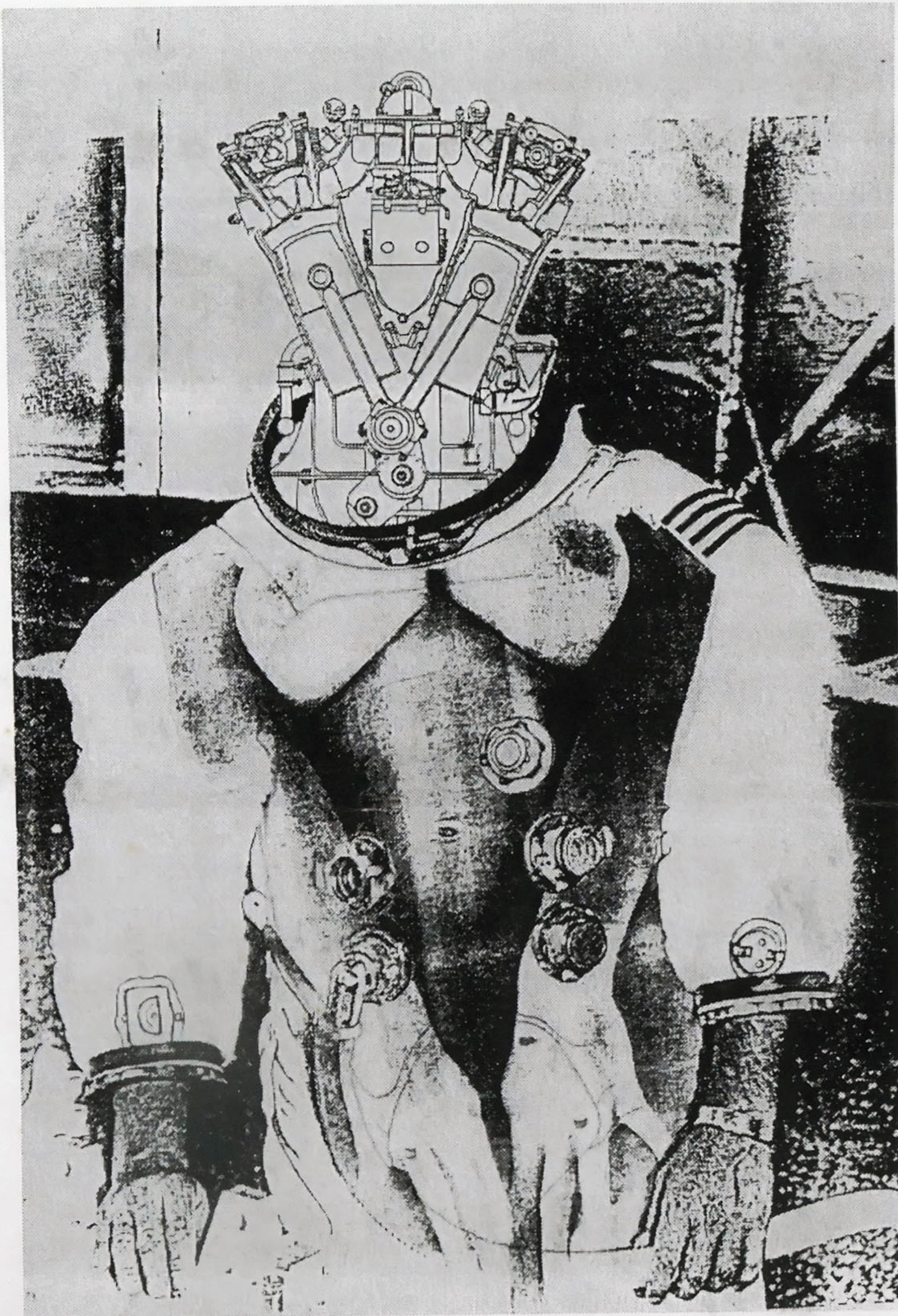
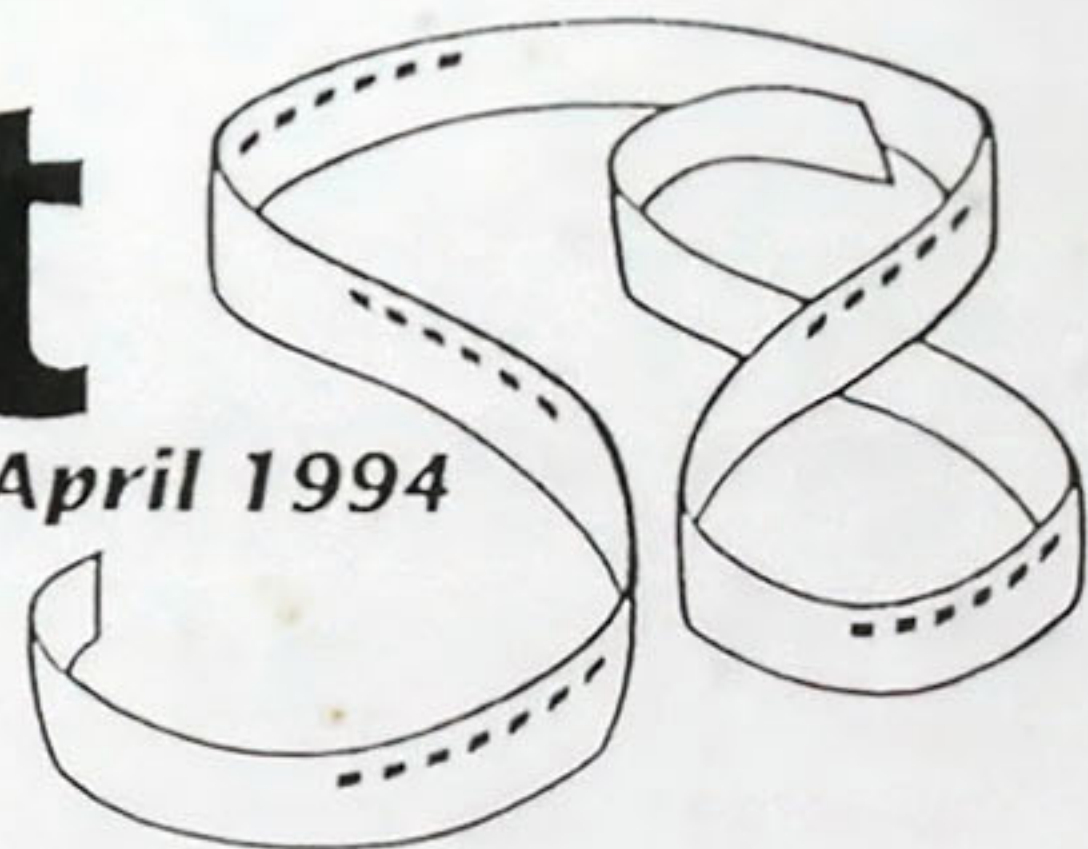


# Super Eight

Issue 90 April 1994

Newsletter of the Melbourne Super 8 Film Group





## OPEN SCREENING DEBATE?

May I suggest for the continued vitality of the Super 8 group that we concentrate on Open Screenings unless we have the opportunity to view interstate, rare or overseas films. I believe it will encourage our members to focus, squeeze the trigger and shoot the rolls - let's have more unreeling.

....Tony Woods

Tony's above suggestion opens up an area that has been discussed on both an informal and a committee level on occasions. That is to do with the '7.30 slot' at the open screening and what function it performs. What should we as a committee be programming for this slot? In the past we have tried to strike a balance between retrospective style programmes of films by practicing members and similar style screenings by individuals or collections of individuals from outside the group. The bias has been towards group members whose films make up the majority of the programmes. However is this entirely necessary? After all many of the films screened at 7.30 would have been screened in the open screening sessions in not-to-distant previous months. Arguably the 'group member retrospective' approach gives both the filmmaker and the audience members an opportunity to view a body of work and to concentrate on a developed or developing oeuvre. However, on the other hand, is it consistent with a policy of openness and egalitarianism to privilege, at most, 10 individual members a year, in fact it is somewhat less and that is, statistically speaking less than 10% of the membership.

Bill Mousoulis made a similar and wider ranging point in the February newsletter, that is that the number of individuals showing films and also writing for the newsletter is relatively small as a proportion of the total membership (which hovers around 100 people on average at any one time). I would echo his question "**What are you guys up to??**" (of course this would be on the understanding that the question

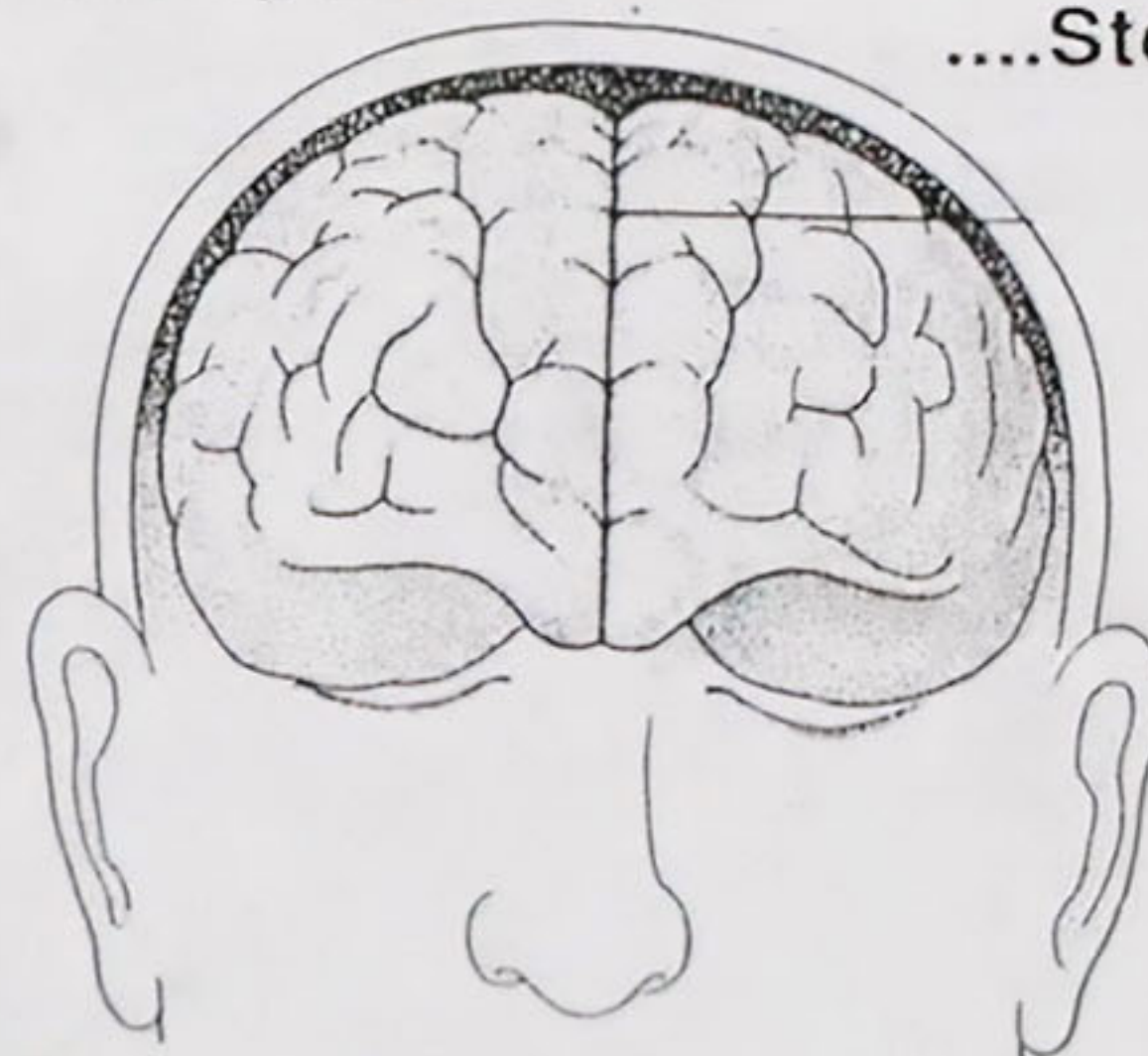
employs the current vogue for the non-gender specific usage of the word "guy"!).

Firstly then an invitation then to enter into the debate about the open screenings: What do you like to see, the open screening films or the '7.30 slot' or both? Of the latter do you prefer to see films from your fellow group members or, as Tony says "interstate, rare or overseas films"? It would be interesting to hear your views, perhaps it will also have the affect of eliciting more contributions to the newsletter.

Secondly, to return to Bill's point, why is it that the open screening films come largely from the same smallish group of people? If it is the fact that they are actually the only ones making films then perhaps some more of you could consider squeezing the trigger. Anyone can make a film, isn't that one of the points of Super 8? If you feel too shy or nervous to show your film, all I can say is please **don't**. Sure it's a scary, nervewracking thing to screen a film at an open screening, but it is also a buzz. For myself, as a relative veteran at showing films at open screenings, it is a buzz that does not diminish with the familiarity of the experience, I still get those jittery butterflies whilst showing a new film. Don't be intimidated into feeling that other people are 'better' filmmakers. They're not: just different.

Lastly, anyone can write for the newsletter. That's not simply to say that the newsletter is open to contributions but also that it doesn't matter how much or little you think you are capable of, or if you think that you don't have the critical faculties, you can still write. Even if you are completely illiterate you can make a mark and that mark is your expression and these pages are here to be filled by those marks.

....Steven Ball





# NEWS

## KIOSK 8

A few changes. Contrary to the notice in the last newsletter, the first Kiosk 8 will now take place on Friday 13th May. By now you should have received a copy of the calendar and news of the extended deadline for entries, which was 6th April so if you haven't entered anything you're too late. There is another K8 in July, and yet another in October, so you've a chance to enter either or both. In May there will be two programmes. The first (at 7.30pm) will be a programme of overseas films, the second (9.30pm) will be local work (perhaps even yours). More news next month.

## CINE BOHEMIO

For a couple of months Vikki Riley has been running Cine Bohemio at Cafe Bohemio, 354 Smith Street, Collingwood, on Sunday evenings. Mostly the films are South American however she has started screening local films. A few weeks ago Marcus Bergner programmed a mixture of local and historic overseas films, including a couple of Super 8s. During April and May there will be more local Super 8 films shown alongside the South American films. Look out for the flyers or call the Cafe on 417 7626 for more details.

## FESTIVALS

Currently calling for entries is International Film Forum Arsenal, International Centre of New Cinema, Director: August Sukuts, PO Box 626, 14 Marstalu Street, LV-1047, Riga, Latvia. Nick reckons it's a good one. You can get entry forms from the AFC. Call Drazenka Cepuran on 02 951 6444. Whilst you're at it ask her if she has any information about international Super 8 festival and if not, why not?

## Why Super 8 is Better than Video in the TV Age

1. It lasts longer, I have 50 year old films which are perfect. The life of video tapes is about 15 - 20 years max, if that.

2. Better resolution. VHS & 8mm video: 250 lines, Super VHS & Hi8: 420 lines. Professional formats like Betacam 625 but Super 8 is estimated at 1200 lines resolution that's twice the best video format used by media.

3. Film formats are standardised around the world. Unlike the 21 incompatible video systems like PAL, NTSC and SECAM. Film can be transferred to any video system quite easy.

4. Film is the only practical medium for 3D anaglyph and 3D polarization and Cinemascope (widescreen) and frame by frame animation effects.

5. Resolution of film is never outdated Super 8 has 1200 lines but video is always outdated, always improving resolution and bringing out new cameras. What was practical in Super 8 in 1965 is still practical in 1994.

6. Film equipment is cheaper in long and short term. A Super 8 camera, projector, editor and splicer can be bought for around \$200. A Super VHS camera, TV, editor and video projector will cost up to \$10,000 and to transfer video to video (PAL to NTSC) costs more than Super 8 to NTSC.

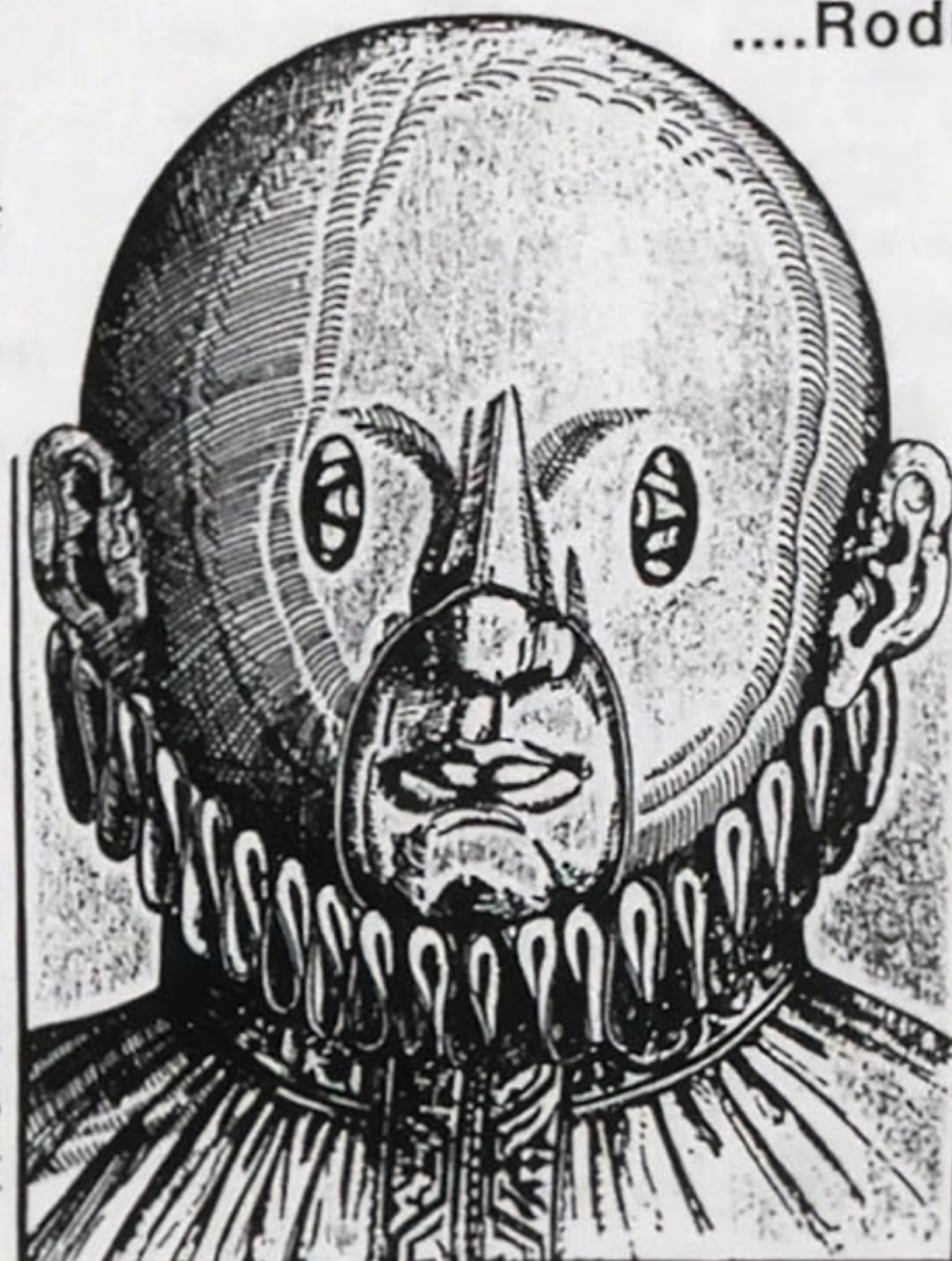
7. If a 250 line resolution image recorded with a VHS camera is transferred to high definition TV with 1125 lines the result is still a 250 line resolution image. Whereas Super 8 film will be reproduced with a full 1200 lines of resolution.

8. A high definition video camera for the 1125 line system is worth around \$.5million, Super 8 can give the same result for only a couple of hundred dollars.

9. If you think that laserdiscs big or small are the best video system with 500 lines you're right. It will outlast tapes but film is proved to last 100 years but laserdiscs, like a mirror, can go brown on edge or inside after time, I'd give it 50 years. Still Super 8 with 1200 lines beats laserdisc quality, when projected is only half as good if that.

10. ...and the list goes on. You can probably think of a few yourself.

....Rodney Bourke





"VISUAL THINKING THAT CAN ONLY  
BE SEEN BY THE USE OF A MACHINE"

Tony Woods first film was shot with a \$15 camera and a 75cent plastic prism. Until recently he could only see his films by bringing them along to open screenings, this month he has had the use of a 50 watt globe projector in his own home, to celebrate this triumph of personal access, Nestor Quixotic thought he would ask him 8 Super questions.

Q.0. What's your background Tony?

I was born 17may 1940, Hobart Tasmania. My father was a shift worker, his lifestyle showed me the alternative to 9-5 routine. My mother was a dressmaker/designer, I had my first experiences at drawing encouraged by her. She also had me chalking hemlines, armpits and necklines as she modeled the gowns (drawing in the round) Fortunately I was 17 when she realised I was short sighted, so from that date I have had lenses in front of my eyes. I had left school and was working at the "Mercury" newspaper as a proof reader. I started art classes at night in 1958. In 1961 I decided to attend art school full time and transferred to nightwork. In 1964 I obtained my F.A.D. and decided to quit work and become a full time artist. In 1962 I had my first one man show in Hobart, from 64-68 I exhibited paintings in Melbourne, Sydney, Adelaide In 68 I was awarded a Harkness fellowship for 21 months in New York, just to paint. The first night in N.Y. I saw Warhol's "Loves of Ondine" I sure knew I had left Hobart behind.

I lived in the Chelsea Hotel on 23rd. st. and had a studio nearby on 7th. ave. I lost all my N.Y. paintings in a fire in 69. I returned to Australia empty handed but not empty headed.

Since 1972 I have lived in Melbourne. I am still a full time artist, living in Fitzroy around the corner from the Super 8 Group.

Q.1. When, what and why, did super8 come your way?

In 92 while an artist with the Elaine Gallery in Fitzroy I met Norma Pearse and Pete Spence on many rewarding occasions

I had not seen any Super8 films and was not a regular film viewer, anyway I saw a Super8 camera for sale. I phoned Norma, she said "buy it!" later Pete came to the studio, checked it out, it seemed O.K. gave me some valuable information. I decided to shoot my main painting subject for 15 years-a colour light situation at the rear of my Fitzroy studio. I rearranged obstacles to the midday sun, s filtered rays, as I had done for my paintings. I finished the roll, during the filming, I found I had to remove my glasses and it seemed more comfortable to gaze with my left eye. Later Pete took the processed film to his place to view and told me it was quite good and later at a friend's place showed the film "Reel Light" plus some other super8 films.

Q.2. As a fellow non-techno artist, how do you approach filming?

At the same time I decided to finish a slide film that I used to record my paintings, with some photo's of the light situation using a child's plastic distorting viewer, holding it in front of the camera's lens. When I got the slides back I was stunned by the diffracted result and decided to do more slides and films probing the possibilities of diffraction of the natural light and in 93 the 100 watt globe, at night. Up till 93 photography was of little interest to me, and was not used in my paintings and drawings. So far in the last few years I have done over 200 slides, 3 7min. and 2, 3 min. super8 films.

I joined the Melbourne super8 group in 92.

*Is it possible with a machine to have total control in moving from the prosaic to the poetic?*

Q.3. What are the main differences between your painting and films? and do they influence each other?

Up till the end of 92 photography was not the source for my art, nature and life were my models! After seeing my first super8 film and slides I started slowly to use the films and slides as my models.

I don't project the slides I have



a little hand viewer I paint and draw alternately. I now have the use of a film projector. I can study the films and my subject at my leisure in my studio.

My entire art work for the last year and a half has been about diffraction of light. Slides can be made into laser copies.

The paintings in acrylic and oil, the drawings in various media are 2 dimensional, my films are a new filmic reality. I change reality in various ways in front of the lens, capture it on film and exhibit these new images of duration showing new diffracted prismatic configuration on the screen. I feel a moral ecological need to only use images I have generated from reality in creating my art, -films etc.

*To extend vision-memory by film, by means that are part aesthetic part technical, exploratory transformational.*

Q. 4. How do you actually work with film, physically and mentally??

I am not a list maker in life or art. I act intuitively spontaneously and feel that the instinct will decide the method needed. I never sketch a rough out, the compositions onto the canvas etc, my drawings are finished warts and all in their own right. I see something, I feel something I think about this and after a lot of head work shoot the film deciding what to do as I do it. My subject is in front of me. I do not edit. I have a subject-motif in my mind I can't visualize it on the blank canvas I do onto film because I wish to see my mental thought. The camera (left eye), my eyes and right hand receive and reveal the mental traces of my brain. Pure feeling derived from observation and a sense of wonder.

Q. 5. Would you care to comment on the open screenings, films shown, suggestions, criticisms etc???

I greatly enjoy the democratic open screenings evenings many films have given me aesthetic and emotional pleasure.

More of the group to shoot more rolls of film, the Groups monthly magazine to be increased and spread around the book-

shops, more members to write articles, the older members to instigate introductions to newer members. We all know that creativity requires solitude but when the works are created they and their creators need an audience and words can lead to friendships. dialogue is essential food.

I feel a high percentage of films 8 and 16 go too fast so that really little registers what's the rush! 5 seconds a shot could be ideal all that work should not be a visual memory test.

Also music (records) as soundtracks can blackmail the viewer. Has permission been granted to use another's creative unit? My subjects are soundless and wordless when I do what I do so in silence, surely in this day and age 3-10 mins. silence could be beneficial and a welcome break from the constant noise around us.

*It is the search for equivalent, rather than style which constitute celebratory art, imagistic thought, deductive logic.*

Q. 6. Describe the process of waiting for that roll to come back and what happens when you actually see it?

Since up to 92 all my work was done by hand and visible unless destroyed.

This use of a machine to record, create a new reality in time is both stimulating and doubt anxiety causing: each creative individual has a differing metabolism, mine is nervous quick thinking do it type. non academic; individual difference is what counts to me in the arts. In film a machine carries out what you remember to do to it and a processed film (by others) needs a machine to show you what you have successfully captured or lost. I try as a non list maker to go about my daily chores unfocused so that my consciousness is not biased or closed to new information---then I focus. I have been trying to capture and portray time in my paintings figurative - nature for over 30 years. I now can portray time evolving thought processes etc. on film. I try for an art that allows the viewer access to the creative act. interpretation and involvement is encouraged.



To see aesthetically, spect-  
relatively and to make thought  
physically visible through painting  
drawing slides and film.

7. I sense you have more to say on this matter?

If I had not taken those plastic lens altered slides in 92 and responded so enthusiastically to the results and seen the potential for my painting and film, I would not have achieved what has been the last 2 years works.

I thank Norma, Pete, Steven for encouragement and friendship.

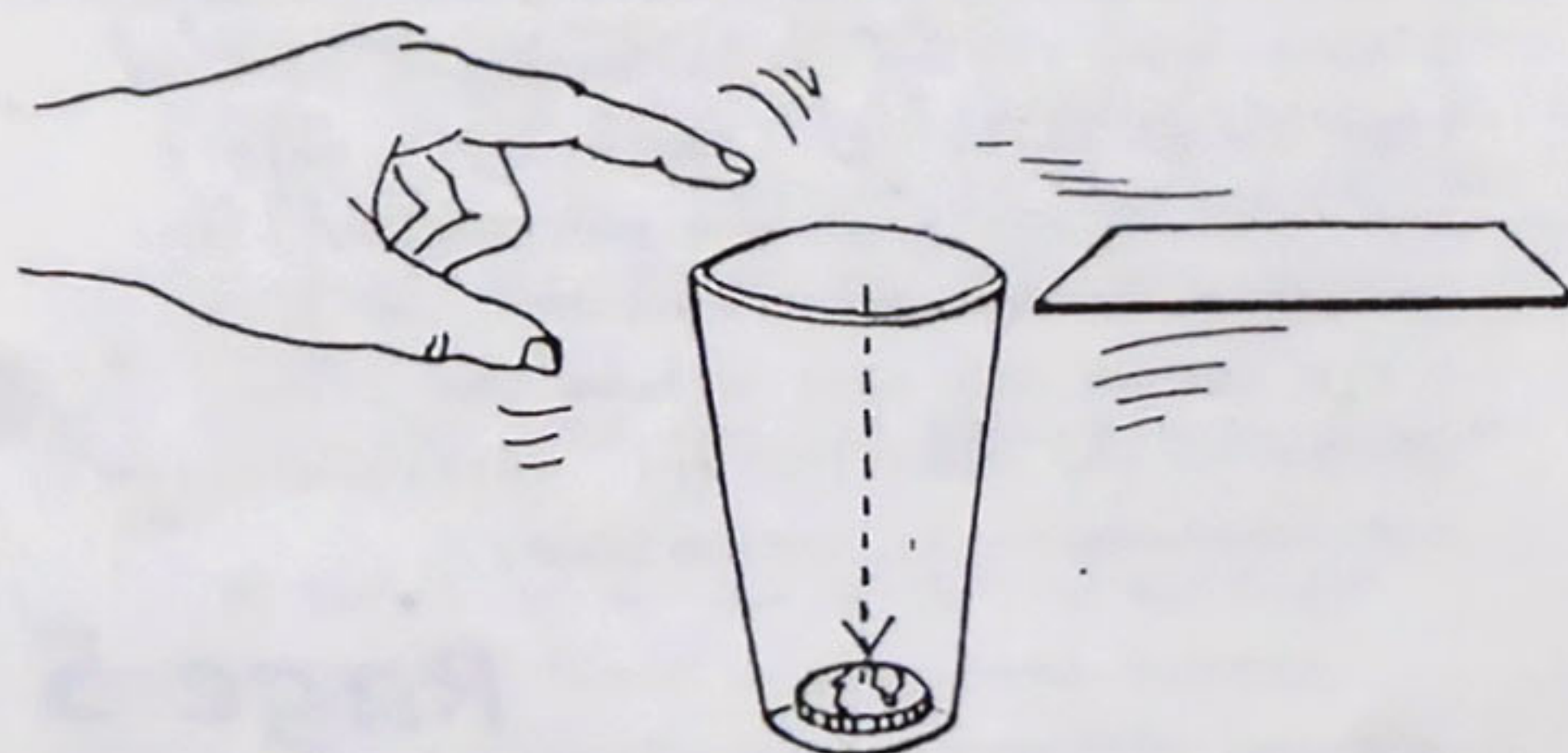
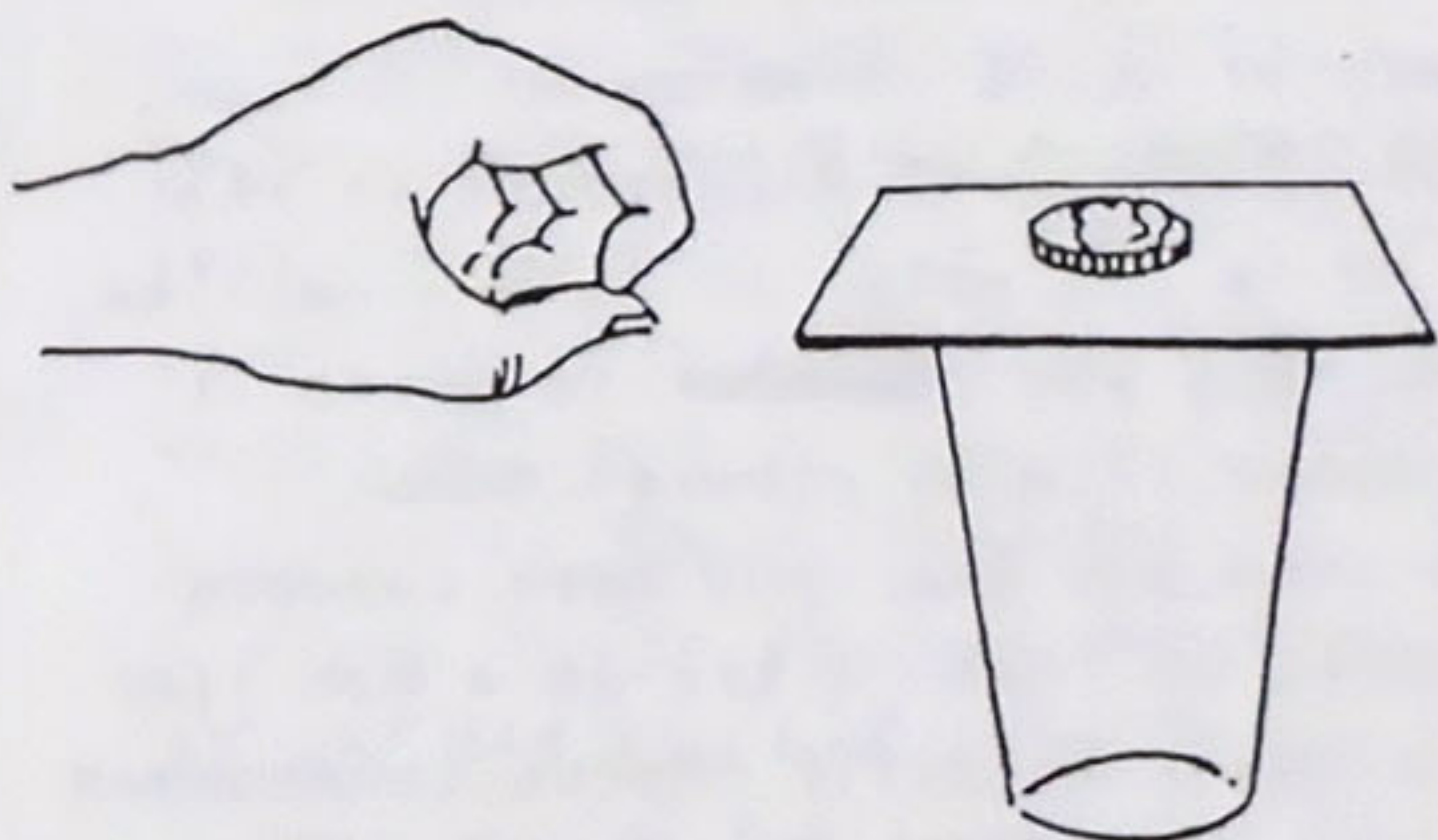
8. Where are you now with Super8, and where do you expect to go with it?

The silence in the now darkened room, the expectancy the viewing, the applause, lights the next film.

For the brief minutes of Super8 I am rapt, alert and mostly sad that that it all has to end. What have I retained? will it change my perceptions of the strangeness of life its ever expanding not shrinking possibilities of interpretation and the use artists filmmakers make of their insights.

*The use of light as a metaphor for spiritual essence.*

I will continue to use my camera just as I use ink and paper paint and canvas to record my vision - revision of the philosophical, conceptual by the visual vocabularies available to me.



Beuys softly dropped the door.

PROTEIN....Steve Ball.7mins.  
2 rolls of film,shot randomly,  
soundtrack,utilizing a sampler C.D.  
also at random.....

Film is sandwiched between shots of binary numbers and oscilloscope. The meat in the middle are short angled train shots, and women exercising behind glass,

The short shots snare similar shadows from electric wires, binding the imagery. Phone and sampler music come round & round again, to further tighten the film.

PROTEIN? because the film consists of one or more chains of amino acids (gymnasts) linked by peptide bonds (trains) and are folded into specific 3 dimensional (calm down jim) shapes, maintained by further chemical bonding (sampling soundtrack) and viewers random response.

IN TRANSIT....Ooni Peh has reworked the end of her film adding a soundtrack by Leo Kottke and introducing daylight into the end of her film.

Ooni goes out into the cold dark night to capture light with her camera.

She tries X under the Punt Rd. bridge. Lights from car's flare and vibrate out in ever widening arcs into the night. Light pulses the grain on poster walls. The film's grain constantly shifts as Ooni stirs it with light.

Warm, warm black and glistening and silvery white, kept apart by the grey grain. The grain like the film is rough and is really my favourite part of the film. It gets really hairy as the morning cars line up like racing cars.

WARM, WARM, BLACK AND WHITE!!!

jim bridges..

**REF**



FILMS BY GARY O'KEEFE

Tuesday 12th April  
Erwin Rado Theatre  
211 Johnston Street  
Fitzroy  
Beginning 7.30 sharp

## MY BACK PAGES

The Pier

Soviet Cockroach

Ormond

Joe and Michelle

Zero Falls

Katoomba

Colette and Chantelle

Subtopia

The Pier was intended for entry in a competition that St. Kilda council was running to showcase a newly refurbished St. Kilda pier. I began filming before dawn and finished later that morning, shooting six minutes of film over those six hours. The Pier required only three splices but despite the ease with which it was made it was never completed in time for the competition. The music is *My Funny Valentine* by Miles Davis Quintet.

Soviet Cockroach is a tenuous pastiche of macro projects set up at different times over the course of 1988. It follows on from an earlier film, *The Polka*, in its use of cardboard boxes, Christmas lights, turntables, toys and gadgets, a lightbox, rear projection and a Barbie doll. "Like Dostoyevski transported to a 7/11 store with a mid-thirties Berlin soundtrack" is how Steven Ball described this film in a Super 8 newsletter at the time. The music is in fact *Shachiadang*, a Chinese Revolutionary Opera performed by the



Central Philharmonic Society. Accompanying liner notes explain:

"...[this music] reflects the brilliance of Mao Tse Tung's thought. These works are full of militancy and pre-revolutionary heroism. They are models in serving the workers, peasants, and soldiers of the proletariat."

I next changed to sound striped stock and set about making Ormond, a diarist film. It captures the last few days that I spent with my family, we separated soon after. Ormond was first shown at the Oct. 1990 open screening and it was included the following year in a Cinematique program 'Beyond Documentary, Beyond Fiction'. Bill Mousoulis, the curator, described the films in this program as "narrative documentary, that is documentary film with the emotional resources of a lived story". It is also Super 8 filmmaking at its most pleasurable.

The next film on the program has to this point been seen by only a handful of people. I had a rented flat in Carnegie in 1991 and was friendly with a young death metal aficionado from work. He asked if he and his girlfriend could stay at my flat on weekends that I was away and so Joe and Michelle was made one Saturday morning in winter. Entranced by the accoutrements of heavy metal and punk consciousness I was interested in their youth and the nature of their rebellion. Its a relatively long film but the length of time enables us to perceive a commonality while not diminishing the things that make them special.

Zero Falls was introduced to the open screening audience as a film "about the strange," and that I was attempting to address the question, "are there aliens among us"? The film attempts to mould a fictional narrative around non-fictional characters and establish links between these people where links would otherwise not exist. A criticism has been that Zero Falls resembles two films, that the ideas are confused in the latter half. This untidiness has occurred as a result of a haphazard approach to plot, nevertheless this is also one of the seductive possibilities of Super-8 film practice. The ideas and images can be explored poetically rather than driven by the imperatives of a coherent narrative.

The extra-ordinary qualities of a bustling tourist town present Katoomba as an addendum to Zero Falls and a destination for the journey that began towards the close of the latter. Katoomba pivots on two strategic camera positions. First the revolving platform in the restaurant carries diners within a breathe's distance of the microphone and lens and later the cable car delivers its passengers to file past an inscrutable camera. Coincidentally the cable car that travels across the ravine bears a close resemblance to the contraption I built to carry the camera across the back yards of Caulfield in the opening scene of Zero Falls.

Colette and Chantelle consists of two filmed sequences and a taped interview with two female prostitutes that was pirated from a *Fast Forward Cassette Magazine* of the early eighties. These three elements had been on the shelf many years before it became apparent there was a film sitting there waiting to be spliced together requiring only credits to be filmed for each end.

The final film in the program is Subtopia and this is its first public screening. This film reaches back to Ormond in its preoccupations with personal subjects but I impose a dream onto one of the characters which absolves this story of being simply documentary.



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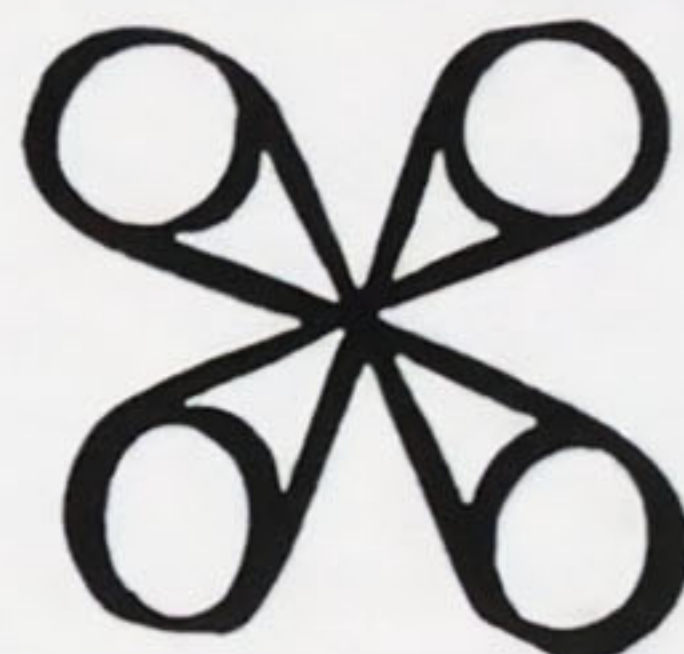
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## Membership Super 8 Group

Cost only \$15, \$10 Concession annually, which includes a copy of **Super Eight** each month, opens doors to open screenings, a wide selection of equipment hire, the invaluable experience of our long standing members as well as contact with other film makers.



Super 8 in the Video Age, Brodsky & Treadway's book, is still available, too. For those who want to share our enthusiasm for Super 8 and get tech tips like when to use that toothbrush! B&T's Little Film Notebook  
P.O. Box 335  
Rowley, MA 01969-0735 USA

### **PLEASE NOTE:** **CHANGE OF POSTAL ADDRESS**

**The new postal address for the Melbourne Super 8 Film Group is:**

**PO Box 2033  
Fitzroy MDC  
Victoria 3065**

**The street address remains:**

**1st Floor  
207 Johnston Street  
Fitzroy 3065**



From Albertus Magnus's *De Anima*, a medieval thesis about the soul, the different parts of which were thought to be located in the ventricles (hollow spaces) of the brain.



## LAST OPEN SCREENING

Films by Jim Bridges

followed by:

PROTEIN (6 mins) Steven Ball  
WHERE THE WATER TASTES LIKE  
LINE (7 mins) David Kuszniir  
HOR'S TIGER XMAS CARD (7 mins)  
A & C Cantrill  
MATTISM (3 mins) Tony Woods  
ALL ON NOTHING (6 mins)  
Darryl Veitch  
IN TRANSIT (6 mins) Ooni Peh

## NEXT OPEN SCREENING

7.30pm TUESDAY 12th APRIL  
Erwin Rado Theatre  
211 Johnston Street  
Fitzroy

at 7.30pm:

FILMS by GARY O'KEEFE

followed by:

OPEN SCREENING  
BYO Super 8 films, all screened  
(time permitting)

### PLEASE NOTE:

Due to the fact that recent screenings have been running very late the screening will begin at 7.30pm exactly. You are advised to arrive early to avoid the disappointment of missing any of Gary's films.

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Editorial & Layout By: PETE SPENCE

Contact Number: 03 417 3402

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# Super Eight



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