..

FILM NOTES FOR Earth and Channel Part Two (3mins) Dir: Steve Ball.

## EARTH AND CHANNEL

Unclaimed and unnamed.  
Latitude south and longitude east  
Equator, meridian, so truthful north,  
magnetic and soothing, speaks  
across earth and through channel.

Current of light  
crashing through.  
Unclaimed and unnamed.

Unclaimed and unnamed.  
Skinny, white burned by  
sun fried salt pan  
gold and brown.

A thousand miles forward,  
a thousand around,  
unclaimed and unnamed.

Unclaimed and unnamed.  
Hard wind blow salt skin  
dry and cracked crust  
lips and earth thirst.

Big black crow a flying blood-clot  
in a scarred sky  
unclaimed and unnamed.

Unclaimed and unnamed.  
sizzle dry grass  
from rain to flame  
in a spark.

Though change  
remains the same.  
Homeless, nameless.  
No name? No claim.

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**Next  
Issue**

SYDNEY S8 SCENE  
FILM MAKER'S FORUM/  
TECHNICAL Q&A  
'PUBLIC TELEVISION AND S8'  
WAY OF SEEING FEATURES  
AND MUCH, MUCH MORE!

## THE POWER OF RESPONSIBILITY

(some more thoughts on the medium of Super-8)

BY BILL MOUSOULIS

"Uncultured people live in the world without being conscious that to be alive at all is the one grand mystery."

- John Cowper Powys,  
The Meaning of Culture.

## A COMMON PRAYER

BY MICHAEL LEUNIG

God help us with ideas, those thoughts which inform the way we live and the things we do. Let us not seize upon ideas, neither shall we hunt them down nor steal them away. Rather let us wait faithfully for them to approach, slowly and gently like creatures from the wild. And let them enter willingly into our hearts and come and go freely within the sanctuary of our contemplation, informing our souls as they arrive and being enlivened by the inspiration of our hearts as they leave. These shall be our truest thoughts. Our willing and effective ideas. Let us treasure their humble originality. Let us follow them gently back into the world with faith that they shall lead us to lives of harmony and integrity. Amen



With this piece, I wish to continue a line of thinking started by me in the last issue with "The Magic in Her Little Girl Eyes..." In that article, I postulated that freedom, love and self-expression are deeply connected, and that they are well suited to the medium of Super-8. Now, I'd like to talk about responsibility and ideas: the responsibility of interacting with ideas.

Firstly, though, I need to discuss a paradox, the paradox produced by the juxtaposition of the Powys and Leunig pieces above. That is, why should one worry about 'ideas' when 'to be alive' is enough? But I sense that Powys is being polemical - trying to push the old 'less is more' idea. Let us categorically state, therefore, here and now, (watch out for this one yuppies!), that if you can't be in an empty room for long without getting restless, that means you don't know how to truly live.

I am often overwhelmed by life: the littlest thing can really get me going. I miss a lot: there is too much to take in. And so I want to state, arrogantly, that I feel incredible humility at all times. I don't value myself, my perceptions, my opinions. I don't hold on to them: I am born afresh every day. That's why I feel (and act) like a zombie most of the time. Even as I'm writing this, I'm just writing it - the lines aren't planned. They are inspired, from something. Like magic.

What is an 'idea'? An idea is something

that comes to you, from somewhere, and then you put it to some use. But not everyone gets ideas, although everyone gets things that resemble or pretend to be ideas. Listen. Do you want to know a secret? An idea is not an idea unless you believe in it, unless you've nurtured, loved and expressed it, and with all your heart. The smallest idea that is believed in (for example, the motion of a bird's flight) is a far more productive thing than a big idea carelessly treated (for example, the ills of consumerism - many student films.)

Which brings us to responsibility, or power. Freedom gives both. They are basically the same thing. So what is human nature? Is it really something that tends not to use, but abuse, power? I'd like to think the answer to that question is up to each individual. I know it is for me. But even if I feel that I myself do not abuse power or responsibility, that does not absolve me from others' abuse. I am not alone. We are not alone. We are in this together.

The 80's are now the 90's, and the act of faith required to live truly and magnificently is constantly being subverted by extraordinarily malicious forces. To be gentle one necessarily needs to be tough. Like the angel in Godard's Hail Mary, we need to slap people in the face and angrily

## SEPT. OPEN SCREENING

The Tuesday 11 September open screening was the 'morning after' a great super-8 festival.

The 7.30pm section consisted of films which had been rejected from the festival. I thought the best of these was Killian Deller's 1952. This film was mainly Koyanisquatsi timelapse animation of people and the weather. The film really impressed me when I saw it at the selection committee meeting, but on seeing it again, I thought that sections could have been trimmed. The sound helped carry the film when the visuals were slack. Some stunning compressed time tricks though! Is Killian Dellers a Swiss Dirk de Bruyn?

Hell is for Tourists (USA) by Michael Herman was another film John West rejected. Silent holiday shots which didn't have much intention or direction. It didn't do anything for me.

The film by Sebastian Dellers didn't appeal to me because of its overuse of multiple exposure. For most of this short film there were about three layers of images. This effect became gimmicky after awhile.

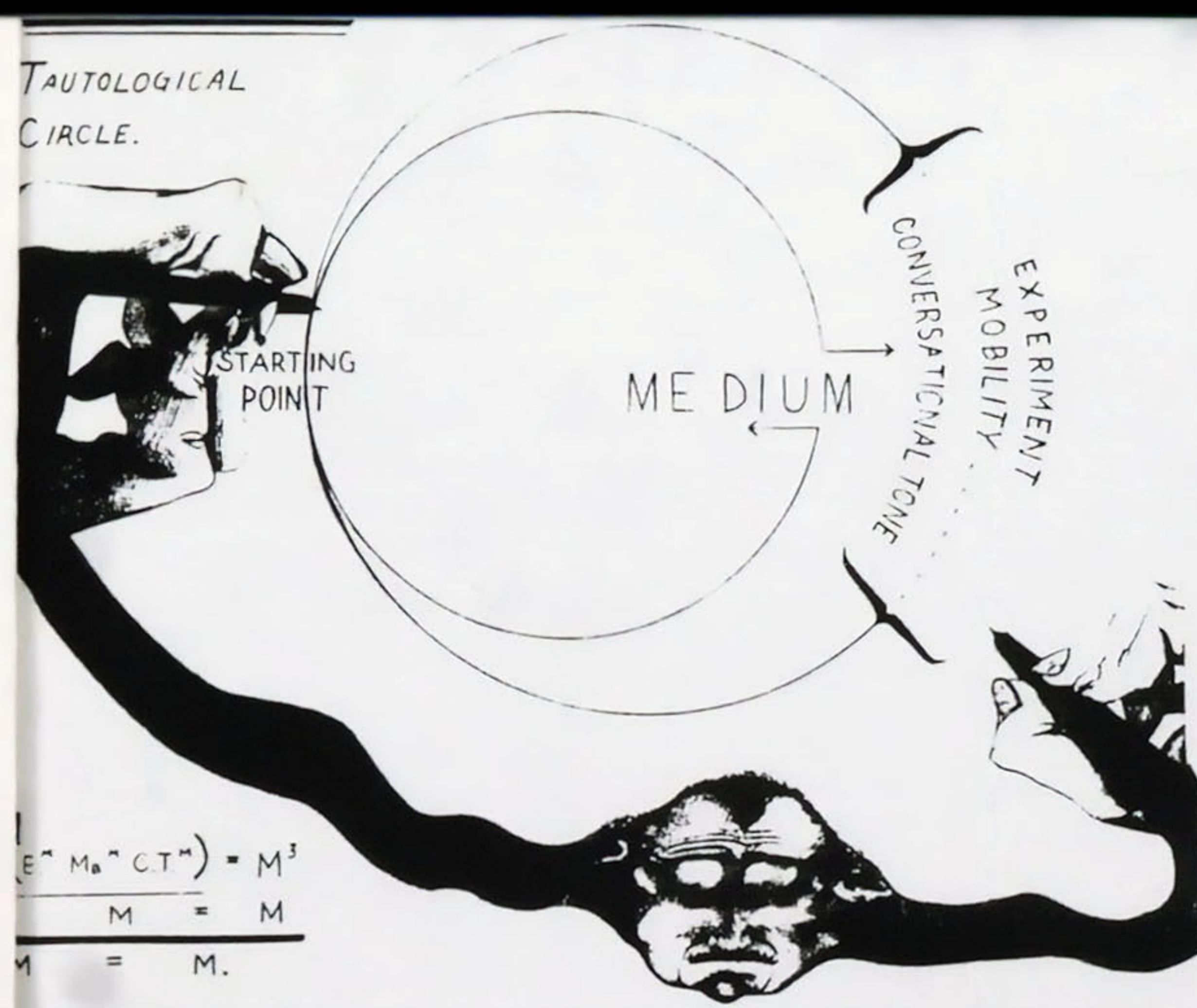
After the break we saw some home-grown films. On the way to the Exam by Russell Morris was a humorous story of two LaTrobe Uni. Ag. Science students battling to get to an exam on time. Blues Brothers music and several interesting twists. I liked it.

Tinsel Scare by Greg Olsen had a real sense of mystery. A young man wakes up in the morning to find a christmas tree with two unopened presents beneath it in his backyard. Ominous storm-clouds are in the background. The music creates a feeling of expectation. The first present is unwrapped, it is a strange looking animals horn. The second present is unwrapped, it is a claw which attacks the man. Russian roulette with presents?

Afterwards it was Stalagtites till ?.00am.

CONT'D P6.

TAUTOLOGICAL  
CIRCLE.



real strength lies in its...." etc., as listed above. But don't "mobile plasticity" etc. already say Medium? As does "verisimilitude"? And conversely: doesn't the Medium of Super-8 already whisper to us the irreducible limit to what we will be able to do — even if this should turn out to be a strength? (There are good reasons for doubting the latter possibility, not least of which is that "conversational tone", "mobile plasticity" et al also come well within the options-range of the "mainstream movie machine": a point Julian ignored or forgot. In defence of this machine it can at least be said that if it does decide to experiment, the experiment won't be half-baked, as those in Super-8 so often have to be: look at Tarkovsky and Soviet mainstream in this regard. The limits of the medium are the limits of my dream

DI A L O G U E     W I T H     A  
P O E T     A N D  
E S S A Y I S T

This note objects to a mode of argumentation employed by Julian Dahl in the article of the Sept. newsletter entitled "WAY OF SEEING FEATURE — Towards A New Super Eight Aesthetic".

To the mode: not to what is being argued. I have nothing against arguing for a personal, expressive use of the Super-8 medium. But to play down the importance of what characterizes it as a medium, and then to valorize "the uses to which the tools are put" in terms of precisely those medium-characteristics, is to argue in circles.

Those characteristics are listed in opposition to "the mainstream movie machine", and given definition in their difference from its characteristics: "conversational tone, mobile plasticity and experimental potential" for Super-8; "verisimilitude", "creators of the 'given reality'", "cliche factories" for mainstream. The two are reciprocally defined by what their media — their "tools" — allow them to produce. What is irreducible in the medium of Super-8 (its spectrum of choices) is used to play down the role of the medium as a medium.

The Super-8 choice-spectrum is narrow: "The probing 8mm pinhole is a poor conduit for the mainstream movie machine." (Whose choice-range is presumably wide.) "Its

It is illegitimate to use the "strengths" of Super-8 to criticize the importance of the medium that these derive from — especially when the strengths are used to characterize the medium, as is the case in Julian's article because you will always come back to it in the end.

What point is there in praising mobility and a quiet, conversational tone when you can't help having these? Does such praise actually have a specific sense? If not, one is entitled to suspect that, having made a virtue of necessity, one is pretending that only the virtue was ever there.

Principle of Logic: Only that is propositionable whose negation is imaginable. (Known as Wittgenstein's law: see "Tractatus", orig. ed.)

There are Super-8 filmmakers who stretch and reach beyond the medium; and there are those who work within what they imagine to be its limitations. Given the same expenditure of effort, the former group will travel further along within the medium than the latter. Those whose reach exceeds their grasp stand the greater chance of discovering how far they can grasp (Zenner's law).

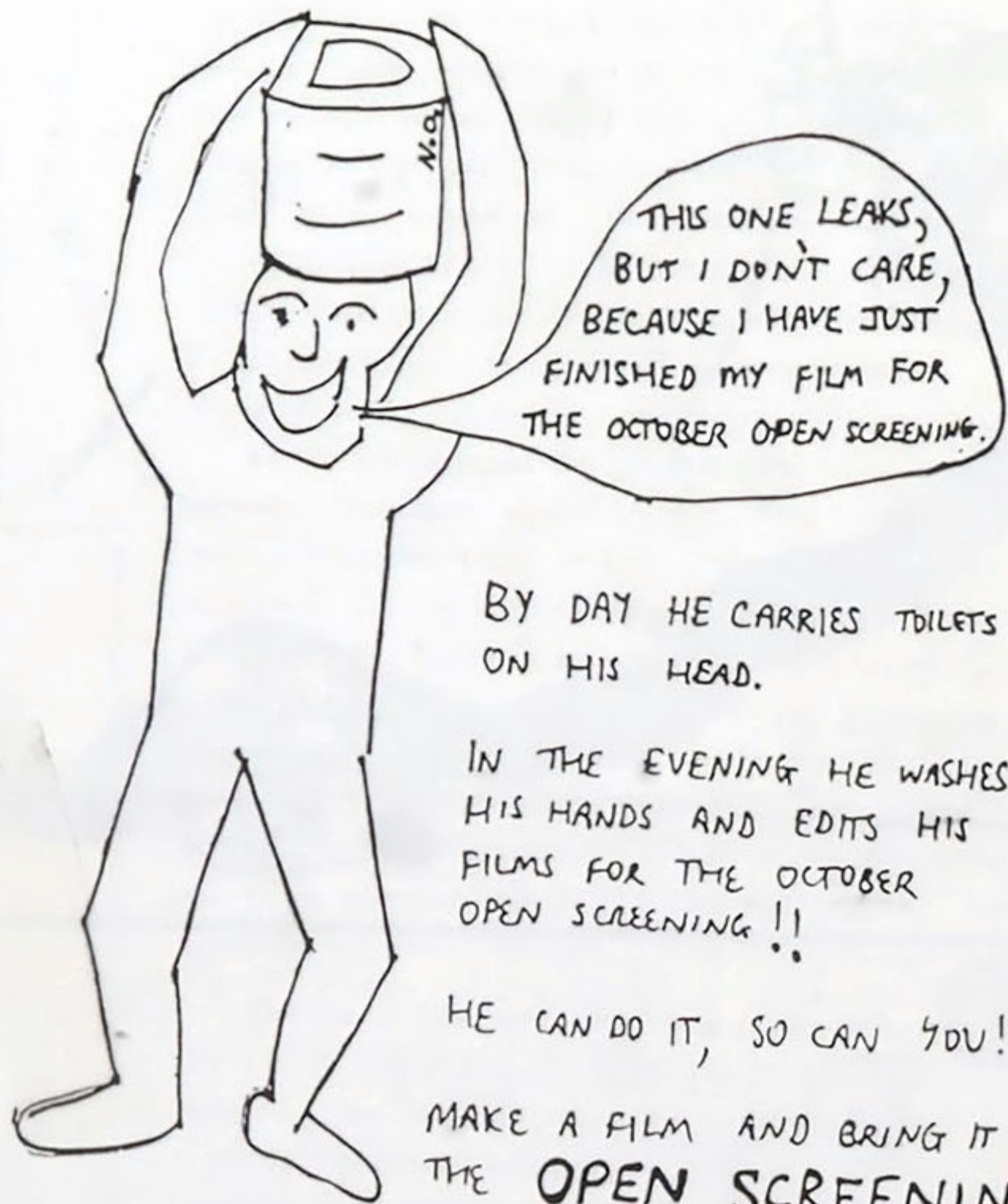
That distance, and none other, will show us the limitations of the medium (and there are those among us who believe they can still be pushed back).

An end to those who lack the competence to be ambitious and make an aesthetic of it!  
Greater rigor in argumentation, please.

Mark C. Zenner.  
7/9/90.

# • open screening •

## THE THUNDER CAN MAN



### NEXT MEETING

Next Open Screening -

Glasshouse Function Room, RMIT,  
360 Swanston St. City.

Tuesday October 9

At 7:30 p.m.

### SPECIAL SCREENING

**Lit Flat** (1987, 47 minutes)

directed by Maeve Woods

with contributions by Glyn Morris  
and Simone Mangos

Maeve Woods' film **Flashing Flesh**  
and **Bones Part 2** played recently in the  
Super-8 festival.

We are pleased to present this other work  
from this film-maker, especially as it's  
a long piece and therefore not suited to  
festivals.

**Lit Flat** has a sense of containment, being  
filmed inside the four walls of a small  
flat. There is a window, and a glass of  
water on a window ledge as a central motif.  
A Zen approach to washing-up.

At 8:30 p.m.

### OPEN SCREENING

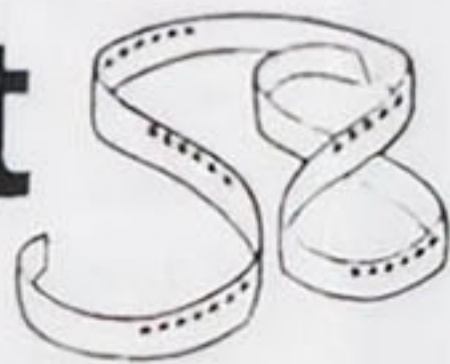
Bring your own film!!

**Editorial & Layout By:** Julian Dahl

**Contact Number:** Bill Mousoulis 429 9847

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# Super Eight



If undeliverable return to:

**Melbourne Super 8 Film Group**  
PO Box 1150  
Richmond North  
Victoria 3121

### LAST OPEN SCREENING

1952 by Killian Dellers

**Many Things Illuminated** by S. Dellers

**Feed the Birds** by D.J. Strutton

**Hell is for Tourists** by Michael Herrman

**Between 2 and 3** by Natasha Lepetit

**Eye-Opener** by Mary-Anne Hogan

**On the Way to the Exam** by Russell Morris

**Tinsel Scare** by Greg Olsen

**Peter and the Pixies** by George Ray

SURFACE  
MAIL

POSTAGE  
PAID  
Richmond North  
Victoria  
Australia 3121

Chris Windmill  
6/158 Chapel Street  
BALACLAVA 3183

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