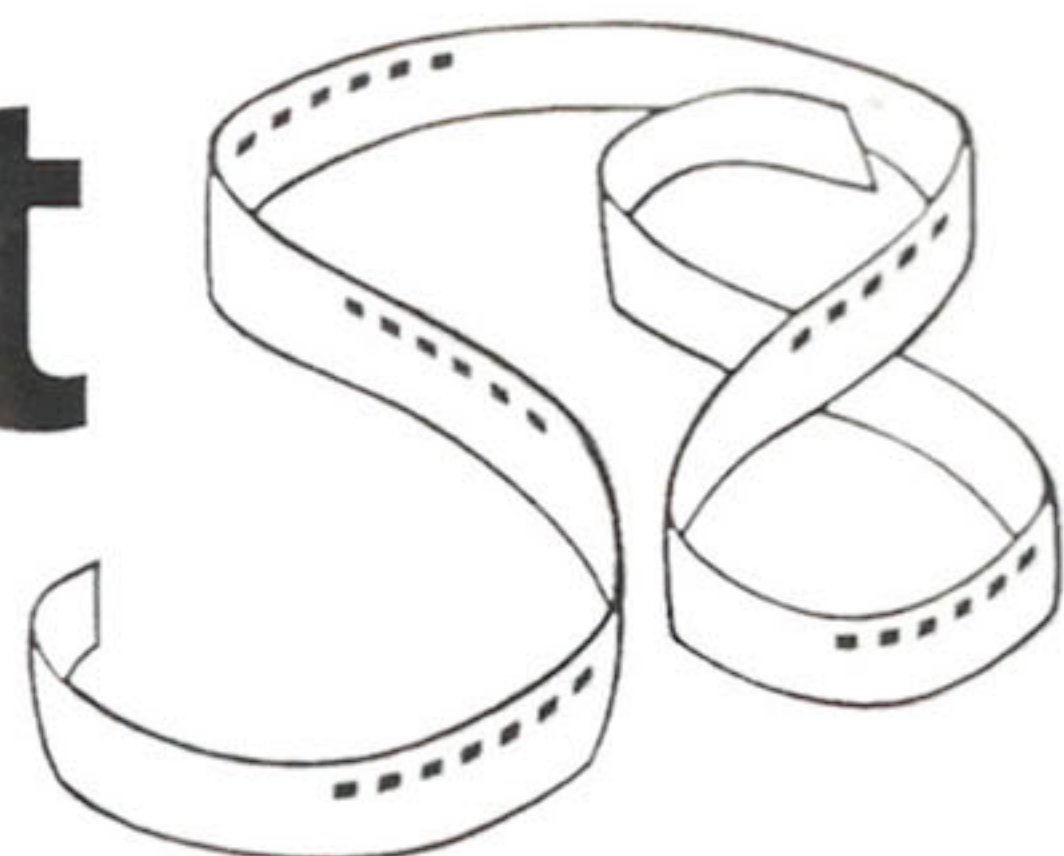


Super Eight

Newsletter of the Melbourne Super 8 Film Group
Issue 56 March 1991



SPECIAL "WOOD IS GOOD" ISSUE

EDITORIAL

If you're in the frenetic midst of editor-viewing, tearing shots with your teeth, shaping the Precocious Child of Light with trembling hands- don't forget the Open Screening at the Glasshouse, 12/3/91, 7.30 pm. (See p. for SCREENING OPPORTUNITY details, as well as the FESTIVAL FOCUS section).

I hope the Open Screening REVIEWS continue in abundance, for MS8 needs some forum for digestion, criticism, comment. Its hard enough to examine the shard of the filmmaker's soul before the next Precocious Child romps into view. The Review section will allow more considered, balanced opinion, forming the seed of new understandings, and the development of our filmic sensibilities.

We are still maintaining our tenuous grip on the Glasshouse, despite these Hard Times. The trickle of government largesse looks like it will return towards the latter half of this year. But the bottom line doesn't have to be dollars, as so many raffish, razor-budget S8 makers know.

Money carries responsibilities, obligations, controls. Just think folks!- we're now free to gleefully throw molotovs into the citadels of public consciousness; to radically challenge precepts of propriety, morality, acceptability. No accounting procedures or expenditure reviews to hold us back. The Way is Open for the formation of the Eight Milimeter People's Democratic Revolutionary Liberation FRONT!!! Come one, come all, and JOIN our kaleidoscopic band of drooling projectionists, cycloptic auteurs and VERY serious film geniuses.

Get funky, get militant, get that New Film hapnin'! And remember- with love, passion and commitment, we can overcome.

Ed. ●

index

Short News.....	3
Open Screening Reviews.....	5
by Bill Mousoulis and Steven Ball	
Actors Available.....	6
Screening Opportunity Film Festival Focus.....	7



COVER- Nick Ostrovskis

membership

costs only \$15 (\$10 concession) annually, which includes a copy of Super Eight each month, open doors to the Open Screenings, a wide selection of Equipment Hire, as well as the invaluable experience of our longstanding members.

by Bill Mousoulis

FUNDING UPDATE: Further to last month's news that our annual \$10,000 grant was cut to zero, I had a meeting recently with Julie Regan from the Sydney AFC office, and the vibes were pretty positive: it looks like funding for the festival should be okay and there's a chance organizational funding will resume again, in about September. For the moment though, we go on, with minimal means

NEWSLETTER: We've had to restrict this issue to 8 pages as well, but are currently setting up the situation where we can get it done really cheaply, allowing us to go back to the 16 or so pages that we've been used to

OPEN SCREENING VENUE: It looks like we'll be able to continue at the Glasshouse, because of the imminent cost-reduction to the newsletter. We'll see though

MEMBERSHIPS: Thanks to the healthy number of people who joined or rejoined in the past month. Special thanks to the couple of people who donated on top of their membership fee. We certainly need it!

EQUIPMENT: Richard has done a test on the Braun Nizo camera and the results weren't too good. The sound needs to be repaired, and it could be tricky. Anyway, an updated equipment list will be in the next newsletter. If you need anything now, give me a ring

For the record,

1990 BUDGET

EXPENDITURE		INCOME	
Wage	5760	10000	- grant
Equipment	731	1316	
Magazine	1226	375	
Newsletter	1684	975	- memberships
Open Screenings	1002		
General Admin.	1476		
Other	2896	2692	
Video Comp.	782	1100	
Festival	7372	6285	
TOTALS	<u>22929</u>	<u>22743</u>	difference: 186

Actual balance at end of '90: 320

But, owing: 348

As you can see from this, at the start of this year we were at about zero balance. The 348 owing is video compilation fees, 130 of which the film-makers have kindly postponed payment till the S-8 Group is funded again.

Memberships and equipment hire monies will now cover newsletter and Open Screenings cost, as best as they can. The Magazine for this year has been scrapped, and the administrator's wage. We're now like we were 1986-88.

The festival operates under a separate grant.



SAT. MARCH 9th
LINDEN GALLERY

3.30pm

"Private Visions" - Japanese Video Art of the 1980's (1)

As a modern post-industrial society, Japan has rapidly caught up with the Western countries upon whose culture its development and modernisation have often been modelled. Video art, however, has few distinct models. Ever since Sony developed the video Portapak in the 1960's (the machine largely responsible for the birth of video art), Japan has had an almost complete monopoly in the field of video equipment, but few apparent accomplishments in video art practice before the 1980's. Since then, and remaining unexpectedly faithful to Japanese artistic tradition, video art has developed as a predominantly personal art practice, often disregarding the medium's potential for social, political or interventional statements.

MIMA is proud to be able to present these programmes of Japanese video art in the 1980's via the Japan Foundation. A rare opportunity to see the work of some of Japan's finest video makers.

Programme 1 includes works that directly address the medium, such as Yoshitaka Shimano's deadpan "T.V. Drama"; psycho-analytical self-portraiture in "Trauma" by Toshio Matsumoto; and artists' responses to their environment, as in Naruaki Sasaki's video sketch-book "Aleatoric Dessiner".

SUN. MARCH 10th
LINDEN GALLERY

3.30pm

"Private Visions" - Japanese Video Art of the 1980's (2)

Programme 2. The highlight of Sunday's programme is "VideoLetter" by Shuji Terayama and Shuntaro Tanikawa. These two highly respected artists (Terayama in film and theatre, Tanikawa as a poet), take the popular modern practice of exchanging personal video letters into the realms of a work of art. Permeated by the wisdom and reflection of the quiet 'questioning voice', underlined by the poignant message of Terayama's impending death, "Video Letter" is a remarkable, engaging and truly transcendental work.

FOLLOWED AT 6pm BY OPEN SCREENING!
BYO FILMS!...FREE TO ALL!

experi

menta

REVISITED

The Experimenta Review in last month's MS8 Newsletter triggered a financial and administrative CRISIS within the walls of MIMA. Has the President been decapitated? Is the Director expanding tentacular control? Will the government squeeze the last gasp of MIMA solvency?

MS8 did not break these news events, so to put the record straight:

MIMA President- Arthur Cantrill
Director- Ivor Bowen
Experimenta Director- Lizzette Atkins

AFC funding has been cut this year but MIMA is still able to continue with reduced operations thanks to the Australia Council, Film Victoria and others.

Experimenta is on TOUR! A 16mm S8 and video programme of around 200 minutes from Festival features will be going on tour around Australia. The first leg starts in March and will travel for six months through several capital and regional centres. Audiences at 10 to 15 venues throughout the country will be able to see this dynamic and challenging programme of experimental image for the first time.



FILMPLUS

* 16mm AND SUPER 8 PROCESSING
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* VIDEO TAPE TO FILM

* NTSC TO PAL VIDEO TRANSFER

* SYNCHRONOUS WORKPRINTS

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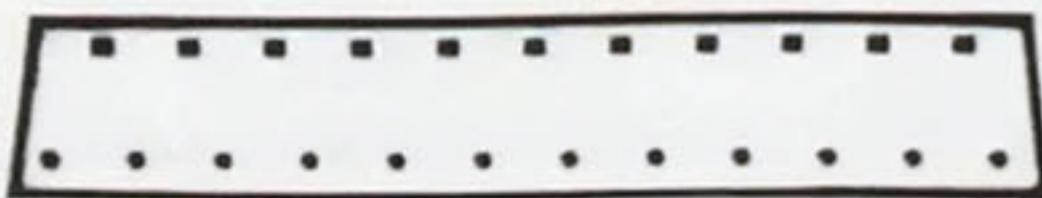


'SUPER EIGHT' HAS OPENED IT'S PAGES TO ADVERTISERS. ROCK BOTTOM RATES AND
MULTIPLE ISSUE DEALS AVAILABLE. GET IN QUICK. CALL STEVEN BALL ON 531 8145

• open screening • REVIEWS

A lack of imagination.

By Bill Mousoulis ,



A suggestion: the majority of the films screened at the last Open Screening - I think especially of the m - dot. report films, Soviet Cockroach, Love, and Colors - showed a clear lack of cinematic imagination. Now don't get me wrong; I'm not saying they're bad films, just that they lack this particular aspect.

What I mean is this: films are made for people to watch, correct? Therefore a film's meaning (and eventual worth) is in the watching, and on from that, in the watcher. It is true that the film-maker categorically guides the watcher, but surely the former can trust the latter to discover the film's meaning for himself? This is what I mean by 'imagination.'

Many years ago I saw a British film of the 30's whose title now escapes me and I was struck by a device in it. We had been following the story of a mountain-climber and were then denied seeing his penultimate climb. Another character simply says in conversation "He didn't make it", and it is terribly effective! The key: absence. (There are people today still lamenting over the introduction of sound to the cinema, let alone colour, stereo sound, etc.)

Colors and Soviet Cockroach literally bombard the viewer with striking, overblown images; the m - dot. report films insistently guide the viewer cunningly and playfully; Love seduces the viewer with numerous classical couplings of music and image.

A striking image is a coded, 'closed' image. It limits its meaning, or potentialities of meaning. The most meaningless film is the film that is most easily understood, the apotheosis of such being the 30-second ad. In that particular form, each shot 'performs.' There is no 'fat', as it were. The signification is clear and quick, but because of this, limited and simplified.

This is not to suggest that minimalism (i.e. of overt content and overt style) is the answer (although it's not a bad place to start!) What is required is an open form, or a form as open as possible. An open form is something that takes the difficult road by letting the viewer do the work required to get meaning from a film. Some semiologists believe 'expression' of meaning through signs to be a problematic venture. The film-maker who utilizes manipulation is a fool; the viewer who succumbs a sucker.

If cinema is not mysterious, I'll eat my hat. No general textual analysis - let alone a purely semiotic one - can adequately describe let alone explain the sheer magical qualities of certain films. This appeal to ineffability is not merely laziness; it is an appeal to highlight the fragility and elusiveness of this sublime process. A fullness (for the purely 'rational' sign is necessarily incomplete) from the deepest recesses of the film-maker is transferred to the viewer, but this is dependent solely on the viewer's powers of discovery - that is the paradox. (This process is possible through the belief in the notion of the commonality of primordial essences.)

It is not necessary to actualize Bazin's famous 'blank screen' vision - one senses the polemical nature of his declaration - but merely to go towards it. We saw it at work a couple of weeks back at the Melbourne Cinematheque in Luis Buñuel's Los Olvidados. The film seemed to be going towards a resolution of conventional tragedy, but it denied the viewer the cosiness of such. But what results

on the screen is far more terrible, poignant, and yes, tragic, than anything we were expecting. Buñuel's cool hand makes us feel things more intensely.

Compared to this, the efforts of the Super-8 film-makers at the last Open Screening were like showing off.

FEBRUARY OPEN SCREENING

by Steven Ball

'Love' Bill Mousoulis

I'm always a bit wary when people use quotes from literature in their work. It often seems that the intention is to somehow give credence through association, or to manufacture a context for the work, to hide or excuse vagueness and insecurity. Bill cleverly subverts this by allowing the viewer too little time to read the Powys quote.

I'm also a bit wary of people using music not made specifically for the film for pretty much the same reasons. Bill's work has a long history of the use of (usually 'indie-pop') music as punctuation and reflection of his characters' thoughts and feelings that cannot be shown or spoken. Here Bill has used Mozart as a counterpoint to black and white, beautifully overexposed colour, shots of streets, visual puns (Mobil/moon). There are no actors, no spoken words to clutter things up. Bill has often explored and reflected his world through character and dialogue. Here there are no such vehicles. This is how it should be. Reflective, moody, subjective and romantic.

50ft Nick Ostrovskis

An unedited 50ft. Does this need editing? Nick provides more sheer uncut kinetic energy than most people do in a lifetime of film making. Rich abstract colour shots reminded me of a de Stael painting. Look out for his new film 'Trance Mosaic'. A return to form.

'Soviet Cockroach' Gary O'Keefe

This looked like a competent piece of film making. Although much of it seemed rather refracted to me. Like Dostoevsky transported to a seven eleven store with a mid 30s Berlin soundtrack. Can I see this again? I didn't get it first time.

? Perry Laird

A record of a trip to Canberra featuring the permanent grin of Simon Cooper. A film with little appreciable structure or direction. Grimy b&w seizing the moment. This occasional obsession with seamy lowlife hypodermic culture left me a little bored. Not a patch on 'Sisters fertility dance'.

actors available

(PERRY'S FOOTLIGHT FOLLIES)

Saccha Harasymin 20 years.
Eyes- blue. Hair, blonde. Complexion, fair. Build, medium. Height, 5'8". Saccha is looking for any challenging dramatic work.
ph. 380 9144

Sarah Walker 24 years.
Eyes, blue. Hair, brown. Complexion, fair/olive. Build, petite. Height, 5'2".
Sarah is currently a third year drama student at Rusden, and has had various bit-part film experience, including Acropolis Now as well as weightier parts on the amateur stage. She is looking for "anything really interesting and gutsy".
ph. 830 1986

Doug Donaldson 26 years
Eyes, green. Hair, brown. Complexion, fair. Build, stocky. Height, 5'6".

Doug has worked in some alter-

native film and video productions and is looking for any acting work that will broaden his ken.

Ph. 347 8272


Ingrid Firth-Smith, 18 years.
Eyes, green/hazel. Hair, blonde. Complexion, fair. Build, petite (not fragile). Height, 5'3".

Ingrid has studied drama at La Trobe University, and been involved in amateur productions. She is looking for dramatic and challenging character work.

Ph. 827 7039

Kelvyn Richards 25 years.
Eyes, blue. Hair, light brown/blonde. Complexion, fair. Build, slim. Height, 5'11"

Kelvyn has had most experience in stage and set lighting. He has participated in productions as an extra, and would like to become more involved in front of the camera. Ph. 481 7208

 ACTORS wanting to broaden their experience are invited to ADVERTISE in this section. CONTACT the Editor.



screening Opportunity

THE LOUNGE has been running their Screenplay event for eight weeks within the comfortable ambiance of beer and skittles, groovy hep and studenski chic.

Previous programming has largely been culled from the National Library of Australia with only a limited range from independant filmmakers.

The organisers contacted were most interested in receiving S8 films for consideration. MS8 is currently negotiating the curation of a month-long S8 programme to be screened every Saturday night over four weeks.

The purpose of Screenplay is to disseminate "interesting short subjects from filmmakers of the past, present and future". Lounge film buffs are looking for exciting, experimental, well-produced works which would suit the alternative groove. Audience size ranges from 50 to 150, with projection and sound of acceptable quality.

Lounge management is unable as yet to pay screening fees, but it is felt that once around 150 patrons are regularly drawn, then benefits to filmmakers would become viable. The evening is advertised, and handbills are distributed for the week's attractions.

FILMMAKERS are advised that works should be fairly short (under 20 minutes), cleanly spliced and with long leaders. Films must be previewed a week preceding screening. Contact deadline is between the 15-20th of each month.

CONTACT Julian Dahl (525 3320) who will be programming the screenings, or:

Anthony Whiting 534 9481
Brice Fenwick 537 1541
from The Lounge, 243 Swanston
Street, City. Screenplay every
Saturday, 8.30 pm. Entry free.

FILM FESTIVAL FOCUS

MELBOURNE FILM FESTIVAL

Director- Tait Brady
Ass. Director- Melinda Tuz
Dates: 7-22 June
Contributions Deadline- March 22
Entry Fee: \$10
CONTACT: PO Box 12367
 A'Beckett St
 Melbourne
 3000
ph. 663 2953
 663 1395

FRINGE FILM AND VIDEO FESTIVAL

Palz Vaughn
Dates: September 7-28
Contributions Deadline- July 8
Entry Fee: \$5 Fringe Membership
CONTACT: Fringe Network
 184 Brunswick St
 Fitzroy 3065
ph. 419 9548
FF&V Festival is a non-competitive, experimentally weighted extravaganza of new images that usually has strong S8 input.

MELBOURNE SUPER 8 FILM FESTIVAL

Curated by the Melbourne Super8 Film Group Committee, the MS8FF is the largest and most diverse fiesta of flickering lights from independant skinny gauge makers. Dates are fairly provisional right now, but will be similar to last year's: Screenings towards the end of August. Contributions Deadline: mid-July
No Entry Fee
Venue: Glasshouse



WORLD OF
DREAMS

• open screening •

FILMS AT LAST OPEN SCREENING

m - dot. report by Steven Ball
m - dot. report by Steven Ball
Soviet Cockroach by Gary O'Keefe
Life and Death at 42 by Perry Laird
Love by Bill Mousoulis
Colors (work in progress) by Nick Ostrovskis

Packaged films brought in by Ian Poppins:
"Sorcerer's Apprentice" from Fantasia and
British Movietone News last edition.

NEXT MEETING

TUESDAY, MARCH 12 1991.

VENUE: Glasshouse Meeting Room, R.M.I.T.,
360 Swanston St. City.

At 7:30 p.m.: IAN POPPINS FEATURE

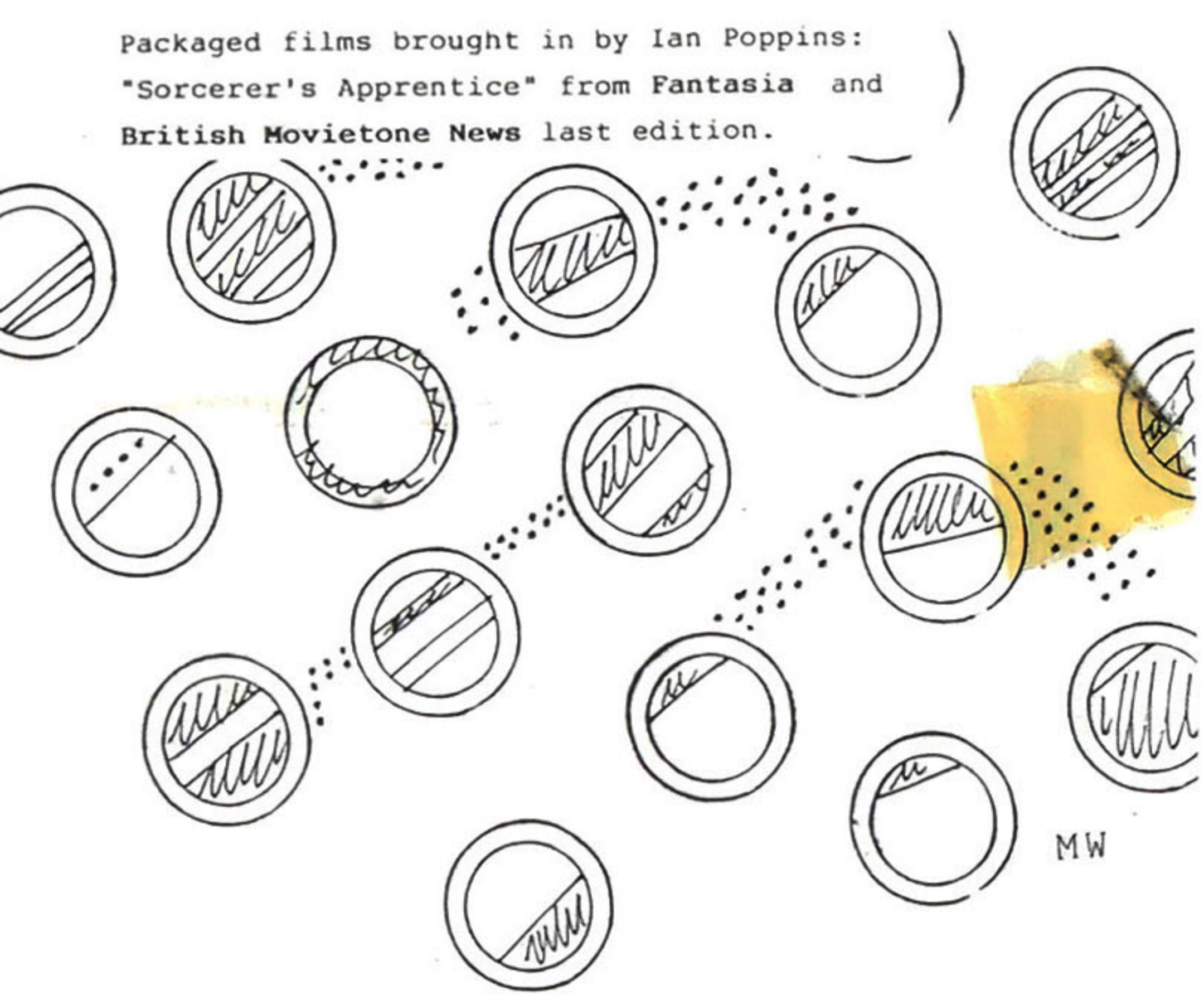
Ian Poppins has been making films for 30 years. He will talk about his experiences in independent/amateur film-making, and will bring along equipment, examples of different stocks, and a finished film or two. An insight into one of the most committed Super-8 filmmakers in Melbourne.

At 8:30 p.m.: OPEN SCREENING

The words "OPEN SCREENING" mean one thing and one thing alone: the glory of BYO film. If you've just made something, bring it along and just watch the tomatoes hitting the screen. Dare-devils only need turn up.

At 10:30 p.m.: STALACTITES

No, that's not a cryptic password - it's the name of the place corner Russell and Lonsdale



Editorial & Layout By: Julian Dahl and Steven Ball

Contact Number: Bill Mousoulis 429 9847

This newsletter is published monthly by the Melbourne Super 8 Film Group.
Contributions are welcome (deadline 4th Monday of each month).
Membership of the group \$15 (\$10 concession) annually.

Super Eight



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