Storyboarding: The Key to Success

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THE GUIDE TO FANTASTIC FILMMAKING

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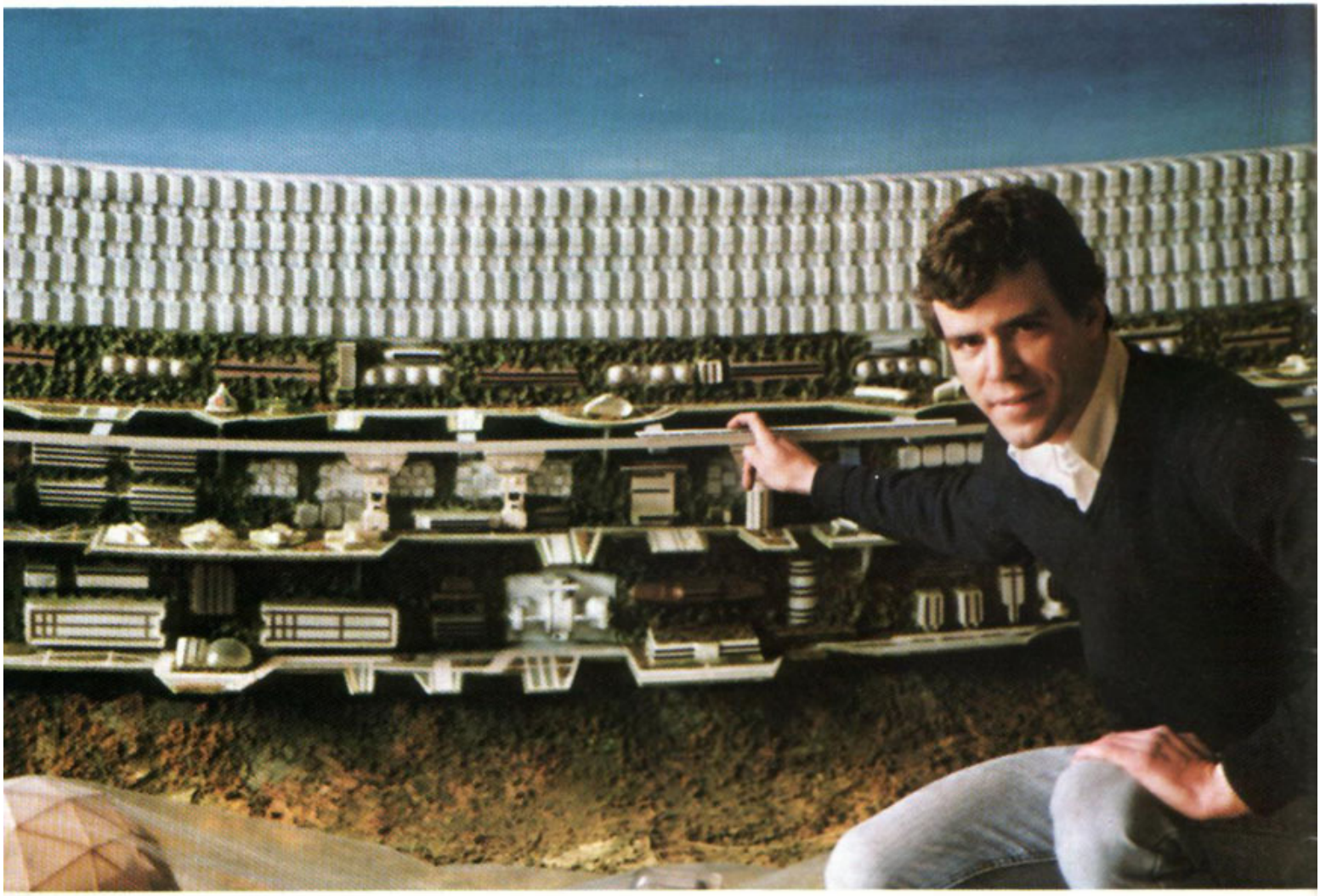

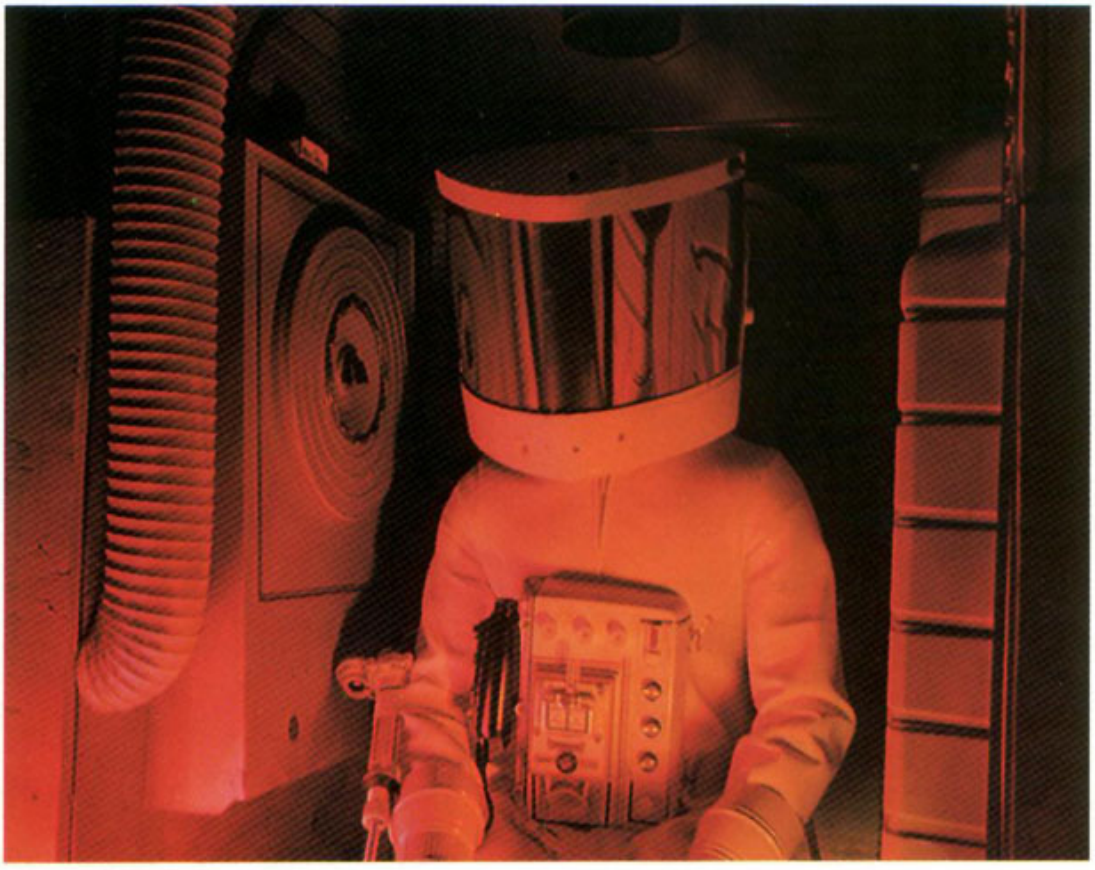

Above: Charles W. Jones with a section of his Ark ship that is heading for a rendezvous with an alien civilization in his film, *At Light*. Story on page 30.

Left: A production still from Chip Galbraith's latest film, *The Representative*. The film is one of this issue's Producers' Bulletin Board entries. See Page 22.

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About the cover: Charles W. Jones of Knightstown, Indiana poses with two of the spacesuits that he made for his film, *At Light*. The story begins on page 30. Cover photo by Jan Skipo.

Editor's BENCH

It's Contest Time!

This is the last issue of CINEMAGIC that you will read before the deadline of this year's Short Film Search. The complete rules are printed on page 12, but be sure to send in for your official entry form (information and address on page 13).

The sponsors of the contest, New York's prestigious School of Visual Arts and CINEMAGIC, have introduced a number of changes in this year's competition. Many of the contestants expressed a desire to know how their scores ranked among all of the entries. Accordingly, this year we are instituting a "report card" that will be mailed to each entrant. The card will show scoring in points in each of the judged categories. Entrants will be able to determine how close their film came to being accepted in the finalists' competition. Ranking of the finalists will of course only be revealed at the awards screening in November.

Additionally, there will be a notation on the card indicating that you and your film are being considered for coverage in the pages of CINEMAGIC. This may have no bearing on the status of your film as a finalist. You may be selected whether or not you actually qualify as a finalist. As I've often pointed out, contest requirements and editorial requirements are not the same.

Last year the screening was held at the Beacon Theatre (an old, restored giant movie palace). This year, in spite of the fact that nearly one thousand spectators attended last year's finalist screening and awards ceremony, we will be located in a much smaller house, in the interest of a better projection environment for Super-8 and 16mm. We would rather have to turn people away from the door in order to insure top quality projection than to have poor projection in an enormous theatre. I think that filmmakers will be pleased to see their efforts projected under the best possible circumstances. Other than those changes, the format is generally the same as last year—so get those entry forms and films turned in.

* * * * *

Eastman Kodak has recently announced that there are new Ektachrome movie emulsions available in Super-8. We have not received test samples, and we would appreciate comments from individual filmmakers regarding the differences—if any—and improvements that they have found with the new Ektachrome emulsions. Letters will be printed in a special section of Filmmakers Forum.

—David Hutchison

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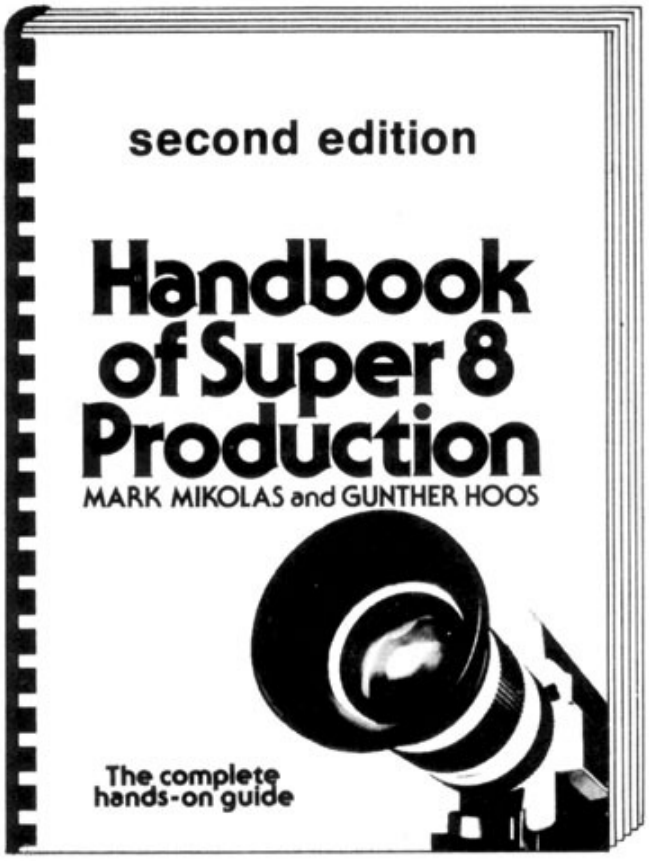

Handbook of Super 8 Production—the book that gives you Super 8 at its best—is back in a newly revised edition. Gunther Hoos and Mark Mikolas have brought their complete hands-on guide up-to-date with the changing technologies of Super 8 production—all the latest equipment, systems, techniques and prices are here, in more than 300 pages of information on everything in Super 8. And now, a sturdy spiral binding to make the Handbook even handier!

You've read about Gunther Hoos and Mark Mikolas in Industrial Photography, Audio-Visual Communications and Super 8 Filmaker, where their reports have helped thousands of serious Super 8 film producers improve their craft. But have you seen the reviews for the Handbook?

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Storyboarding

The Key to Success

By DAMON SANTOSTEFANO

Damon Santostefano, Line Producer for *Starlog's Birthday Fantasy* goes over storyboards and makes endless phone calls during preproduction.

Storyboarding is the backbone of any film production, whether it is a narrative, documentary, or experimental. Good storyboards, properly used during shooting and editing, will make for a more informed and efficient crew, faster and more creative editing, and lower production costs. When money and time matter, storyboards are essential.

Storyboarding is the most enjoyable phase of preproduction; it is the time given to brainstorming the images that have been darting about in your head and committing them to paper. You begin to build momentum as you create the sound and images for each scene and slowly find the transitions that will visually bind the plot together into a whole film. It is the most creative and exciting part of preproduction—the rest of your time will be spent finding equipment, buying materials, preparing forms, permits, paperwork and endless phone calls.

At the completion of your storyboarding, you will have created a book containing the "how" for every aspect of the film—from the dialogue to the mood lighting. It will be one of the most important pieces of information you will refer to, right up to when you bring your matched negative into the lab for printing. It is your bible.

Surprisingly, in film production today, in feature as well as student films, many directors find storyboarding superfluous to the production. This is because they either possess the financial means to shoot thousands of feet to cover whatever pops into their head on the set, or they think they have more creative freedom, in respect to camera angles, movement and blocking, if they are not restricted to previsualized ideas. These directors probably lack the ability to commit their ideas to paper because either they have none during preproduction, or they feel that secretly praying for spontaneous genius on location is the best way to shoot—"what ever comes," is the terminology.

This is *not* the way to make a film. To shoot without storyboards is a basic violation of narrative filmmaking. Film as an art medium has endless potential and flexibility, and like any art form it requires the artist to exercise a certain amount of discipline during the entire process of the medium's creation. Only in this way can the artist have control over the presentation of his message so that it is structured and styled in a way that the audience can understand and identify with his ideas. Even a film idea that is molded around a single strong narrative plot can be scattered in hundreds of different directions without discipline and good planning.

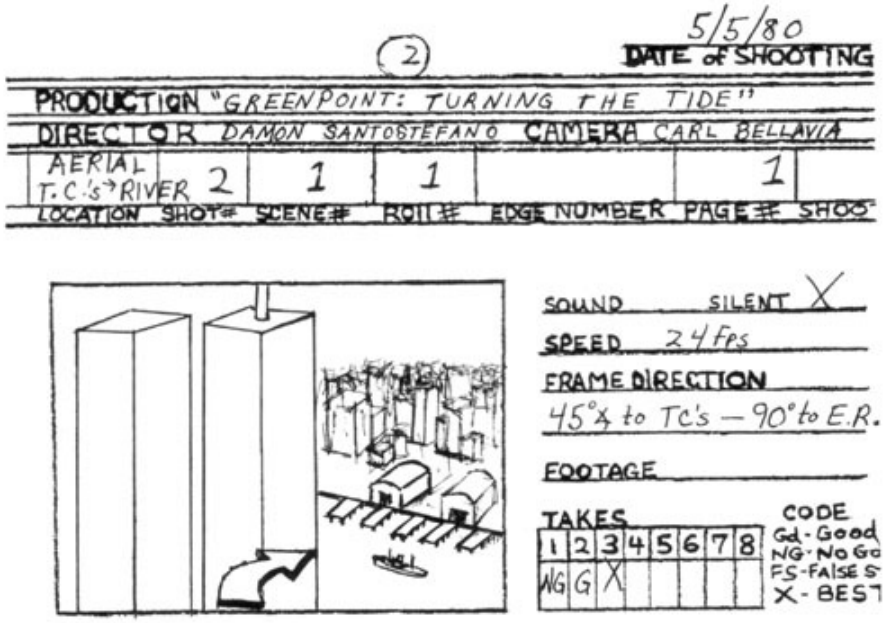
Skipping the storyboarding process signals an artist's disregard to an essential part of the film's organization, and this can ultimately lead to many problems during the production and post-production phases. With no reference as to how shots should look and how they will later cut together, the dangers of self indulgence and/or insecurity on the director's part begin to cause problems. Scenes may be overshot by adding unnecessary angles and action to them. Or there maybe a lack of coverage—that is, failing to shoot a certain action or piece of dialogue from the correct number of angles, resulting in a piece of unshot script and the hassle of reshooting it, once the gap is discovered in the editing room.

Life Savers

With these dangers in sight, there are four essential, life-saving qualities of thorough storyboarding to keep you from making mistakes. One, a complete storyboard book that contains every shot in the order that it will be seen in the finished print; it should also contain the lighting layouts

PHOTOS: JOHN CLAYTON

Above: Damon on the set of *Starlog's Birthday Fantasy* with (from left to right) film crew member Charles Kaufman, cinematographer Jim Sofranko and STARLOG publisher Kerry O'Quinn, who directed the film. **Below:** A storyboard Damon prepared a film he directed for the New York Harbor Development Corporation.



ART: DAMON SANTOSTEFANO

FIGURE #2

and set and prop specifications, to enable anyone to know exactly what elements are used to create a certain look for each scene. The storyboard book becomes the complete source book for all of the intangible production values, such as mood, stylization of the set, costumes etc.

Two, the use of storyboards is pertinent to every crew position on the set and one good idea is to make sure each crew member gets a production book with a copy of the storyboards for his own private use. This will enable each person to study the storyboards carefully the night before a shoot or when they have a free moment on the set. Your crew should know what each shot involves and what the day's schedule consists of, so they can work on their own, efficiently and confidently. This practice gains you a little peace of mind because you know your crew members will know what they are doing and you will not have them asking you silly questions every five minutes that are already answered in the storyboards. Good storyboards are the key to an efficient crew, which saves you precious time. Saving time helps you achieve the next step.

Three, enough problems occur during shooting without needless mistakes caused by poor storyboarding. With the film completely visualized on paper, the chances of forgetting a prop or making a continuity mistake are greatly reduced. Without these mistakes, the hassle and cost of reshooting is kept under control. Along with a happy and well informed crew, thorough storyboarding will help you in the most important way—keeping your production costs to a minimum.

Four, in order for you to accurately draw your storyboards, you must first visit your potential locations. Once there, you can realistically determine what you can and cannot shoot there, taking availability, desired camera angles and clean sound under consideration. Then you can begin to act out the scene with the help of others, and plot out the different camera angle possibilities. Its a good idea to take Polaroid snapshots of the angles you have decided upon, leaving you with a clear reference for storyboard illustrations. All of the technical and logistical details of the location, such as access to sufficient electrical current for lights, areas for equipment set-up and storage, a nearby hardware store for emergencies, can be noted on your storyboards or location breakdown list.

If you do not take the trouble to do all of this, you may encounter endless unforseen problems causing you to rewrite some action on location—plus rehearse the new material. Besides pushing the production behind schedule and causing the possible loss of this or other locations, you will also anger and fatigue your crew.

Storyboards require you to become systematically familiar with your locations. They help you to organize the hundreds of elements that go into the film's previsualization, enabling you to maintain a smooth production and a reasonable budget.

Storyboarding Formats

There are different basic types of storyboard forms to use depending on whether you are making a narrative or documentary film. These forms are not standard (in fact, everyone has their own version of a storyboard), but they all consist of the same information. The forms illustrated here are my own version of a storyboard form. Figure one is for a narrative film and figure two is for a documentary film.

The difference between the two forms is very important. The documentary form has a less organized format, complimenting the spontaneous style in which a documentary is shot. The narrative form, (figure one) is more intricate with much more information to fill in, yet kept as simple as possible. Note there is a storyboard frame as well as a space for a floorplan of each location.

The recording of events on a documentary shoot is open to what ever happens on the location, since the director has only a basic idea of what will be drawn into each frame. In the documentary form, the storyboard frame itself is large and can be used for drawings of preconceived compositions or, after you are done shooting, for quick sketches of one shot or a whole scene. These are later used as a reference by the editor. Note that the other spaces made for technical information are clear, bold and close together so that the director or production manager can easily jot down or mark information during or after shooting. Efficiency and speed are essential on a documentary shoot, a crew cannot afford to miss important action that will never happen again.

The information across the top of the form combines the notes recorded and used by the director, the cinematographer, production manager and the editor. For "location" you fill in where the scene is to be shot. "Shot" rarely applies in a documentary unless you are shooting a pre-storyboarded interview. It requires the shot number that you are taking within a scene. "Scene" applies very often and can be filled in with either a number or a nick-name. For instance, "Nazi Rally, Speaker One" or "Commissioner Interview," etc.

"Roll #" is where the assistant cinematographer writes down on what roll the particular shot or scene is recorded. Then, the editor upon assembling the scenes, knows what roll to search through for the particular shot. "Edge number" is strictly for 16mm and 35mm. This is where the editor, apart from his logs, might want to mark down the code numbers that the storyboarded scene falls between. These code numbers are printed onto the edge of the film stock, occurring every 20 frames and are used by editors and negative cutters as a coded reference point for every shot that was filmed. "Page #" is for the script page number on which the storyboarded shot occurs. The crew can refer to the script by page number if they are confused.

To inform the entire crew, especially the sound man, if the shot is "sound" or "silent," (silent is also known as M.O.S.),

One of the special effects scenes in *Starlog's Birthday Fantasy* featured live explosions in the conference room, which is under attack by a squadron of TIE fighters. The explosions were created with two large carbon dioxide tanks and a "lightning" machine. **Above:** The final effect. **Below:** The storyboard. Note the placement floor plan shows the position of the tanks, the lightning machine and the actors.

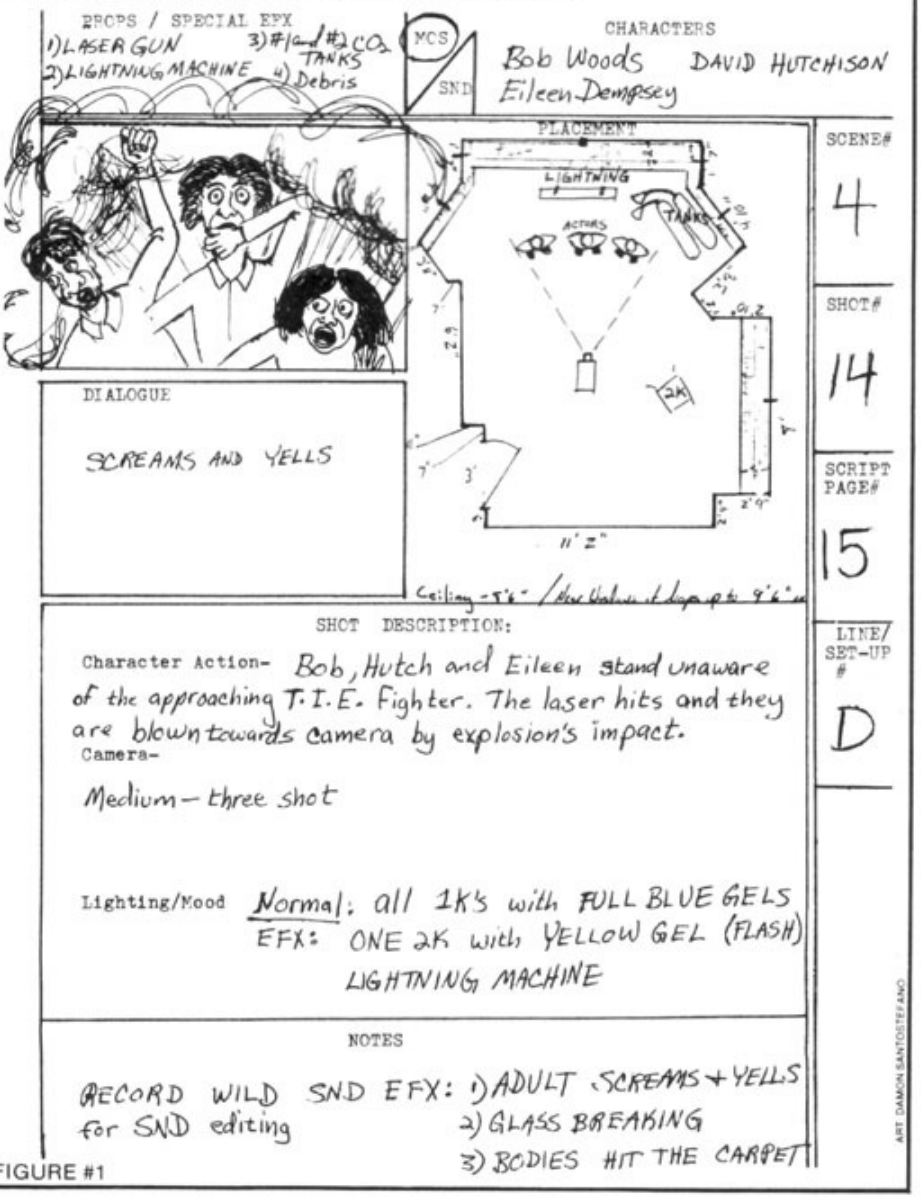


FIGURE #1

you must simply circle the one that applies. "Speed" is for the cinematographer so he knows if he is to shoot a scene at slow or fast motion. "Frame direction" does not usually apply to a documentary shoot, but was inserted in this particular form because I was doing aerial photography from a helicopter and needed to mark down whether the cinematographer, who was shooting out of the side door, would be shooting forward or aft during flight. It was also used to note which direction the passing landscape would be moving, (frame left or frame right) to prevent mistakes in frame direction when the aerial shots were cut together. It can also help prevent reversing the frame direction while shooting other traveling shots or pans.

"Footage" is for the assistant cinematographer to mark down, aside from his camera reports, the amount of footage that elapsed from the end of the last shot to the end of the storyboarded shot. The little grid and code system for "takes" is a very fast way of recording, for the editor, what is good enough to use in the take selection process. Finally, "shot description" helps the director by describing the entire action of the shot, camera movement, what to expect, ideas on what action to manipulate for desired effects and, finally, notes on what happened and what was captured during shooting.

The organization of a narrative storyboard form can vary drastically, but this was proven to be a very comprehensive and efficient type from my experience. The format is detailed and organized and the missing information is meant to be thoroughly worked out before committing it to paper, unlike the documentary form. Similar to the documentary form, the blanks are meant to be recorded and referred to by the entire crew.

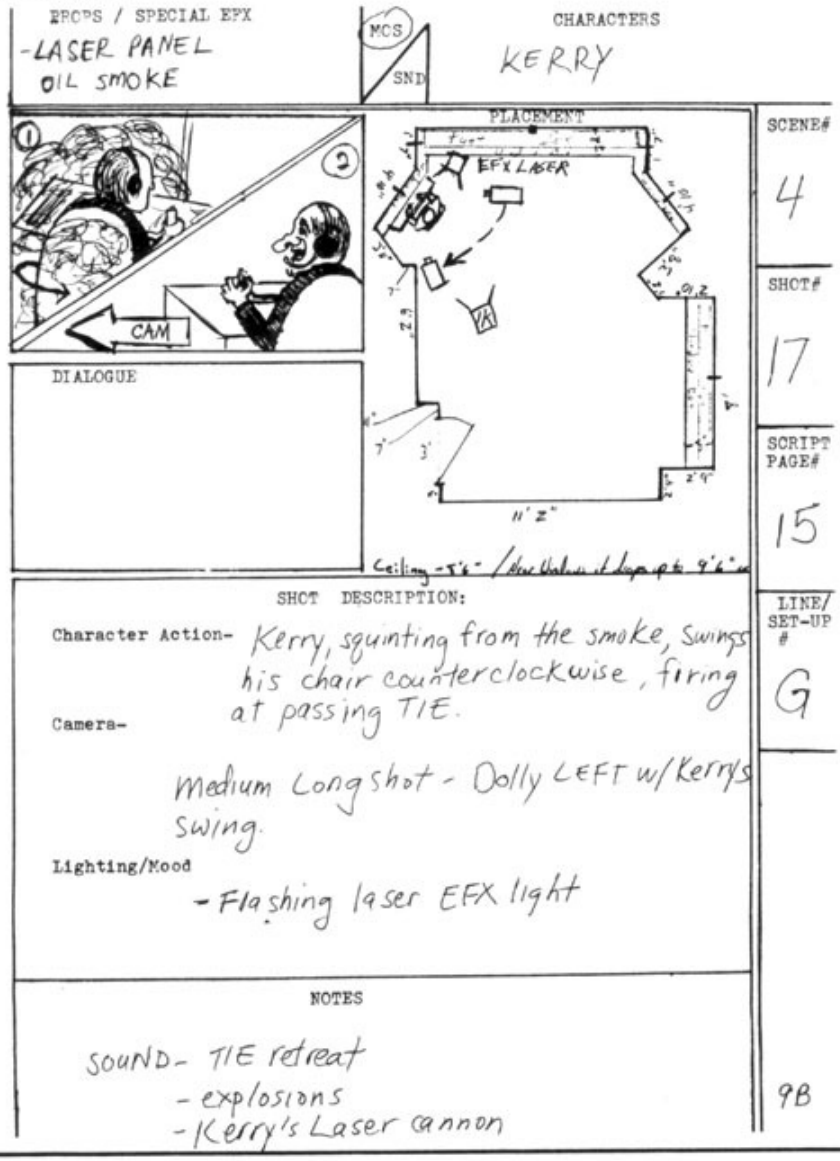
The empty box on the top left is the storyboard frame. It is small but ensures enough room for a meticulous drawing of the action. Above the frame is "Props and special effects." Here the director or production manager fills in what particular props and special effects machinery are to be used in this particular scene. This particular storyboard is of a special effects scene in *Starlog's Birthday Fantasy*, a fast-paced 15-minute live action and animated montage of science fiction's growth through the years, produced by STARLOG Magazine. Note that the hardware used to create a bright 10,000 watt flash and simulated billowing smoke and debris are listed and also drawn in "Placement."

"Placement" is the space for the floor plan of each location. Your first step is to measure the length of the walls and windows and the height of the ceiling at each location. Then reduce your plan in scale—for example, let one inch equal one foot. Don't forget to draw in all opening doors, windows and unmovable furniture.

Once you have Xeroxed as many forms as you need for each particular location, you can begin plotting the camera, lighting and actor placement. With the explosion

PHOTO © 1981 SF FILM PRODUCTIONS

STARLOG publisher Kerry O'Quinn is transformed into a young boy in *Starlog's Birthday Fantasy* and does battle with Darth Vader's TIE fighter. The storyboard shows the camera movement that dollies left with Kerry's swinging motion as he tries to get a TIE fighter in his laser cannon gun sight. Note that the placement panel shows the position of the laser EFX light and the 1K. Note also that oil smoke was used to create an after explosion effect.



scene from STARLOG's film as an example, you can see how simply each element is plotted. The three ovals represented the actors, the lightning machine (consisting of two dangerous, but functional carbon arc rods) and two 50 pound carbon dioxide tanks (creating a massive gust of mist) are plotted behind the actors out of frame. It is a good idea, when plotting the camera, to draw in what the angle encompasses, this way everyone who looks at the plan knows what will and will not be in frame. The permanent lighting for this scene and many others consisted of 1K's (1000 watt lanero open face lights) lining the ceiling around the windows with full blue gels to match the quartz lighting with the incoming sunlight. These lights are not diagrammed because it was not necessary to plot the lights that would not be touched once they were hung. The symbol marked "2K" is an effect to supplement the lightning machine; when the explosion happened, the 2000 watt lanero with a yellow gel was flashed on and off to add a hot "fiery" look.

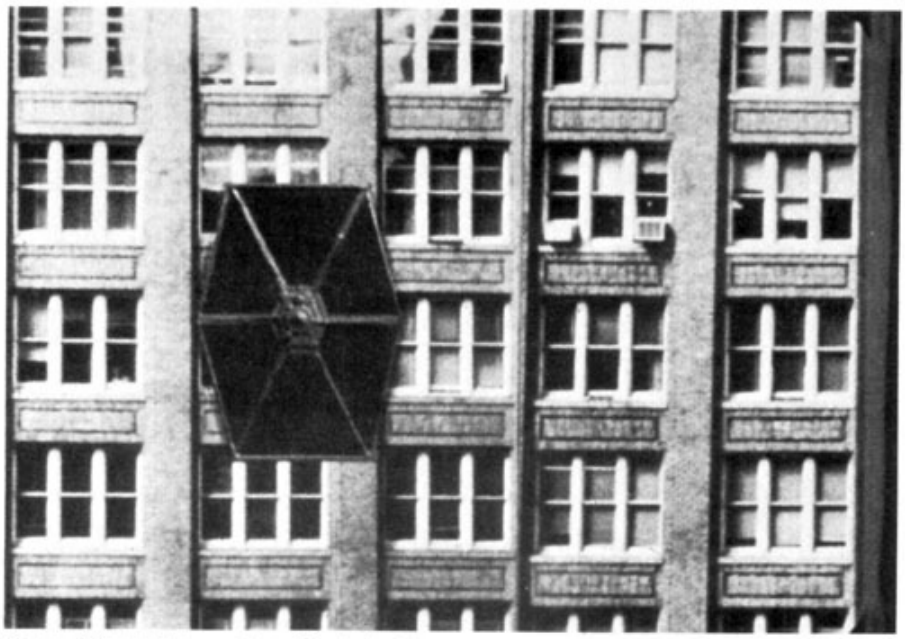
The information along the top and down the right hand side of the form, is similar to what was explained previously, except "Line/Set-up," which refers to what particular "set-up" or unique group of shots the storyboard is a part of. To create a set-up, you take, say, six shots out of script order, (the order in which they will be seen) and group them according to their similarities into "shooting order." These six shots may have a large window in the background, or an important effect in common requiring them to be shot all at once to save time.

Each grouping of shots must also be organized into a logical shooting order, these groups are called "set-ups" because they usually require a lighting and camera set-up that is different from other groups of shots. The set-ups are given a code number or letter, so a person can then look at the storyboard for the set-up and refer to the set-up list, if necessary. On this form "Shot Description" is broken into three major catagories to keep the shot elements straightforward and organized. "Notes" can serve many important roles as in the documentary form. Here, for example, because this shot was filmed MOS, (the effects that were needed to make the action sound authentic had to be recorded separately and then laid-in by the editor. In "Notes" the list of needed sound was written down during preproduction so that they would not be forgotten.

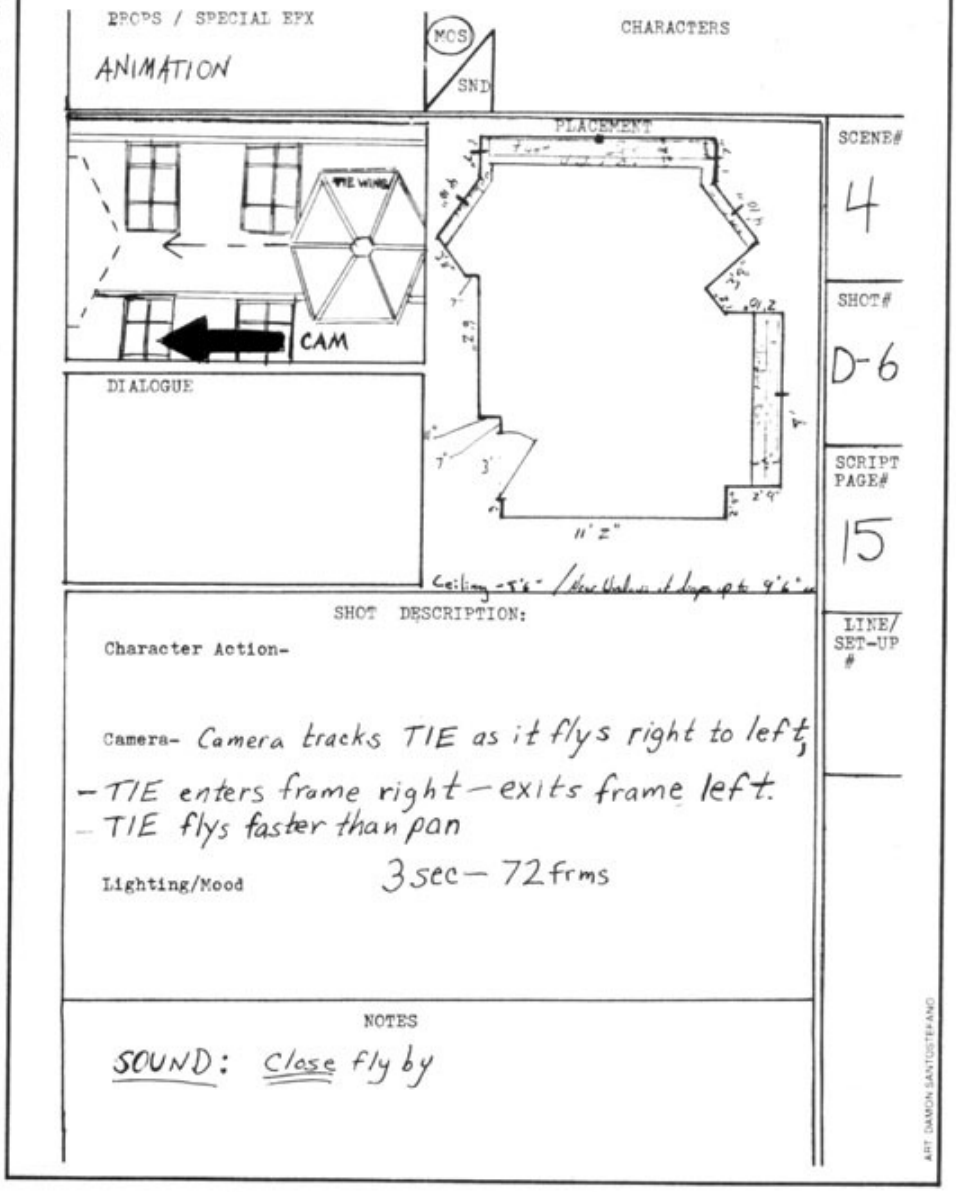
From Script to Board

Now that you are familiar with the layout and function of the documentary and narrative storyboard, the next step is to create the storyboards from a script. As a script example *Starlog's Birthday Fantasy* will be used (figure 3).

The first step is to visit your location with your script in hand. After sketching the floor plan and making other notes as we discussed, begin to visualize each scene. You might have someone act it out as you and your cinematographer watch to see how it



Above: A frame blow-up from *Starlog's Birthday Fantasy* shows a TIE fighter buzzing down Park Avenue outside Starlog's New York office. **Below:** A storyboard of the same sequence shows how the scene looked in the planning stage. The floor plan on the left is an actual scale drawing of Starlog's conference room in which the scene was shot. The drawing of the TIE fighter is the storyboard frame.



will be covered by the camera. Take each action and try to find what angle feels best. Is it appropriate for the action? Does it help express the feeling that should be present to make the scene work? The way you place a character in the frame is crucial, make sure you search for the right way to present him.

While planning your shots, avoid unmotivated camera angles or movement. For example, avoid panning across an actionless expanse in order to get to your subject. If there is nothing to follow, don't pan simply to show an empty location, it will surely prove to be boring. Try to avoid overproducing your camera work as well. If there is no motive to move the camera during a scene, let the action carry the moment. Avoid moving around for the sake of a "neat shot" because the camera work will call attention to itself and your audience will be distracted from the performances and dialogue.

Use camera movement to help draw your audience into what the character is feeling in the situation. For example, at a point of a horrifying realization, quickly walk the camera from a medium shot of the character to an extreme close-up of his trembling face. This will almost always move your audience.

With all of this in mind, take each sentence of action and decide if it needs its own shot or if it should be included in a shot with other action. Then, most importantly, search for what kind of angle would have the most appropriate impact. Although I did mention earlier that you should "feel" what is best, there is of course a large amount of intellectuallization involved in creating visuals from the written word. After all, part of the craft is developing a sense of audience awareness by studying what form of manipulation will arouse what emotional reaction.

For example, in the *Starlog* script, the top line reads, "Norman ... his eyes are intense." The very nature of the description implies that we should see his face in a close-up as he watches intensely for approaching danger. It would not play any other way because in a medium or long shot you would not be able to see where his eyes were looking and you could not even detect that his eyes were intensely anticipating the enemy, ruining the impact of the shot. Another supportive fact is that the next shot is the first approach of a screeching TIE fighter from *Star Wars*, implying an expansive sweep of Park Avenue as the TIE swoops from the sky. A close up of Norman's scanning eyes juxtaposed with the punch of a fast moving wide shot has a perfect impact for the beginning of a battle scene and will cut together well. Following this manner of construction, that is, considering how a shot works on its own as well as how it cuts with the next shot, ensures smooth and realistic cutting.

Each description lasts for only a few words before going on to describe the next action. This style, although choppy in written form, when properly interpreted onto the screen should create a spectacular fast-paced battle sequence. The key is to see that the short sentences imply that each action should not stay on the screen longer than 5 to 10 seconds. With this in mind, you should apply a high-energy feeling to the visuals you choose by adding sharp high or low angles, extreme close-ups and energetic camera movement for every action, to complement the quick cutting.

Two particular adjoining shots can be used as an example of camera movement adding power to each shot and also making the cut between two shots kinetic and smooth. For example, the sentence, half way down the page, that reads "Directly across the street, a TIE sweeps right to left past rows of windows." This shot could be interpreted as it reads, but it would be a very static, uninteresting moment in the battle to simply have the TIE move in and out of frame. In order to give it a suspenseful feel, a camera movement was added in the storyboarding for the animator to execute. The shot now has the TIE fighter enter frame right and quickly make its way across the frame, as the camera attempts to pan with it. The TIE screeches past the building behind it, while the camera cannot pan fast enough to keep up with its flyby. It soon zooms out frame left as the camera can no longer track it in center frame. This subtle movement adds a great amount of realism to the shot while also helping the animation look larger than life.

The next immediate shot is "Kerry tracks the TIE, firing laser blasts." If the TIE moved right to left, then Kerry must also swing his chair from right to left as he tracks the TIE. This shot also needed more movement to enhance Kerry's efforts to get a direct hit. A camera movement was added for three reasons; to make the shot more dynamic, to see more of Kerry's face, (his back would be to the camera too long if the camera didn't move with him), and to match and carry through the right to left pan from the last shot. The shot was storyboarded with the camera dollying right to left behind Kerry as he swivels counterclockwise in his chair to catch the TIE. The dolly, when cut together with the pan of the TIE, gives the smooth and captivating effect of one continuous right to left sweep through the action. See the storyboards.

Keeping the details of creating the appropriate angles and camera movements in mind while practicing efficiency and organization, the storyboarding process soon becomes second nature as your creative abilities and imagination have room to greatly expand.

Storyboards are essential to filmmaking. After you storyboard your first film project, you will discover how storyboards are the key to a well organized and well made film. The key to creating shots that will truly grab your audience and never let them go, lies in using storyboards as a disciplinary structure for your creative thoughts as you design the style and mood of your film on paper. CM

FIGURE #3

15

STARLOG'S BIRTHDAY FANTASY

NORMAN...his eyes are intense. Suddenly from up Park Avenue, a TIE fighter comes sweeping down out of the sky. NORMAN's thumbs wiggle with anticipation over the red Laser Cannon trigger buttons, and he swings his chair around and leans into the viewer. From up Park Avenue the TIE zooms right at us, firing a spray of laser blasts -- wide at first, then right into the window. HUTCH and two staffers scream as a blinding explosion and billows of smoke rock the window box behind them, debris and glass fly about. All three dive for the floor, HUTCH and a staffer hit the floor, smoke and debris fall around them, their faces show real panic. NORMAN fires rapid laser blasts. Directly across the street the TIE sweeps right to left, past rows of windows. KERRY tracks the TIE, firing laser blasts. Looking south, the TIE swoops upward away from the defensive laser barrage. KERRY fires one last shot, misses, and turns angrily to HUTCH who still cowars under the conference table.

KERRY

If you're not going to use that thing, give it to one of the girls!

HUTCH gets his nerve up and begins to stand up, grasping the blaster. NORMAN turns from looking at HUTCH to the viewer. Screeching from over the top of the Pan Am building, another TIE sweeps down from the sky.

A page of script from Starlog's Birthday Fantasy.

CINEMAGIC/SVA SHORT FILM SEARCH CONTEST RULES

CINEMAGIC and New York's School of Visual Arts have once again combined resources to create a unique annual competition for science fiction, horror and fantasy filmmakers. Read these rules carefully . . . and good luck!

ELIGIBILITY—Anyone can submit an original film, no matter what their degree of experience or professionality. Independent groups, school classes and semi-pros are encouraged to enter, but only *one* film can be entered from any group or individual—so pick your best. The film must have been completed within the past three years ('79, '80, '81)

Ralph Miller's *I Was a Disco Vampire* received an honorary mention in the 16mm category in last year's Short Film Search. The film was in B&W.

Above: Kevin Havener's *Towers* was a 16mm honorary mention winner. **Top right:** Rick Schneblin's *Antioch 3* won 2nd place in Super-8. **Bottom right:** Steve Koch's *Shortcut* won Grand Prize in the Super-8 category. *Shortcut* is featured in CM #11.

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS—Super-8 or 16mm film formats only—using live-action, animation or *any* combination of special effects techniques—silent or sound (obviously sound is desirable, via optical or magnetic track on film, or separate cassette with clear sync marks and instructions)—projection speeds of 18 or 24 frames per second—color or B&W. Producers using special lenses (such as anamorphic) must be prepared to supply a screening lens for the judges, if requested. Any other technical questions that arise should be submitted to the CINEMAGIC editorial offices.

SUBJECT REQUIREMENTS—All entries must deal with science fiction, fantasy or horror subjects, or any combination of these categories.

RIGHTS AND CLEARANCES—For judging purposes, the more *original* the elements of your film, the better. We are searching to discover new talent on the way up—not just those who can snip and lift elements from TV and other sources. Which is not to say that you cannot use, for instance, library music, film clips, etc.—you *can*. However, a good professional approach requires that you obtain all the necessary rights and clearances (for pre-recorded music, brand name uses, etc.) or that you customize such things as store-bought model kits. The use of unoriginal material will *not* affect prize eligibility at all, but it could affect follow-up uses of your film in commercial outlets.

PROTECTING YOURSELF—All entries should display a copyright notice (e.g. © 1981 Wonderful Productions) in the title frame, and if you wish, at the end of the film, too.

PRIZES AND AWARDS—Cash prizes will be awarded in two categories, Super-8 and 16mm, as follows:

Super-8

Grand Prize	$200
1st Prize	$150
2nd Prize	$100
3rd Prize	$ 50

16mm

Grand Prize	$400
1st Prize	$200
2nd Prize	$150
3rd Prize	$100

In addition there will be special award trophies for the winners, merchandise prizes supplied by film companies and manufacturers and other surprises. Winning films will be featured in special articles in CINEMAGIC magazine. The judges will award Honorable Mention prizes for outstanding creativity to other films they find noteworthy.

Left: Damon Santostefano's *Roublex O.M.F.* won 3rd prize in 16mm. **Bottom left:** Bonnie Borucki's *Swan Creek Fantasy* won Grand Prize in 16mm. **Above:** Dean Barnes' & Greg Gilger's *The Good, The Bad and the Furry* won 2nd prize in 16mm and appears in CM #12.

The Good, The Bad and the Furry featured live action, and cel and stop motion animation. The film got the most laughs at the screening of finalists.

JUDGING—All entries will be screened and pre-judged by a panel from the School of Visual Arts and CINEMAGIC magazine. A selection of finalists will be screened before a theatrical audience (open to the public) on the awards evening, and the final judging will take place then by a select blue-ribbon panel, consisting of Charles Hirsch, SVA Film Chairman; David Hutchison, Editor of CINEMAGIC/ Kerry O'Quinn, publisher of STARLOG PRESS; and professionals in the science fiction, horror and fantasy filmmaking field. Ratings will be based on six criteria: 1) Script, 2) Direction and Technique, 3) Visuals, 4) Sound and Music, 5) Imagination and Originality, and 6) Overall Impact. Each filmmaker will receive a card returned with his film noting his standing in relation to the other entrants.

AWARDS PRESENTATION—To be held at a midtown Manhattan theater. Exact theatre location to be announced later. Admission will be free. A selection of the finalists will be screened, science fiction and fantasy celebrities will be on hand to greet the winners and the awards presentation will be made. Filmmakers need not be present in order to win, but all finalists will be notified a week or two in advance if their films will be screened that night.

ENTERING YOUR FILM—A $10.00 entry fee is required for each film, and should be sent via check or money order (drawn to SVA/Search) along *with* your film, soundtrack cassette (if separate) and official entry form—all in *one package*.Everything should be securely packed in a Jiffy Bag or fibre film case and *insured* for your own protection. *Mark* each reel, can and box with the official name and address of the entering producer, plus the name of the film—to avoid our misplacing a piece of your package amid what will no doubt be piles of entries. Your entry fee will cover return packing, postage and insurance from SVA. Please allow several weeks following the Awards Presentation for films to be returned.

Note: We suggest that films be sent via UPS or Express Mail. The "Special 4th Class Rate" at the post office, although the cheapest method for sending films, takes up to four weeks for delivery and could cause you to miss the deadline. All foreign entries must be marked "MOTION PICTURE MATERIAL—NO COMMERCIAL VALUE."

Send *film entries* to:
SVA/Search
209 East 23rd St.
New York, N.Y. 10010
ATTN: Reeves Lehman
Send *correspondence* to:
CINEMAGIC/Search
475 Park Avenue South
New York, N.Y. 10016

DEADLINE FOR FILM ENTRIES: Friday, October 16, 1981.
(The earlier you get your film in, the more time the pre-judging panel will have to consider it carefully.)

Screening of Finalists and
Awards Presentation:
Monday, November 16, 1981
Theater to be announced
New York City
Doors Open: 6:30 PM
Presentation: 7:00—11:00 PM

For Entry Forms

For your copy of the official rules and the official entry form, which must accompany your film entry, send a self addressed, stamped envelope (business #10 size) to:

CINEMAGIC/SVA
Short Film Search—1981
475 Park Avenue South
8th Floor Suite
New York NY 10016 CM

Filmmakers' FORUM

Address all correspondence to: CINEMAGIC—Filmmakers' Forum, c/o O'Quinn Studios, Inc., 475 Park Ave. So., New York, NY 10016

Due to the enormous volume of mail received, the editor regrets individual replies are impossible.

Note From Down Under

. . . Congratulations on a magazine which is informative, entertaining, and best of all, choc-a-block with practical information for both amateur and professional movie makers.

The cost of producing a professional documentary, in Australia at least, without quite substantial backing from one of our government bodies makes it difficult for independent producers to release films other than through the various co-ops.

CINEMAGIC, I believe, offers to serious amateur filmmakers the opportunity to study techniques sometimes mysteriously kept secret by manufacturers or other people in the industry.

Perhaps that's an unfair statement! Some of us were fortunate to be able to study the techniques of pioneers such as Norman Dawn, and later those of a master, Raymond Fielding, in a specially prepared environment.

CINEMAGIC offers the opportunity to amateurs to develop techniques learned from your articles. Hopefully, it encourages them to build an optical printer (issue #4) or a smoke generator (issue #2) and then modify them to suit a purpose in filmmaking not previously thought of. I hope your readers will give you that feedback, perhaps for publication. Congratulations on a fine publication. As a professional producer with two films *(Chrysalis* and *The Girl Who Was Different)* in release, I appreciate the job you're doing.

Andrew Rowan
Owl Motion Pictures
1 Barber St.
Bundaberg, Qld. 4670
Australia

Thanks for the lift.

Super-8 Rotoscope Projector

. . . In reference to Pierre Befori's letter in CINEMAGIC #12, here is the best news for film animators since the introduction of Super-8 movie film! The Polaroid Corporation *has* a rear screen movie projector *with* stop-motion (single frame advance) capabilities! It's a revised Polavision Player and has been on the market for over a year. Polavision is the instant-developing movie system.

The player has a control box with buttons for freeze framing, frame advance and slow motion. In addition, a quick review button replays a few seconds of just seen footage. The player, combined with the new Van Rotoscope Easel, offers unlimited rotoscoping capabilities.

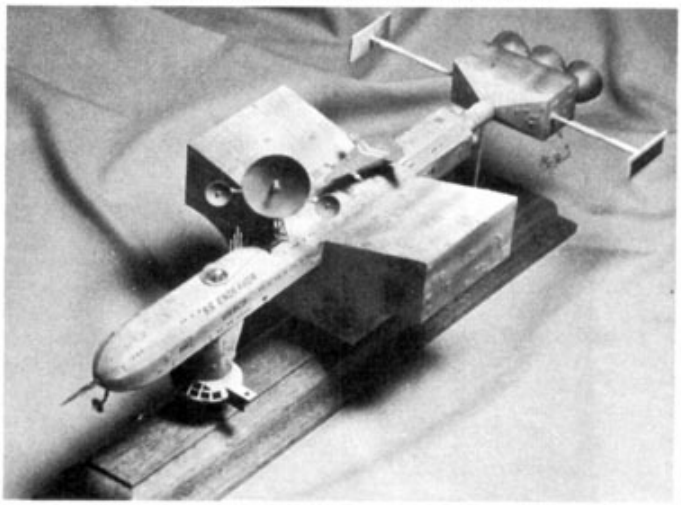
Readers are advised that there are two Polavision Players now being sold, even though the original machine (without special effects options) has ceased production. The new version is available through select audio-visual supply houses—not camera stores. It is, however, available directly from Polaroid as a complete system as follows: camera, $129.95; player, $499.95; total price = $629.90. The system includes ten free Polavision film cassettes (a $99.50 value.) In addition, a pair of Twi-Lite movie lights is available for $39.50.

Super-8 film can be spliced into the Polavision cassettes. An informative article about the system is in Super-8 Filmmaker, volume 9, #3.

The Van Rotoscope Easel (for holding cels) is available from Yellow Ball Workshop, 62 Tarbell Ave., Lexington, MA 02173. Good luck and good rotoscoping!

Kirk Vogel
Box 32271
Dallas, TX 75224

Spaceship Model Commissioned



David Merriman's asteroid mining ship, the S.S. Endeavor.

. . . Here's a shot of a model I was commissioned to build for a producer. It was built in only two weeks out of styrene plastic and wood—no kit parts! Hopefully the story idea (the model represents an asteroid mining ship) will be bought by cable tv as a series.

David D. Merriman Jr.
D & E Models
4118 Colorado Ct.
Virginia Beach, VA 23456

UMI-Bowl Film Festival

. . . The film association, United Moviemakers International Corporation (UMI) is sponsoring an international film contest this year—The UMI-Bowl International Film Competition. The organizers count on great International participation. The competition has been a great success for several years running, with a great number of international entries.

The 1981 UMI-Bowl is open to Super-8, Single-8 and 16mm films, sound or silent. Any individual, group or organization may participate in the festival. Films entered in previous UMI-Bowl competitions may not be re-entered.

Winning films will be selected by a competent panel of judges. Apart from the UMI-Bowl Award for Best Film and the UMI-Bowl 2nd Prize, a number of special awards will be presented for outstanding achievements. The deadline for entries is October 1st. The films will be screened on Saturday, October 17th at the festival. Entry forms and rules may be obtained by writing: The UMI-Bowl, Box 55109, 400 53 Gotenberg 55, Sweden.

Writer Seeks Filmmaker

. . . I often read in CINEMAGIC's filmmakers' forum section of filmmakers searching for actors, designs, SFX ideas—everything! You do a very good job of solving problems and getting answers.

Now I have a request: Can you put a writer in contact with filmmakers? I lack the funds to produce movies but I do consider myself an accomplished writer. Is there an organization that matches writers with filmmakers in need of scripts? Among my accomplishments are: *Macbreath*—a Shakespearean satire; a Daracula satire; *Martian Chronicles* and *Empire Strikes Back* satires, and I write seriously as well. I would love to see something I wrote made into a film! If there are any interested filmmakers reading this, please contact me.

Bryan L. McLane
20th Century Flops Productions
4100 SW 32 Dr.
Hollywood, FL 33023

Brillo FX

. . . I have been a loyal reader of CINEMAGIC since issue #1, and your magazine hasn't let me down yet. I am now writing a few tips for Filmmakers' Forum.

Here's an unusual effect that can be done quite easily, although the outcome is great. First, film a spaceship or planet or whatever you want to be in the effect. Then backwind the film and film a piece of brillo pad, or some other steel wool pad. The secret is to have the pad shaped like the first object filmed. Now film the steel wool pad in total darkness—except light the pad with a match and make sure it is positioned in the same frame position as the first object filmed. You will see the effect of sparks traveling around the paid. If the steel wool is loosely pulled apart it will burn longer. After you have the film developed, you will see the spaceship or planet filled with what appears to be an electric current.

Here's another technique that works well for me: For a long distance throw, which you feel is impossible to try: You want someone to throw an object (axe, spear, board, etc.) and you want it to land exactly on target. First film the person throwing the weapon. Pan the camera with the weapon, and stop it when it passes behind some background objects (tress, buildings, etc.) Then place the weapon on target. Start filming again from

the same point where you left off, making sure that the scenery is blurred just as it was for the first take. Pan to the target as if you were still following the object through the air. Lots of times the viewers lose sight of the object while it is in the air, but see it on the target at the end of the pan. This method hasn't failed me yet, and it always leaves my audience asking how it's done.

Anyone interested in writing to me about filmmaking problems they need to solve, or if you have a good SFX technique or just want to talk about filmmaking FX in general, please write to me and include a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

Bret Wood
Rebel Films
7733 Lasata Lane
Harrison, TN 37341

Credit Where It's Due

In response to Charles Chiodo's letter in CM#11, Stowmar Enterprises, the creators of I Go Pogo *has requested that we rerun this photo identifying the artist—it is Steven Chiodo, Charles' brother. Stowmar has run into distribution difficulties with the* Pogo *film, but hopes for theatrical release in the near future. When the film is definitely scheduled for release CINEMAGIC will run an article on the art and artists whose talents created* I Go Pogo *with a list of the production cred its. CINEMAGIC #9 featured an interview with animator Marc Chinoy, who discusses the philo sophy and technique of his stop-motion animation process, Flexiform.*

Steven Chiodo was one of the animators of I Go Pogo.

Zero Dollar Set

Mike Van Dyke's impressive set was made from odds & ends.

. . . My friend and I have just completed several life size sets and 11 miniature spaceships for a new movie we are making. Pictured here is one of the life size sets made from tips from your article, "Zero Budget Sets," in CINEMAGIC #10. The spaceships were made from your article on how to make spaceships in CINEMAGIC #2.

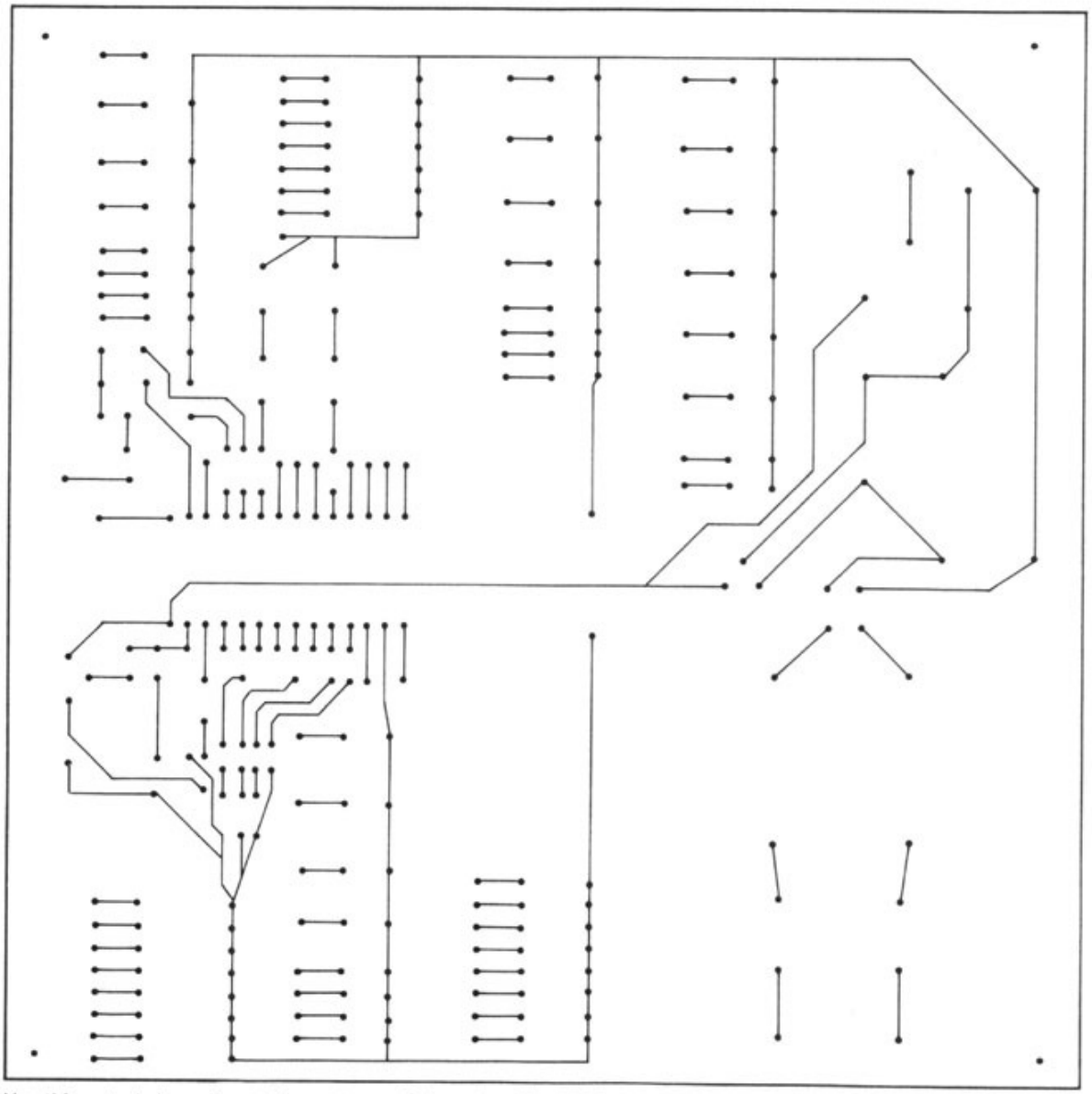
Mike Van Dyke
8061 Acacia St.
Cypress, CA 90630

Electronic

SPECIAL FX

A Box Full of Sound

By CHRIS E. STEVENS



Use this actual size pattern to lay-out your PC board on 6" x 6" RS# 276-1587 PC Board

Movie soundtracks are broken into three main catagories—the dialogue, music, and the sound effects. Even the best of movies would be dead if they didn't have these basics. Can you imagine what it would be like if you didn't hear the lightsabers in the *Star Wars* epics? What if they forgot to add the music that helps set the mood of a particular scene? Even though all of these basics must be combined successfully to make up the sound portion of a good movie; equally so, the *lack* of a particular sound in the right spot can blow the pleasures of a good movie right out the door. When I become aware that a scene is missing the proper and necessary sounds that add credibility, I usually walk out, disgusted at the lack of care and preparation.

Any amateur production will be enhanced with the proper effects. One of the downfalls of amateur films is that although hours and hours are spent on the visual effects, little or no time is spent on the audio portion. I personally think that this kills a film faster than anything, and it's all too obvious in most cases that the sound portion was rushed . . . slopped together, as a last minute thought in a last ditch effort to save what might have otherwise been a

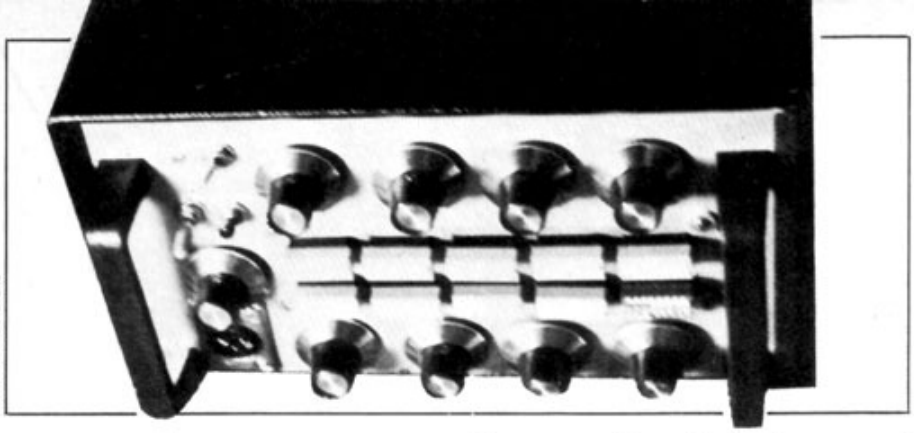


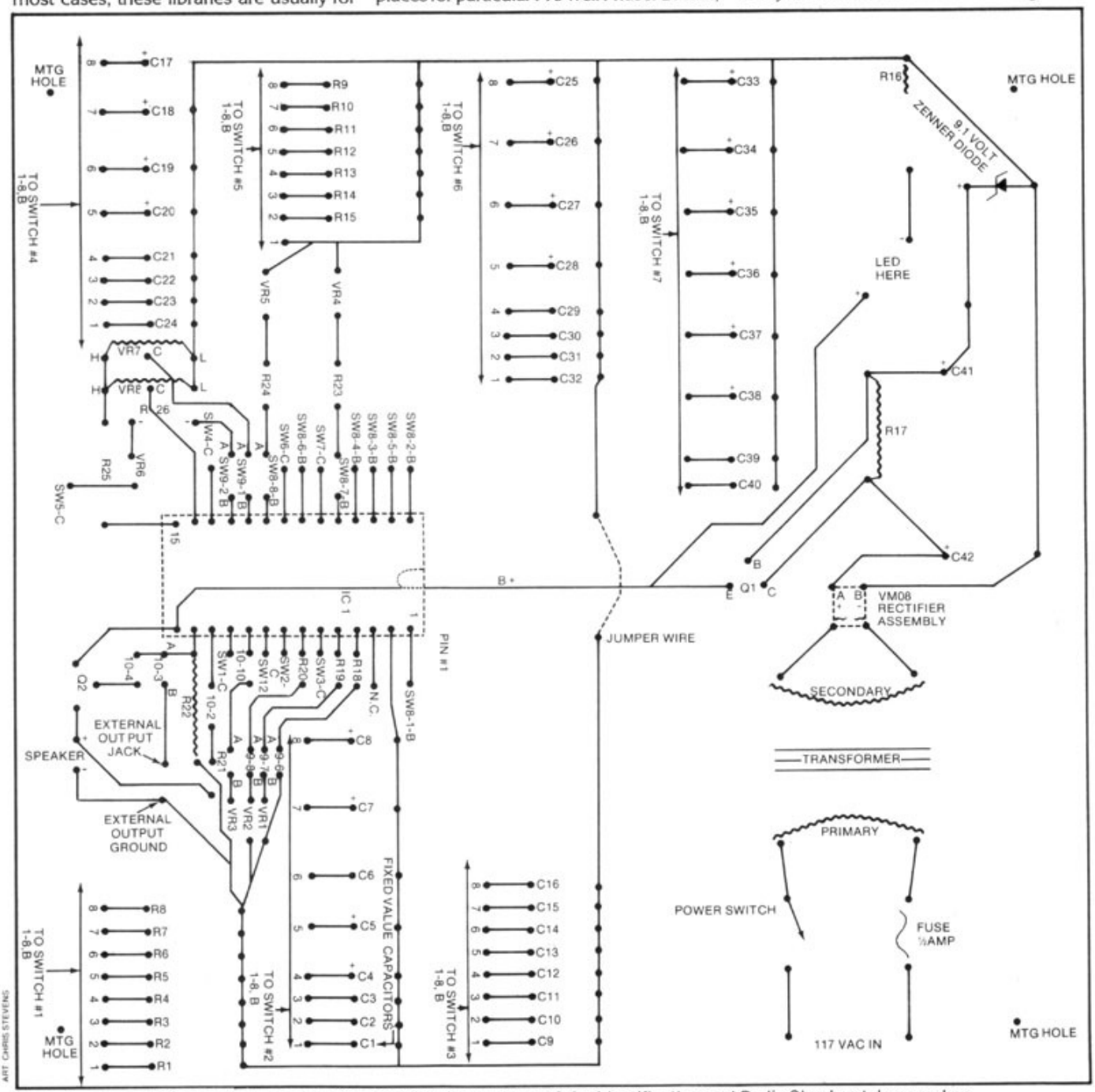
PHOTO: CHRIS STEVENS

good product.

If you've ever taken the time to price a commercial sound effects library, you've already discovered that there is a better chance of finding life on the moon. And in most cases, these libraries are usually for the commercial production houses, and offer very little in the way of the sounds needed for a good sci-fi epic. In most cases, you spend the time searching through records ... re-runs of *Star Trek* and other places for particular FX. Well Phaser Breath, we've solved your problem. How would you like to have a complete sound effects unit at your command, twenty four hours a day, and not have to pay scale?

I chose this project for some simple reasons. First, it's the only one that I could think of for this month's article ... secondly, I do appreciate the small budgets that most amateurs have to work with, and lastly ... because in spite of all of the wires that you see in the photos of this project, it *is* easy to build.

I'm going to try to burn up a few pages with a description on how to build this thingie, without overloading your input sensors. The most important thing to keep in mind at all times is that you can't rush this project. It does take time to build, and you might as well settle in and plan your moves in advance, before you make them. Don't worry about all of the wires and things. I've



Use this schematic for parts placement. See the Parts list on page 20 for identification and Radio Shack catalog number.

re-designed the unit without all of the unneeded extras . . . many of which are on the unit pictured. When I build something for the first time, I take it to the limits, and then go back and eliminate the stuff that will add too much extra expense, and the items that don't function as well as I think that they should. You might say that I streamline the device as much as possible, so that there is less chance of a failure along the line. In any case, the hard work (layout etc.) is already done. All you have to do, is drill six zillion little holes . . . mount the parts . . . and have a blast.

Now, let's get to work. The box is designed around the SN-76477-N complex sound generator chip. It's very similar to the ones used in the arcade games, and what we're doing, is programming it manually so that it will deliver the sounds that we need at the flip of a switch. At present Radio Shack is marketing two sound chips. This is the less expensive of the two, and in my opinion, appears to be the more versatile. In any case, make sure that you get the right chip. Contrary to popular opinion, the two units that Radio Shack markets *are not* interchangeable. And since a lot of the parts come two to a package, you might want to offset some of your costs by sharing it with someone else who wants to build his own unit.

Even though this project may seem a little expensive, it's well worth it. I've already lost hours of sleep blasting aliens out of space . . . flying my own plane and the like. It's amazing how many sounds this thing will make. You might also want to keep in mind that if your budget is a little tight, you can always build it a little at a time until it's finished. Anything that's worth building, is worth taking the time necessary to do it right.

If you built the power supply in last issue's article you can use that, although I've provided for a self-contained power supply. If you do use the external unit, just connect your leads and matching connector at points "A & B" in the power supply section of the pc board. Make sure to keep the polarities correct, and use the highest setting (above 9 volts) on the power supply. If you wish, you can also use a 9 volt transistor battery too. However, all of the parts after these points (A&B) must be used (the 2009 transistor and the zener diode and resistor, R-17.)

Very probably, the most tedious part of this job is drilling the holes. After that, it goes very fast, and you'll find that the mounting of the parts is very easy. If you use the photos as a guide, they'll give you some idea of how things are put together. Just remember that the unit that you're building is *not* the same as the one pictured. I want you to keep that in mind. For instance, I've eliminated the external microphone and several other external inputs. After I put my unit together, I couldn't see any real reason for all of the extras, and decided that the basic unit is the best. Another example is also in the power supply. After putting this thing together, I realized that the 2009 transistor, 470 mf capacitor and the resistor, R-17 provided for electronic filtering of the power supply, and meant that I could use one less filter capacitor, again saving money.

I did allow for an external output. The best thing to use is the "phono" type jack, which is compatible with most audio mixers and stereo systems. It has enough power so that it doesn't need a pre-amplifier, but it will not drive a speaker. While we're on the subject of the speaker, it was mounted with cable clamps that I got from Radio Shack. These are little metal clamps, and I fitted them so that they just caught the edge of the speaker, and bolted them down with 4-40 screws and bolts. I also used grommets for the insulators on the pc board. I chose four that were closest to the size of the screws.

Control Functions

Control Functions

These are the switches and the values that correspond to the individual switch positions. Remember, the smaller the capacitance, the higher the sound; the lower the capacitance, the lower the sound pitch.

SW 1 Amplitude Resistor
1 22k
2 33k
3 47k
4 56k
5 100k
6 150k
7 220k
8 270k

SW 2 Attack/Decay Timing Capacitor
1 .01mf
2 .05mf
3 .1mf
4 .47mf
5 1mf
6 4.7mf
7 10mf
8 22mf

SW 3 Noise Filter Capacitor
1 100pf
2 220pf
3 470pf
4 .001mf
5 .005mf
6 .01mf
7 .05mf
8 .1mf

SW 4 V.C.O. Control Capacitor
1 100pf
2 220pf
3 470pf
4 .05mf
5 .1mf
6 .47mf
7 1mf
8 4.7mf

SW 5 V.C.O. Control Resistor
1 Ground
2 56k
3 100k
4 220k
5 470k
6 1meg.
7 2.2 meg.
8 10meg.

SW 6 S.L.F. Oscillator Control Capacitor
1 470pf
2 .01mf
3 .05mf
4 .1mf
5 .47mf
6 1mf
7 4.7mf
8 10mg

SW 7 One-shot Capacitors
1 .05mf
2 .1mf
3 .47mf
4 1mf
5 4.7mf
6 10mf
7 22mf
8 50mf

SW 8 Various Uses
1. Envelope Select 1
2. Envelope Select 2
3. Mixer A
4. Mixer B
5. Mixer C
6. V.C.O. Logic
7. One Shot Resistor
8. Oscillator Control Resistor

SW 9 Various Uses
1 Pitch Control Resistor
2 V.C.O. Control Resistor
3 Open
4 Open
5 Open
6 Noise Oscillator Resistor
7 Noise Filter Resistor
8 Decay Resistor

SW 10
1 Attack Resistor
2 Speaker Feedback
3 Aux. Output
4 Internal Speaker
5 Open
6 Open
7 Open
8 Open

Variable Resistors
VR1 1 Megohm Noise Filter Resistor
VR2 1 Megohm Decay Resistor
VR3 1 Megohm Attack Resistor
VR4 1 Megohm One-shot Resistor
VR5 1 Megohm Oscillator Control Resistor
VR6 1 Megohm V.C.O. Control Resistor
VR7 50k ohm Pitch Control Resistor
VR8 50k ohm V.C.O. External Control Resistor

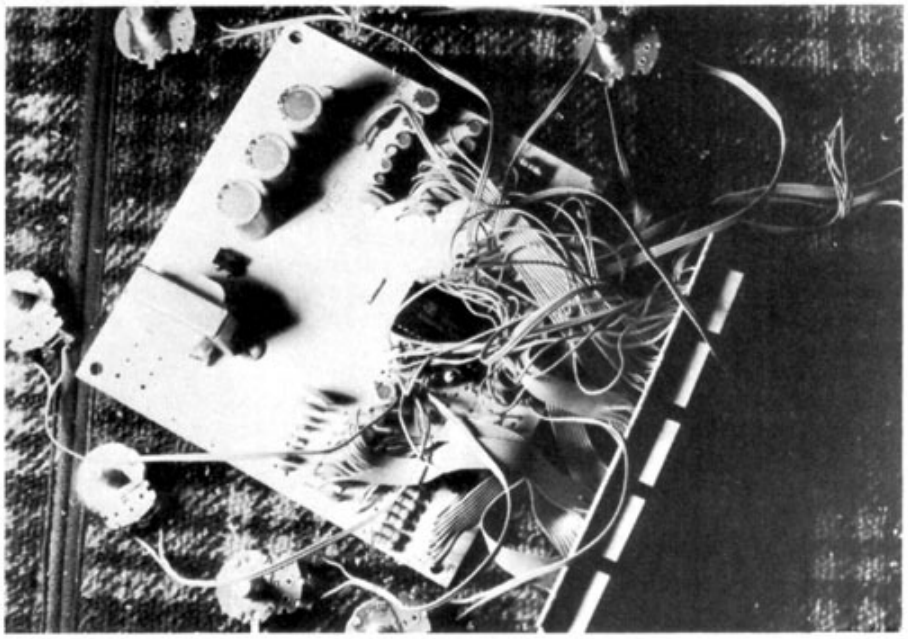


PHOTO: CHRIS STEVENS

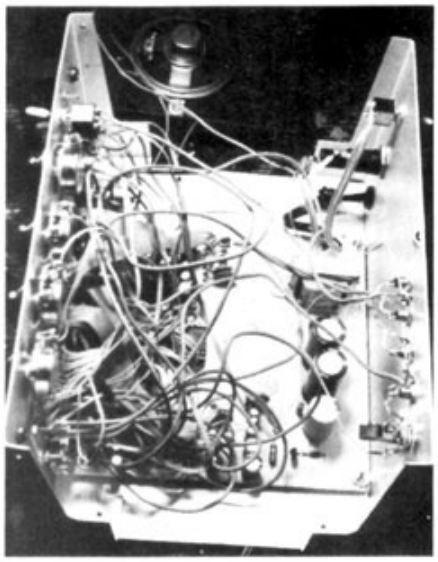
The complete PC board for the sound effects generator has all parts attached. Note the ribbon cables, which make wiring easier. Unit shown has extra features.

When mounting the parts, make sure that all of the parts, including the jumper wire are mounted from the top side of the board. Be sure to clip the wires off as close to the board as you can *after* you solder them in place.

The next thing to take into account, are the switches that make up the front switch panel. I chose the computer type of switches, because of the small amount of space that they use. Also, if you had to purchase 80 separate switches, it would probably take a good ten years to come up with the scratch. Switches one through seven are straightforward. Each one has nine wires—one common, and eight for the individual positions. I used the ribbon cable, because it can be separated into sets of nine, eliminating a lot of confusion, and also it seems less susceptable to breakage, in the long run. When looking from the foil side of the board, the positions are from right to left, and the positions will correspond on the main pc board when the wires are inserted from the top. Each switch has sixteen holes, and then there are the little open circles that indicate solder "pads." Don't drill these, instead, when painting the board circuitry, just leave a space for you to tack the wire to the board. Study the photos to get a better idea.

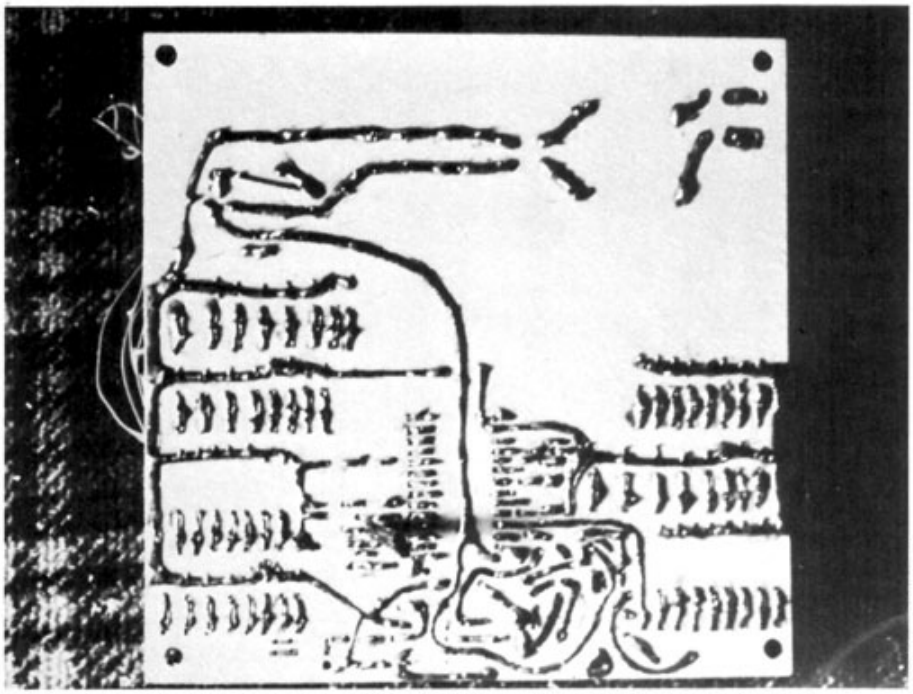
Another item for consideration, are the variable transistors, or pots (potentiometers) if you will. Each one will have three taps on it, and with the shaft facing you, the side that should go to the ground is the one on the right, with the other wire bridging across the one on the far left and the center tap. This way, you only need two wires, but have all three taps connected. The exception to this is the two pots that have to have three separate wires. (VR 7 & 8) The center tap is "C," the right tap is "L" and the left tap is "H."

A few words of caution: The switch panel is mounted from the rear and you must make sure that under no circumstances you allow any one of the switch leads to touch the metal case. Also, the top row is row "A" and the bottom row is "B." The solder pad to the right (as viewed from the foil side) is "C," or common.



Finished unit is mounted in project box.

Again, I'd like to remind you that the circuit board layout is from the bottom side, and the pin-out of the IC will be shown from the top view in the information sheets. To help eliminate some confusion, on the tech sheet, pin #1 is in the upper left hand corner. But on the circuit board layout, it's in the upper right hand corner, as the IC is viewed from the bottom. Sometimes, it even confuses me. Also be sure that when you install the electrolytic capacitors, you keep the polarity correct, with the negative (indicated as: —) or ground side connected properly. It might also help to take some time to study the photos closely for additional building hints, and if you need to, ask questions. If I can, I'll try to offer help should you get hung-up on something. Just drop a



PHOTOS: CHRIS STEVENS

The bottom view of the completed PC board after all parts have been soldered in.

Parts List

All of the parts listed are available at your local Radio Shack Store. Radio Shack part numbers are listed in italic for your convenience.

Resistors

R-17 560 ohms *271-001*
R-16 680 ohms *271-003*
R-19, 20, 21, 23, 24, 26 3.3K ohms *271-028*
R-22 3.9K ohms *271-029*
R-1 22K ohms *271-038*
R-2 33K ohms *271-040*
R-3, 25 47K ohms *272-042*
R-4, 15 56K ohms *271-043*
R-6 100K ohms *271-047*
R-7, 13 220K ohms *271-049*
R-8 270K ohms *271-050*
R-12 470K ohms *271-053*
R-11 1M ohms *271-059*
R-10 2.2M ohms *272-061*
R-9 10M ohms *271-069*
R-18 4.7K ohms *271-030*

All values are ½-watt, 10% tolerance.

Capacitors

C-1, 14, 31 .01mf *272-131*
C-2, 15, 21, 30, 40 .05mf *272-134*
C-3, 16, 20, 29, 39 .1mf *272-135*
C-4, 19, 28, 38 .47mf *272-1417*
C-5, 18, 27, 37 1mf *272-1419*
C-6, 17, 26, 36 4.7mf *272-1422*
C-7, 25, 35 10mf *272-1423*
C-8, 34 22mf *272-1026*
C-9, 24 100pf *272-123*
C-10, 23 220pf *272-124*
C-11, 22, 32 470pf *272-125*
C-12 .001mf *272-126*
C-13 .005mf *272-130*
C-41 470mf *272-1030*
C-42 1000mf *272-1032*
C-33 50mf *272-1027*

Variable Resistors

VR-1—6 1-megohm linear taper *271-211*
VR-7, 8 50 K-ohm linear taper *271-1716*

Switches

SW-1—10 8-position mini-dip *275-1301*
SW-11, 12 SPST *275-624*

Solid State Devices

IC SN 76477N Complex Sound Generator IC *276-1766*
Bridge Rectifier Assembly *276-1161*
Q-1, 2 Transistors *2009*
Red L.E.D. *276-033*
9.1 Volt Zener Diode *276-562*

Hardware & Miscellaneous

8-ohm speaker *40-262*
line cord *278-1255*
Deluxe Project Box *270-270*
Transformer, 24-volt sec., 117-volt pri. *273-1386*
Fuse, ½-amp. *270-1271*
Fuseholder *270-365*
IC socket, 28 pin (optional) *276-1997*
Shielded phono jack (Aux. Output Jack) *274-346*
Etching Solution *276-1535*
Printed Circuit Board 3"x6" *276-1586*
Printed Circuit Board 6"x6" *276-1587*
Machine Screws 4-40 *64-3011*
Hex Nuts 4-40 *64-3018*
Metal Cable Clamps *64-3023*
Knobs, eight *274-413*
Ribbon Cable, 40-conductor *276-771*

line here to CINEMAGIC, describing your problem as completely as you can, and I'll try it out on my unit and see if I can come up with an answer.

Don't be afraid to experiment either. Another reason for using the computer type switches is because unlike a rotary switch, you can select more than one value to program in, arriving at sort of an "in-between" value. In some cases, you can get two separate values working independently and yet together, with some interesting results, increasing the flexibility even more. Keep in mind too, that when you're programmed in the "one-shot" mode certain portions will not be used and will have little or no effect. When programmed for continuous operation, the "one-shot" portions will be inactive. I might also mention that in the photograph of the completed unit, it's programmed for a one-shot phaser blast that lasts about three seconds in duration.

For your first test, you might want to try to duplicate the settings shown since this will produce a sound the first time, if things are in working order. Don't be surprised either, that after you feel you've programmed a sound, you don't get one. Because of the way the parts values interact, it is possible to program out of the range of the IC. If this happens, *experiment.* Usually by changing the value of one of the variable resistors, you'll be able to get it going, and then you can correct from there. I do urge that you experiment with the unit and get the feel of the thing. Flip switches and turn those controls. When you get something that you'd like to be able to do again, make a log of the sound for future reference. A good example is included in the sheet enclosed with the IC.

Well, I gotta go now. I hear the sounds of an alien spacecraft hovering about three feet off the floor of my living room, and if it's an unfriendly, I'm gonna have to blast it outta the sky. Good hunting! *CM*

Let's hear from you!

Send in your suggestions for projects you'd like to see, questions concerning electronic special effects. I'll try to select the best projects for use and answer as many questions as space will allow every month. Since I know most of you are on a tight production budget, and this project might seem a little expensive, I'll try to come up with a lot of little "thingies" for the next issue in the "cheap to build" category.

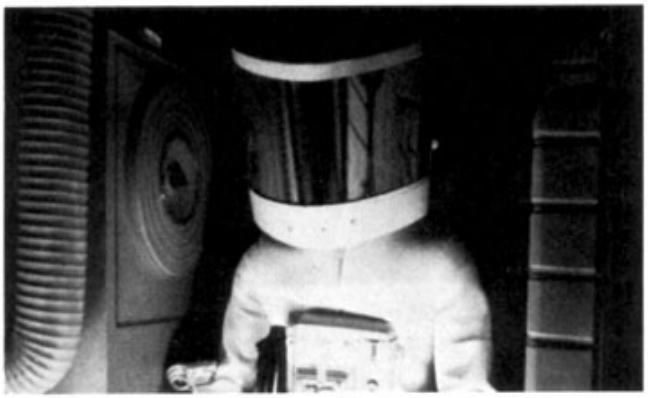
Chris E. Stevens

Born and raised in Hammond, Indiana, Chris graduated high school in 1967, graduated electronics school on 1968 and attended Lincolnland College (Springfield, IL) for one year in 1971. Up until recently he has had his own local PBS-TV show called, ETC! Of himself, he says, "At present I'm making my living by custom designing and building electronic specialty equipment. I have an F.C.C. Radiotelephone License for Broadcast Engineering and I am also a licensed pilot. I have pursued a career as a radio D-J for the last 12 years and am presently looking to get back into the business."

Producers' BULLETIN BOARD

Please forward announcements of film projects in current production or near completion to: CINEMAGIC, c/o O'Quinn Studios, Inc. 475 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10016. Please include a photograph of some phase of the production, if possible.

Dog of Doom. Comedy/Horror. The intellectual Mr. Yowza awaits the delivery of his new dog, Yabbles. When his brother Milton arrives with Yabbles, the fun begins. Producer/Director: John Manginaro. Cast: J. Manginaro, F. Manginaro and Pierrie C. Fritz. Crew: D. Mortanez and A. Mortinez. Super-8, color, with a musical soundtrack. Running time: 5 minutes. (Cinema 22 Films, c/o John Manginaro, 23-30 31 Rd., L.I. City, NY 11106.)



The Representative. A group of extraterrestrial beings decide that it is time for Earth to become a member of their council. The film follows an alien's search for an Earth life form best suited to represent Earth. Producer: Barrera/Galbraith Productions. Director: Chip Galbraith. Filmed in widescreen. Budgeted at $1,600. Super-8, stereo sound, black and white. Running time: 12 minutes. (Chip Galbraith, 14427 Blue Skies, Livonia, MI 48154.)

Beyond: The Beginning of the End. A crew of five sets out to discover a new planet for human to inhabit after the earth is nearly destroyed by World War III. On their journey they encounter a black hole and a race of alien beings who derive pleasure from torture. They finally find a suitable planet, but their spaceship is destroyed upon their arrival. They try to send a message back to war-stricken earth. Producer: Century Productions. Writers: Doug Taylor and Steve Morrow. Cast: Joe Larsen, Dick Curry, Doug Taylor and Steve Morrow. Super-8, color, sound. Running time: about 45 minutes. (Century Productions, c/o Steve Morrow, P.O. Box 225, Elk Point, SD 57025.)

Green Grass and High Tides. The rousing tale of a mysterious young gypsy girl, hunted across southern England in 1890 by outlaws and gunslingers who are seeking her much rumored, legendary gypsy treasurer of great value. A young American traveler tries to come to her rescue—only to find that she has the "power" to take care of herself. The film combines non-stop action with mysticism. Producer: Alternate Images Productions. Director/Editor: Michael Osborne. Writer: Eric Gilmartin. Camera and FX: Robert Barbere. Artwork: Leah Battle. Cast: Stefan Klakovich, Roxanne Manno, David Armstrong, Eric Gilmartin, Andy Tuttle, Eric Tolle and Greg Ederer. FX include: supered titles, shining eyes, blood, mattes, rotoscoping, explosions and working props. Super-8, color. Running time: 18 minutes.

The White Ship. A ship traversing uncharted waters in the middle of the Pacific Ocean suddenly runs aground on an uncharted island where a temple erected by sub-humans stands. The ship becomes engulfed by globular pink-eyed jelly. Producer/Director/Research: Larry Apakian for Dunwich Productions. Super-8, color, sound. Running time: 5 minutes. (Larry Apakian, 2230 Forrester Ave. Holmes, PA 19043.)

Doctor Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. A dramatic retelling of the classic tale by Robert Louis Stevenson. A man achieves physical separation of the good and evil in human nature, yet attains uncontrollable results. Producer/Director/Writer: Scott Gibson. Cast: Scott Gibson and Tom Mansfield. FX include: transformation sequence, flaming titles and gore effects. Super-8, color, sound. Running time: 15 minutes. In post-production. (Famous Flicks Productions, c/o Scott Gibson, 306 Burnwick Rd., Richmond VA 23227.)

Renegade Nuns on Wheels. Comedy. Four very strange individuals with equally strange names (Lhon, Huh, Wings & Wha) discover a Trans Am with light speed capability. Producer/Director/Writer: Mike Safreed. FX: Mike Safreed and David Lambert. Cast: Mike Safreed, Seth Paskin, Steve Seward, Tony Seward, Greg Tumbush, Scott Meyer and Ed Swann. FX include: video feedback, music by great blues artists. Super-8 and video, color, sound. Running time: 30 minutes. In production (Mike Safreed, Jr., 1854 Scotch Pine Dr., Dayton OH 45432.)

Joe. A science fiction comedy about a Parisian New Wave artist who must join the army after losing a bet. He is stationed on a newly colonized planet where his commander orders him to take a message across enemy lines. On his journey he must deal with hairy monster feet, space termites, talking rocks, and eventually a whole troop of alien soldiers. Producer: The Knoxville Central High School French Club. Director/Editor: John Davis. Writers: Phil Petree and John Davis. Art Director: Robert Elliot. Sound Effects Advisor: David Tumblin. French Club Faculty Advisor: Cindy Corum. Some Equipment supplied by: Jack Garrison. Original score recorded by the Central High School Band. Conductor: Jack Mallard. Additional music recorded under the supervision of Charles Sanders. Filmed on the land of Max and Juanita Zuber. FX include: glass shots, laser effects, stop motion animation, pyrotechnics, full scale spacecraft mock-ups and miniature spacecraft composited with live action. (Central High French Club, c/o Central High School, 5321 Jacksboro Pike, Knoxville, TN 37918.)

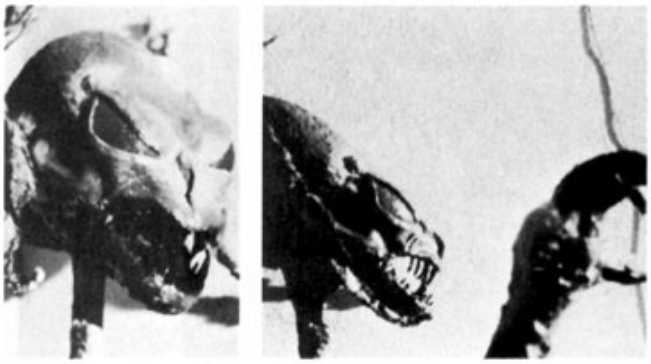
The Encounter. A man out for a Sunday drive notices a small, white figure walking along the side of the road. He gives chase, and the alien leads him to a spaceship where the excitement really begins. Producer: Second Unit Productions. Director: Michael Hoover. Story: D.E. and Michael Hoover. Script: D.E. Hoover. Make-up and costumes: D.E. Hoover. Cast: Rick Van Horn, Loren Keith Gulbranson. Filmed on location in Balboa Park, San Diego, California. 16mm, color. Running time: not established. (Second Unit Productions, c/o Michael Hoover, 6029 Malcolm Dr., San Diego, CA 92115.)

San Francisco's Finest. An R-rated police versus mad sniper story. Assigned to the case is inspector T.J. McHenry, a hard-nosed cop who takes the case as a personal vendetta after his wife and daughter are murdered by the sniper. Producer/Director/ Writer: Thomas G. Knowlton. Cast: Thomas G. Knowlton, Carl Benson, Paul Joseph, Tammie Allen and Lara Collete-Dobson. Make-up an FX: Thomas G. Knowlton and Paul Knowlton. FX include: bloody gunshot wounds, beatings, car chases and action stunts. Super-8, color, sound. Running time: 90 minutes. (Thomas G. Knowlton, 2541 13th Ave. N.W., Rochester, MN 55901.)

First Goal. A hockey film starring Bobby Orr concerning Orr's belief that there is too much emphasis in youth sports on winning and not enough on having fun. Producer: Bill Trautvetter for September Productions. Director: Dan Driscoll, Standing left to right in the photo are: Dan Driscoll; Bill Trautvetter; Melanie Brelinsky, administrator, commercial relations, Standard Brands, Inc.; Bobby Orr; and Jane Barden, account executive, Newsome & Company. The film was funded by Standard Brands, Inc. 16mm, color, sound. Running time: 12 minutes. (September Productions, 171 Newbury St., Boston, MA 02116.)

Panners. The story of two psychic film critics who have their own weekly television show on the PBS network. Each week they review the latest offerings from the movie industry—which include such films as: *Yoda Goes to Chicago, Altered Dates, The Milkman Always Rings Once, But if You Don't Answer He Leaves* and the ever popular *Samurai Godfather.* Unfortunately, they don't always agree . . . Producers/Directors: Ben Jones and Wade Rockett. Written by: Sean Jones, Ben Jones and Wade Rockett. Cast: Sean Jones, Wade Rockett, Mike Heath, Carl Hess and Amanda Tarte. FX include: rear projection, rising blood veins, and much, much more. Super-8, color, sound. (Ben Jones, 5617 Trooper, Las Vegas, NV 89120.)

The Third Force, Part One: The Stardust Mission. This film is the first part of a planned triology. It is an authentic adaptation of the first *Perry Rodan* book (available in German, containing the first five adventures in condensed form. The book has the same title as the film.) Producer: CLZ Productions. Director: Harold K. Zink. Script/Production Manager-/Publication Reations: Norbert O. Czernoch. Model constructor/Designer: Werner Lischka. Cast: Harold K. Zink, Norbert O. Czernoch, Viktor Farkas, Werner Lischka, Werner A. Putz, Thomas Breit, Roland Stainer, Eva Magnana, Peter Breitner and Arnulf D. Krausz. Special Guest Stars: Walter Ernsting and Ernst Vlcek (two *Perry Rodan* writers!) FX include: mattes, miniatures, animation, aerial image optical FX, stock shots and double exposures. 16mm, color, sound. Approximate Running time: 80 minutes. Scheduled release date: Autumn of '82. (Harald K. Zink, Elisabeth St. 5, 1010 Vienna, Austria.)



The Unearthed. Millions of years ago an alien being was cast out from its home world for committing heinous crimes against its people. The alien was sentenced to a limbo of endless drifting in space for all time. However, the giant star cruiser carrying the alien is dragged into the gravitational pull of the newly formed Earth. The ship crashes and sinks beneath the molten surface for countless centuries. A severe earthquake in southern California forces the ancient starship upward through a fault—with the occupant still alive! The following days bring a series of horrible deaths in the area and one man's battle against the evil creature. Producer/Director/Script: William Craft and Lee Murphy. FX include: Automated creature, miniatures, mattes, graphic make-up effects. Super-8, color, dubbed soundtrack includes music. Running time: approximately 40 minutes. (Bloodlust Film Productions, c/o William Craft, 19538 Arminta St., Reseda, CA 91335.)

PROFILE

Jerry Parisi: Super-8 Sleuth

Actor/Filmmaker Jerry Parisi has created his own stellar vehicle. It's a detective series called *Carbonero,* which he writes, directs and plays the leading role.

By JOHN CLAYTON

The clean-up committee has just arrived. A homicidal maniac is on the loose and he is systematically murdering all of the prostitutes in New York City. The only description that the police have of the mad man is that he wears a long coat and a big hat. Detective Terry Carbonero is hot on the killer's trail. It's typical police drama, except *Carbonero* isn't the Tuesday Movie of the Week—it's an amateur 55 minute movie shot in Super-8, single system sound. *Carbonero* was conceived, written and directed by Jerry Parisi, who also stars as Carbonero.

Parisi is young actor determined to make it big. In short, he wants to be a movie star. *Carbonero* shows that Parisi can direct and produce as well as act. The film, though it's hardly Academy Award material, is a good film and shows some promising talent developing by making Super-8 movies. Parisi in particular has a natural style of acting that's neither affected nor self-conscious.

Although Jerry Parisi thinks of himself primarily as an actor and only secondarily as a filmmaker, his filmmaking talent—particularly his ability to get many people involved in a production that offers no pay—merits attention.

"I first got the idea to make *Carbonero* way back in 1973," Jerry begins. "I had just gotten off the subway and was walking home from high school when I saw a brown car come careening around the corner and smash into the posts that support the elevated subway tracks where I live in Queens. There were a couple of hundred people standing around, so I started walking over to the crowd to see what was going on. Before I reached the crowd another brown car came speeding around the corner and smashed into the 'el' posts. My curiosity was really aroused, so I ran the rest of the way over to the crowd to find out what was going on. When I looked around the corner I saw a half dozen more brown cars—all identical with the same license number—lined up and waiting to speed off and crash into the subway platform. When I saw the cameras I realized that they were making a movie, so I went over and asked the cameraman what the name of the movie was. He told me the movie was called *The French Connection.* I shrugged because I had never heard of it. I said 'What kind of a little company is this?' The cameraman answered, 'Twentieth Century Fox, that's the little company doing it.' Then somebody whispered 'There's the star.' I turned around and looked at the guy. I had never seen him before. It was Gene Hackman. I had always wanted to be an actor, and after that experience of seeing a movie being made in my own neighborhood I decided to make my own action packed police movie.

"I began preproduction on the original *Carbonero* in 1974. It took me until 1976 to finish putting the movie together. Most people start out by making short films, but I thought I'd start at the top with a feature. The cast for the original *Carbonero* had about 170 people in it. Most of them were extras. There were four main parts and about 20 supporting roles and bit parts.

"After I finished the first *Carbonero* I decided to make another film using the same character. I started making the second *Carbonero* in 1979. I was working in several different plays during the pre-production and the actual production of the second *Carbonero.* Each play lasted about six or seven months in practice and a couple of weekends of performance. I worked on the script with Jeff Pollizzotto every chance I got. We finally finished the script and were ready to begin shooting.

"The second *Carbonero* is a totally different story than the first one. Even though I play a cop named Carbonero in both films, the character is radically different in the second film from the character in the first. I plan on doing several more *Carbonero* films. I'll use the more developed character that appears in the second film in the future episodes. I'm presently involved in preproduction on the third *Carbonero* film. It's tentatively called *Once Upon A Hold-Up.*"

There were four producers of the second *Carbonero* film: Jerry; Steve Shane,

Back row, left to right: Jerry Borg, Tony Styles, bar tender, Jerry Parisi, Pat Drabeck, Florence Stylenou, Ro McGovern & Steve Shane.

who plays Sargent Joe Kelly; Jerry Borg, who plays Bill Peabody; and Ro McGovern, Jerry's girlfriend, who plays Carbonero's wife who is also a nurse. The film cost about $6,000 for film and processing. Each put up a roughly equal share. Jerry took up collections before each shoot and bought the film in bulk. Other costs, such as gas for the patrol cars, costumes and uniforms, props and sets and food for the cast and crew are not included in the $6,000 figure.

"We shot a total of 119 50 foot rolls of Super-8, sound film to make the second *Carbonero,*" Jerry reveals. "That works out to about a 6 to 1 shooting ratio. We made some mistakes that wasted some film, but mostly we used so much film because we had to shoot some scenes from many different angles and we were working with single system sound, which requires shooting extra footage at the beginning of each take to lip sync the sound with the picture.

"I edited the film myself," Jerry continues. "Some of the cutting looks just a little slow, but that was the only way to make sure that the soundtrack would be properly synced. Super-8 sound film has an 18 frame separation between the picture and the sound, so you have to leave the 18 frames of soundtrack on the front of each take to ensure that the actors' voices will be lip synced. The rule we followed when we were shooting was to run about 5 seconds worth of film through the camera before the actors were cued to start talking. That left me with some extra footage to play with in the editing room, but it also used up a fair amount of film when you consider that each scene required several takes. In my opinion it's one of the main drawbacks of shooting in Super-8 —if you have to shoot with single system sound. I didn't have all the necessary equipment to shoot and edit double system sound and get total frame-for-frame editing control, but I don't think it detracts too much from the film. There's a lot of action to carry most of the scenes, so it's not like the actors are always sitting around for a few seconds at the beginning of each cut before they start talking. Besides, who can afford to sink all their money into producing a feature length film in 16mm double system sound? *Carbonero* would never have been made if it weren't for the relatively low cost of shooting in Super-8."

There's a brothel scene in *Carbonero* that shows a group of very scantily clad young ladies (prostitutes) sitting around in

Pat Claussen plays one of the first murder victims in Parisi's film.

Robin Shane is brutally beaten by the murderer.

Christine Gulotta plays a prostitute in *Carbonero.*

a parlor waiting for customers. Carbonero barges in, looking for one of the prostitutes who may have information about the killer. When Carbonero announces himself as a cop the prostitutes all run out of the building into the street. The parlor interior was actually the front porch of a house that had to be dressed to look like a living room interior. You'd never know that it wasn't actually an interior room.

"We had to build some chairs in forced perspective to make the parlor look deeper than it actually was," Jerry exposes. "I also had to convince a bunch of young girls to parade around in their underwear. We literally stopped traffic when we shot the scene where the prostitutes run out into the street. A couple of car loads of young guys were driving by when the girls went running out, wearing only their underwear. The cars screeched to a halt and almost slammed into each other as the guys inside forgot about driving to get a good look at what was happening.

"We shot many of the interiors at Jeff Pollizzotto's house," Jerry continues. "The living room area was shot on a Sunday for the scene between Ro McGovern's character and Carbonero. Later the bedroom was painted green to shoot the hospital scene. We dressed the room to look like a hospital. We went to great detail to ensure realism. Steve Shane and I constructed the headboard with the bedlight and the nurse pager. It looks very realistic. I made up the girl who was hospitalized because she had been beaten up by the murderer but had escaped before he could kill her. I gave her a very ugly black eye with stage makeup. Jeff made the I.V. pole that was used in the scene. All the attention to detail really payed off. It really looks like a hospital room.

"We had to find another location to shoot the precinct interior scenes because none of the rooms in Jeff's house were appropriate for the realism we were after. We payed a homeowner we knew $30 for a one day shoot in his house when we decided it was the right location. We had to shoot four scenes using the precinct interior. We shot them all in that one day that we rented the house. We arrived at about six in the morning and dressed the set and managed to finish by the end of the day. The owner of the house was very nice in letting us use his house. The $30 really only covered the use of his electricity. If we had been forced to shoot in a studio we wouldn't have been able to afford the rental. We had to go out and get the old typewriters, the desks, the Rollodexes, the phones, the payphone, the maps, the filing cabinets—the whole works. It looks authentically like the interior of a police precinct station. We tried to pay attention to all the minute details in every scene that would make the story as realistic as it could be.

"I needed to cast 234 people to fill all the parts, including extras in *Carbonero*," Jerry reveals. "I naturally started with my best friends. I found some people in a shopping mall where I worked. I asked people to find other people for me. I cast most of the girls for the movie by having them come over to my house wearing bathing suits. If they had nice bodies, I cast them as prostitutes, because the girls playing the prostitutes had to wear skimpy outfits and they had to look good in them. I also did some casting through one of my agents, Clara Kennedy. She went out of her way to help me. I got most of my better players through her. Most of the tough parts had to be played by professional actors. My advice to Super-8 moviemakers about casting would be to be totally honest with everyone. Tell them whether or not they'll be paid for their services. Obviously, I couldn't afford to pay people to play in *Carbonero*. Tell your actors if they get a big part they'll be expected to be available whenever they're needed. Although I couldn't pay my actors, I did pay for their food when we broke for lunch during a shoot. I took up a collection among the producers and went out and bought

Parisi & Tony Styles preparing to shoot the subway chase scene.

cold cuts, bread and soda and we set up a buffet table where everyone could make their own sandwiches. You have to do at least that much for your actors and crew, otherwise nobody will want to give his time. People don't work well if they're hungry.

"A cast of 234 people is a huge cast," Jerry admits. "Of course most of those people were extras and bit players. Everybody in the cast was great and could be depended on to be available for shooting at any time—except one person who unfortunately had a fairly major part. After we were well into shooting the film and had too much in the can to replace him with someone else, he started to skip shooting dates where he was required because he had lines. He was one of the few supposedly 'professional' actors in the entire cast. All of the others, the union professionals and the amateurs, were great. We eventually had to start writing him out of many scenes he was supposed to be in. It's a shame when one person out of literally hundreds can cause so many problems. Aside from the problems we had with that one actor, the entire production ran smoothly.

"Another source I used to find actors for *Carbonero* were the amateur theatre groups that I worked with in Queens," Jerry divulges. "I told my friends in the theatre groups that I was making a movie and asked if they wanted to be in it. Most regional theatre actors are very happy to work on a movie because they've only been exposed to stage work, and if they aspire to become movie actors, they need to get the experience. I trusted these people's abilities more than the totally inexperienced people I recruited from non-theatrical sources and I wound up giving them bigger parts because I felt they could handle them."

Jerry spent a great deal of time preparing his script. He had the help of Jeff Pollizzoto and a girl named Ester Bialobroda during various stages of scripting. He made five drafts of the script before he arrived at the final shooting script. Even after all this careful preparation, he still had to change the script during shooting because of the actor who failed to show up for several shoots and had to be written out of several scenes.

"The movie took two years to shoot," Jerry continues. "During the course of shooting I had to make sure that the leading characters didn't alter their appearances too much, or I would have had continuity problems. You can't have a character wearing a moustache in one scene and not in the next without an explanation. Tony Styles, who plays Carbonero's partner, grew a beard after we had finished shooting, but after editing it became apparent that we had to reshoot a few scenes because they didn't work out the way we had planned them. I had to ask Tony to shave off his beard for the retakes. He didn't want to do it, but fortunately he didn't refuse. If a film takes that long to shoot because everyone involved has other committments you have to keep an eye out to make sure that nobody radically changes their appearance.

"It took about seven or eight months to assemble all of the footage into the final cut," Jerry confides. "I screened the rough cut on several different occasions to different groups—relatives, friends, cast members and the like—to get feedback from them about what they thought of the way it was cut together. When you spend so much time on a project you begin to lose your objectivity and your eye can't see some flaws as readily as someone who's seeing it for the first time. I used their advice to trim out the fat and make the story move faster and with more cohesion.

"One of the reasons I wanted to make *Carbonero* is because I've always admired and respected the New York City police," Jerry confesses. "When I actually began making the film I found that they were more than willing to help. They accomodated us in every way they could. We spoke to the same two detectives that took Sylvester Stalone and Billy DeWilliams on patrol for a week to show them what it's like to be an anti-crime policeman for their roles in *Nighthawks*. They offered to do the same

Jeff Pollizzotto, lower left, shoots a publicity still for *Carbonero*.

The brothel scene required many attractive women to partially disrobe.

Bob Drabeck plays a cop. Note the realistic-looking uniform & patch.

Bill Meany plays a drunken bum in *Carbonero*. He's also the murderer!

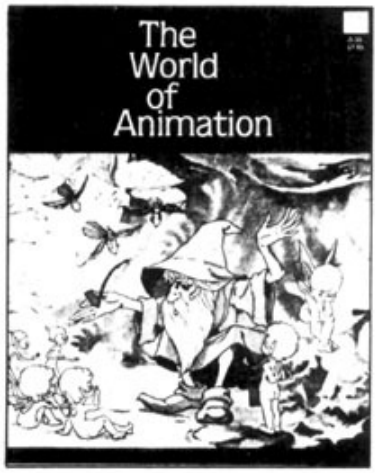
thing for us.

"Because we were considered amateur filmmakers, we didn't bother to get a filming permit that's required of professionals in New York. In New York, if you shoot with a tripod, you're considered a professional. Of course we used the tripod for many scenes, but no one ever bothered us or asked for our permit. We asked many policemen who we saw on the street where we were shooting to help us out by letting us film our actors in front of their squad cars. We realized that we couldn't show them, their badge numbers or the patrol car numbers in the film, but they helped us in every way they could. They explained that they would have to leave if they got a call, but they'd be glad to help if they weren't busy. We were shooting one scene where the murderer chases an undercover policewoman disguised as a prostitute down the street and we run after him with our guns drawn. We neglected to inform the police that we would be shooting in the area. Someone called them to report a man with a gun chasing a girl down the street. A patrol wagon came speeding down the street to where we were shooting. My crew all looked at me and said 'You're in trouble.' I put down my gun and went over to the patrol wagon and tried to explain that we were making a movie. The police were really nice about it. They even agreed to speed the truck through a few scenes with the lights flashing. It's the climax of the movie, and having a real patrol wagon come speeding to the scene with its lights flashing really adds a special touch to the film. Of course, you'd see it in a professional production, but you wouldn't think an amateur production would have such realism. It makes the film look very professional."

Jerry has formed a film company called Take One Pictures with his friends that he worked on *Carbonero* with. He has recently been joined by Paul Vitous (see the Profile in CINEMAGIC #8) and Jeff Pollizzotto. Parisi is scheduled to play the lead in *The Galileo Encounter*, an independent film that was scripted by Phil Goldberg and will be directed by Vitous—if they can find a film "angel" who'll produce it (see Producers' Bulletin Board, CINEMAGIC #12.) They've already made a trailer that they can show to prospective angels. The film will be shot in 16mm in color with sound and have a half hour running time.

Jerry is hoping that *Carbonero* will somehow get aired on cable tv or make back some of the money it cost to produce. He's been working on the script for *Once Upon a Hold-up* and building the miniatures for the special effects sequences in the planned *Carbonero* sequel. He's trying to find an angel to help him produce *Once Upon a Hold-up*. In the meantime he's recently become a SAG (Screen Actors Guild) member and he's been making his rounds as an actor looking for work in films. He was recently cast for a small bit part in a major film that is soon to begin shooting, but he was later informed that the scene he was to be in was cut from the film. He's still looking for his big break. Jerry Parisi has the determination and drive that are absolute essentials for success in the film business. With luck his determination may pay off and he may achieve the success he longs for. CM

KODAK'S ANIMATION GUIDE



Kodak's, **"The World of Animation,"** is an authoritative guide for anyone who is interested in making animated films. It is jam-packed with tips on every aspect of film production and animation technique. This in-depth guide book was prepared by Kodak especially for the animator who wants to make professional-quality animated films on a MODEST BUDGET.

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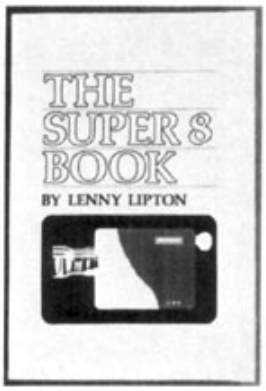

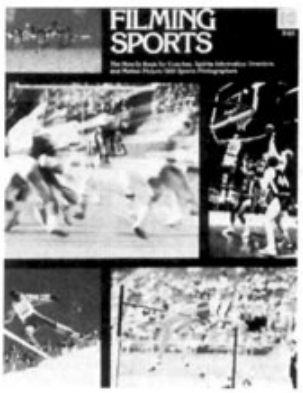

The Super-8 Book. By Lenny Lipton. A Fireside Book, published by Simon & Schuster, New York. 6" x 9". 308 pages. $7.95

Lenny Lipton is widely regarded as one of the world's foremost authorities on Super-8 filmmaking. His previous book, *Independent Filmmaking* is one of the most valuable books available to the backyard cinemagician. It shouldn't come as a surprise that his *Super-8 Book* is one of the most comprehensive books on the subject available to date.

Super-8 filmmaking is Lenny Lipton's life. He has made many acclaimed films in Super-8 and is one of the world's leading proponents of professional use of the format. Clearly, he loves what he's doing and wants to share the joy of Super-8 filmmaking with anyone who'll listen. That's what he does in *The Super-8 Book.*

The Super-8 Book is broken down into seven chapters: Format, Cameras, Sound, Processing and Stripping, Editing, Prints and Projection. Each chapter is a wealth of information on its particular aspect of Super-8. The chapter on cameras will tell you what's available and how Lipton personally feels about most cameras on the market. The chapter on sound is especially helpful to the filmmaker who has a good grasp on the techniques involved in filming but needs to improve on his sound recording techniques. Similarly, the Editing chapter is an invaluable aid in learning the technique of editing—especially sound films.

Perhaps the most valuable aspect of *The Super-8 Book* is the way in which Lipton states his own preferences for various tools and techniques. You feel as if you're having a personal conversation with Lipton and he keeps saying, "Look, you don't have to do it this way, but this is the way *I* do it and it works very well for me." He can save you a lot of time and trouble by telling you the results of his own experiments.

Although some of the subjects in *The Super-8 Book* are rather technical and are most often presented elsewhere in extremely dry and long-winded texts, this is not the case here. Lipton has more than a little bit of the artist in him. He *is* an artist who happens to write about Super-8. In addition to being an acclaimed filmmaker and author on the subject of Super-8, he's also a songwriter. He wrote *Puff, the Magic Dragon,* which was a big hit for Peter, Paul and Mary back in the early sixties. He takes every opportunity he can find to inject a little wit and wisdom into the technical subject he's covering. So, if you're interested in learning as much as you can about Super-8 but have been bored to tears by the dry technical manuals you've found, try reading Lenny Lipton's *The Super-8 Book,* and also his *Independent Filmmaking.* Compared with some of the other books available on the subject, *The Super-8 Book* is a breath of fresh air.

Sound: Magnetic Sound Recording for Motion Pictures. Published by Kodak, Motion Picture and Audiovisual Markets Division, Rochester, New York. 8½" x 11". 56 pages. $6.25.

Kodak publishes many technical manuals and handbooks for the professional as well as amateur filmmaker, and the quality of these publications has become very high in recent years. A case in point is *Sound: Magnetic Sound Recording for Motion Pictures.* It is an excellent handbook that is chock full of information about sound recording. Anyone interested in being a soundman should read it.

The soundtrack is generally the weakest element of most amateur productions. This is because most amateurs consider the soundtrack secondary to the visual element of a film. It should *not* be this way. While great visuals are immensely important, bad sound will ruin the overall impact of a film almost as drastically as bad visuals or bad acting. It's not only that something's missing when the soundtrack is gurgly —*something's annoying!*

If you're one of the people who suffers from bad soundtracks, you should do something about it before your audience decides not to attend your next screening!

One thing you can do is learn more about making soundtracks. Kodak's book can help.

Maybe you can't afford to go out and buy an expensive 16mm "noiseless" camera for double system sound recording, but you can learn how to make the principles that make these cameras so attractive work for you. So you're stuck with a cheap single-system Super-8 camera with a built-in microphone? Can't you take the microphone off the camera with an extension cord? Can't you fashion your own barney or blimp out of inexpensive materials? Can't your replace that built-in mike with one more suited to shooting a particular scene you have in mind? In most instances you can.

Although the book concerns itself mainly with professional techniques for 16mm double system sound recording, many of the principals are the same for Super-8—whether single or double system. Do you know when to use a shotgun mike or an omnidirectional mike? Can you read a VU meter? Do you know how to splice and edit mag film? Kodak's *Sound* book will show you how. You don't have to settle for the the hassles of editing Super-8 single system. You can transfer your single system original to mag film and edit in double system—as if you had shot in double system to begin with! This will give you total editing control and you'll get used to the techniques used in editing professional theatrical films.

You'll also learn how to record "wild" sounds and build up your own personal sound effects library. Even if you don't have the resources to get into double system sound, it will help you in the future (if you plan on a career in film) to understand the mechanics of double system synchronization.

One of the most helpful aspects of Kodak's *Sound* book is that it tells you what to expect from a sound studio or transfer lab. This can save you both time and money and help you to plan your dubbing session so you can use it to your fullest advantage. Whether you're looking for a career as a soundman or you just want to make sure that your independent filmmaking efforts have the best possible soundtrack, Kodak's *Sound* book can help you acheive your goals.

Filming Sports. Published by Kodak, Motion Picture and Audiovisual Markets Division, Rochester, New York. 8½" x 11". 288 pages. Soft bound, $19.95. Hard bound $29.95

Filming sporting events can be a pleasurable and rewarding experience. If you're both a filmmaker and a sports fan, this avenue of filmmaking will prove to be both recreational and educational. You'll be gaining valuable experience behind the camera while you're rooting for your favorite local high school or college team.

Filming sports may present the golden opportunity for you to start working in 16mm. Find out if your high school or college has a program for filming the team in action. Maybe they need a cameraman or assistant. If you're serious about a career in filmmaking, you should get as much experience as you can, any way you can. You'll learn how to work within the school's filming budget. Perhaps you'll be asked to help in a fund raising activity. This is valuable to any filmmaker who has a project in mind and needs to know how to budget it and raise the money to get it produced.

There's a technique to filming sports, and Kodak's informative book *Filming Sports*, will show you how it's done. Even if you're not a sports fan, the experience you gain by getting involved in filming your school's team will come in very handy. Learning how to shoot the action of a football game can help you later on when you're ready to start filming your own action-packed adventure film. Maybe you'll get your hands on the school's Bolex (or other 16mm camera). Maybe the coach will let you borrow the camera—if you prove yourself trustworthy. The possibilities are limitless.

Kodak's *Filming Sports* will give you pointers on filming most kinds of sporting events. It'll also show you how to use 16mm splicing equipment, choose the right film for the lighting conditions at the event, deal with the lab, work within your footage allotment and much more. If you really want to make movies, why not make some at the expense of your school? You'll be able to use the experience you gain in the future—maybe it'll help you land a job with a local film company. If you're going to break into the film business, the time to start is now. Kodak's informative books can help you on your way. CM

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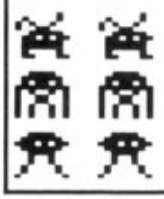

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Low Budget Devastation

By STEVEN SIPPIN and KEVIN SMYTH

The camera pans over a burnt out landscape, strewn with devastated buildings and piles of soot and debris. Not a pleasant scenario, is it? And it's even less pleasant to think of from a technical standpoint.

We recently had to create this scene for a film we were making as part of a school project. Since not many cities we know of have been destroyed by nuclear bombs are nearby and safe for filming, we decided to create the scene, henceforth referred to as the city, in miniature.

Even if you are not skilled in the art of model making you will find it easy to make buildings in such simple (and inexpensive) mediums as balsa wood and styrofoam. Even if you have a knack for building miniatures, you will still be confronted with the problem of creating the illusion of depth. You'll have to use forced perspective (see CINEMAGIC #5) to create the illusion of depth in a shallow miniature set.

The base of our city is a 5' by 4' piece of plywood. The first step is to cover the base with plaster and contour the plaster to make it look like a rocky terrain. You have to do this before the plaster sets. Next, paint the plaster after it has dried. A mixture of greys, tans and black will give the plaster a realistic rocky look. Now you have to cover your set with various forms of debris. This can be done with ash, charcoal and sand. For added realism add little bits of twisted wire or styrene guirders suitably melted for that "charred" look.

Now collect various bits of balsa wood, scrap wood and styrofoam. These bits will become your buildings. Since these buildings will only be viewed from one angle (unless you have other plans) you only have to build facades, not four-sided buildings. A simple rule to keep in mind is: styrofoam equals brick, balsa wood or plastic equals metal or glass. You can carve the styrofoam with an X-acto knife to make it look like a brick wall.

Steve Sippin and Kevin Smyth put the final touches on their ruined city.

PHOTOS: STEVEN SIPPIN AND KEVIN SMYTH

The background painting for the ruined city was painted on a shade.

A crashed jet fighter lies in rubble.

A miniature space colony set.

Many interesting brickfaces can be obtained with just a few minutes of careful carving. Damaged office buildings can be made from balsa, cardboard and plastic sheeting. To create effective windows for these buildings, use a grating. Make sure you have given the building its undercoat of paint (grey, silver, brick red, etc.) Now hold the grating over the building or rest it on the building itself and spray paint the windows through the grating. Remember to always use a darker color for the windows.

All the buildings in your devastated city should have burnt out portions and some of the buildings should be built on an angle so they seem to be buried in the earth. Now set up the buildings. You really don't have to know anything about various set scales (1/72, 1/24, etc.) Simply place your buildings in decreasing size order. Your eye should be a good enough judge for the proper placement of the buildings to make them appear in depth.

After you've placed all your buildings, pile sand up on the side the wind hits. An empty Elmer's Glue container makes a good sand dispenser. The final touch is a background painting. If you can paint or if any of your friends can paint have them paint a continuation of the devastated city with buildings smaller than the smallest ones you've built for the set. An old window shade makes an effective and cheap canvas. If you don't know anyone who can paint, make it a night scene by using a black velvet backdrop. Make tiny holes in the backdrop and place a light source behind it to create a starry night sky. CM

CINEMAGIC
COVER STORY

A Journey Through Time and Space

By DAVID HUTCHISON

Independent filmmaking is no way to make a living. The hours are long, the work is exacting and the monetary reward is small or non-existent. You've got to just love filmmaking to put up with all the agony.

Charles Jones is a young artist who loves filmmaking. He began with a strong interest in painting and sculpture, but was soon seduced by the artistic potential of film, the 20th century art form. "I started as a painter and sculptor," explains Jones, "but I had always read a lot of film history and was a great movie buff as a kid. It really is *the* American art form. Film is the most accessible of all the arts, since anyone can put down a small amount of money to go into a theater and watch it. It's not like they have to buy a painting to have it on their wall. Film is something that everybody can participate in for not very much money.

A model shot from Jones' film showing the suit modified from one of Aurora's knight kits.

"My parents were children during the Great Depression of the 30s. It was often a struggle just to get food on the table, but on occasion they would vote whether to spend what money they had on the luxury of a chicken dinner or to see a movie. The choice of a movie always won. When times get tought people need their dreams."

Film has the potential to give substance to dreams in a way that no other medium can. It's a double bonus, not only can you bring your own dreams to life, you can show them to other people. Describing a dream in words is approximate at best, film can be the next best thing to creation itself, since you can create the illusion of reality.

"It was the motion and color of film that first attracted me . . . and the fact that film exists in a time frame. Within that time frame you can do anything," Jones believes. "Film combines color, motion and all the elements of theatre and music into a medium that gives you a very wide range of expression. Of course there is a price to pay for all that freedom—you have to know a lot about all of those fields. You have to do a lot of reading and learn a lot of technical skills to produce a film.

"There is a different kind of 'kick' with film. When you are making a painting you get a more immediate feedback from it. You stretch your canvas or whatever, pick up your stick with hairs on the end of it, take your pigment and you're ready to go. With film you are looking through a camera and you have to wait till it gets back from the lab

A live action scene from Charles Jones' *At Light* shows scratch-built suit.

to see if it came out all right. Then with editing, sound, etc. the feedback you get is sort of in stages as it develops. You have to develop a good sense of discipline to work in this medium. For me it took awhile. But I really don't mind all the constraints, because there is a certain freedom inside all of that that you can't get anywhere else."

Jones raised the money for his project, which he is filming in 16mm, by working long hours on an assembly line for a nearby automobile factory. "I worked and saved my money; so far, not counting my own time the film has cost more than $15,000. I didn't have the nerve to ask anybody to back me until I could prove to myself that what I was doing really had value. A friend of mine has a small production company in Indianapolis. I put up the money to rent a camera from Victor Duncan and he offered his professional services for free. That goes for everyone that has helped me on the film. It's quite a gamble to put out your entire savings for equipment and materials on a large scale—you're really putting yourself on the line.

"But you have to force yourself to do these kinds of things, because it is the only way you can extend your abilities. You have to have the nerve to take that step, to say, 'Look, we are going to invest this money in this and we are going to try to do it. That's the only way you can get anywhere.

Knights In Spacesuits?

"In 1976, I began designing the space suits. I knew from reading NASA articles that suits for deep space would have to be like armour to protect the wearer from hard radiation over long periods of use. Also, the life support systems would have to be larger than what was usually shown in SF films.

"I think space suits will be like automobiles. . . . Once many companies are making them, there will be all kinds of suits. Suits will be available with a variety of options depending upon the buyer's requirements and how much money he has to spend. Suits will indicate one's social status and, like cars, will fluctuate in style and color. Larry Niven has written about the possibility that a person's suit will have art embellishing it, declaring the wearer's personal taste.

"Some of my suits look like 15th century armour, for a very good reason—I used Aurora's knights kits to make them. Not because it was easier (it wasn't), but because I had been to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York and looked at their collection of armour. When you look at this stuff, you realize that there are only so many ways to cover the human form with rigid plates and that the Italians and Northern Europeans had it down to a fine art a very long time ago. . . ."

The medieval knights wouldn't recognize their space suited decendants at all, however. Jones has added things like worklights and his concept for communications antennae. Jones has laminated into the various curved surfaces of the armoured space suite miniaturized versions of long distance dish antennae to provide multi-directional reception capability. The helmets vary in design according to function. "I think bills are functional on helmets, because they provide a protective ridge for the faceplate in front of the visor and they shield the wearer's eyes from glare."

The entire film is designed to look at least plausibly accurate. "I don't think people want to see things that are so outlandish that they don't look functional." Jones continues. "In the world of the SF film as in many other areas beauty is function and functional things are beautiful. Speaking of helmets and NASA designs, I think the NASA helmets are just beautiful.

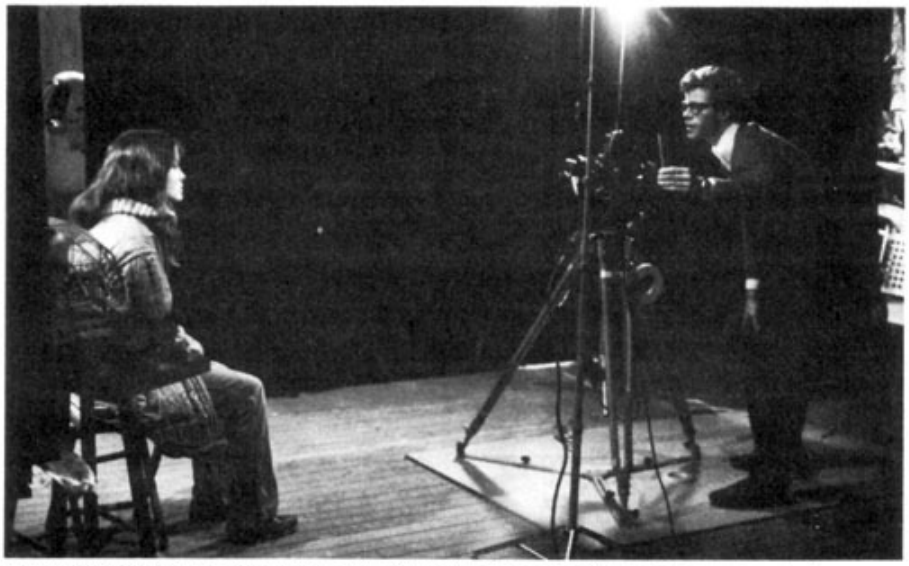
"In the future, I think helmets will probably have the capability to display maps or any kind of visual right on the visor, much like the liquid crystal numbers on a digital watch . . . they just seem to float in the glass.

"Most of the visual look of the film has been influenced by my knowledge of art history—some of the things I've done in painting and some the things my friends have done in painting. As far as the technology end of it goes, I have really tried to follow the literature I got from NASA and from reading other space books.

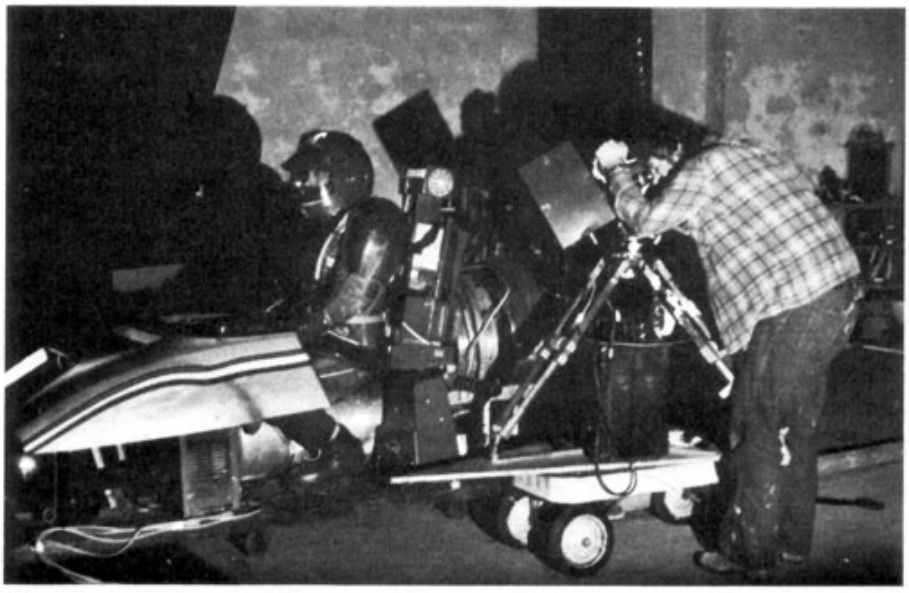
"What I think was striking about *Star Wars* was its unity of vision and style. It was sort of 'California funky,' but it was original. I think that's why it took off the way it did. I think George Lucas has taken myth and fairy tale and put it into a new framework."

One of the miniature space craft that Jones has constructed for the film is the small research scout *Einstein*, which has the capability to travel just *under* the speed of light. Jones explains the basis of the design.

"The ship was built utilizing knowledge gleaned from a transmission from an advanced culture. It sports a refined version of the Bussard ramjet—a hydrogen fusion drive, utilizing electromagnetic sails to gather free hydrogen. The craft is protected in flight by an electromagnetic particle field generated by the drive and dispersed through various strengths of grids (copper and brass colored tubing on the model), depending upon what needs protecting the most. The craft is virtually all-engine with the exception of the pilot's chamber (a



Most of Jones' equipment was homebuilt and engineered; the camera was rented.



PHOTOS: LARRY CASEY ALLEN

Set-up for sequence on rocket scooter with space suited actor.

Jones sets up a scene with the model of the "New Earth" in the background.

coffin-shaped form) which is without windows (cameras and viewscreens are used instead).

"The *Einstein* started out as a basic kite shape of honeycombed aluminum. Its greatest stylistic influence was the *Spirit of St. Louis* and Apollo's *Eagle* LEM. I wanted to make a craft that was scientifically plausible and that looked angular, ungainly, squat—much like the *Eagle* does. I wanted to avoid the white spaceship look, the overly dirty look because it's been done and, more important, since the craft is protected by a particle field, it doesn't need paint and it wouldn't get really grubby either. I wanted to use the copper and brass materials to warm up the color. Look at the *Eagle*. Gold foil casually wrapped on it . . . metal cladding so thin and weight conscious that it visibly ripples. . . . That's elegance!"

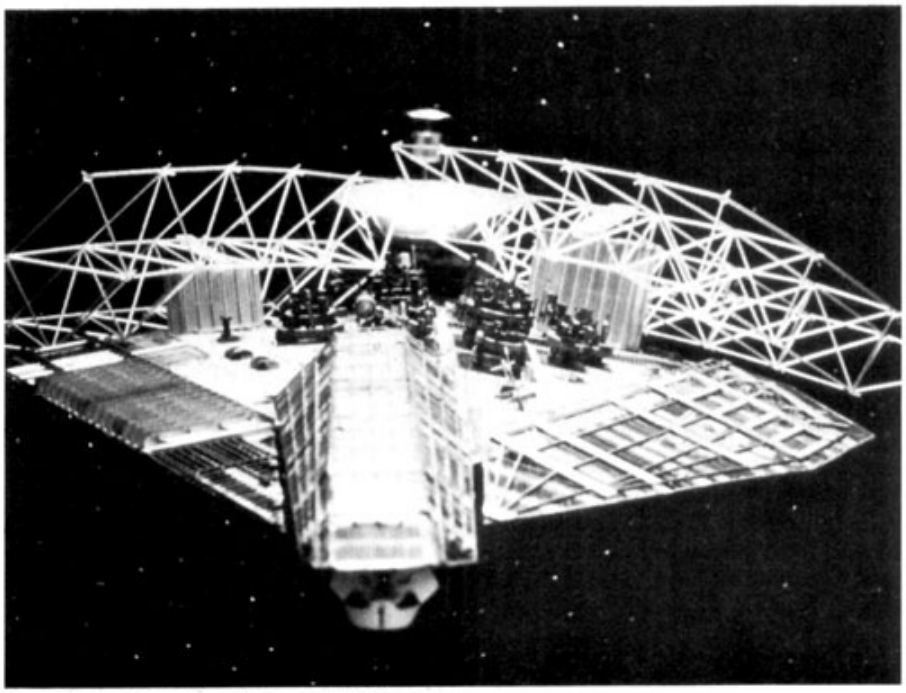
Jones believes that film, like any art form, should express your own personal feelings. The SF film has the ability to convey through poetic images the wonders of science. "I think that art can enhance the staggering quantity of information in science without being misleading," Jones adds "I think people go to see films and art, because it helps them put their own experience into a framework that they can deal with. This particular project developed from my feelings about technology. I extrapolated my own viewpoints about man's tools, the limitations of tools and the role tools play in man's struggle to survive in the universe. The story is about a hero. A hero is someone who is isolated, sometimes ridiculed, beaten down, but then is still able to gather strength and win. I think everyone has an affinity for that kind of image, because we are all struggling . . . whether we are filmmakers or whatever, any occupation. We are struggling to achieve our personal goals; we are all trying to survive.

"When you are making a film and telling a story you enhance the struggle and you enhance the victory and that in turn enhances the audiences response." Art has the power to evoke emotional responses from people—to make them feel and perhaps to think. Perhaps this emotional power of art is the reason people are drawn to it. The obvious example is the popularity of films during the depression. People flocked to the theaters to "escape." To escape a world in which thinking and feeling were grim; it allowed them to feel things that those difficult days did not allow; it permitted the relief of being able to feel comfort, joy and simple pleasure in existence; it gave people the emotional fuel to survive until the time came when these feelings would be part of their daily existence again. Such is the positive power of art and film as one of the most intensely involving mediums.

Do Your Homework!

The Neal Armstrong Museum is in Ohio and not very far away from where Jones lived in Indiana (about a four hour drive). It became one of the first places to go to see the real thing as far as space hardware is concerned. Jones believes that making a good SF film requires a lot of homework. "I looked at the space suits and machinery in the museum. I watched all the Apollo and Skylab films available, in particular the 16mm films that were actually taken in space. Then books and magazine articles—including STARLOG and FUTURE LIFE. You just have to do the research; you have to do your homework. Its important to have the information, because you have to know what you're doing, particularly if you are going to make it fascinating for someone else."

Depicting alien civilization and hardware, particularly alien hardware that is supposed to be far in advance of our own, is always a challenge. Generally speaking, the more abstract the design, the better off you'll be. Jones' solution was to go to abstract imagery, which is perhaps the logical choice for someone whose background is in painting and sculpture. "Pure light and pure color can be very powerful and beautiful. There are several filmmakers that realize this, so I've been working along lines that are not so different in principle from many other filmmakers, but we all have different ways of doing things. I think that Douglas Trumbull's imagery in *Andromeda Strain* when the scientists are looking at the E.T. virus in its abstract geometric form is a particularly powerful image—both the coloration and



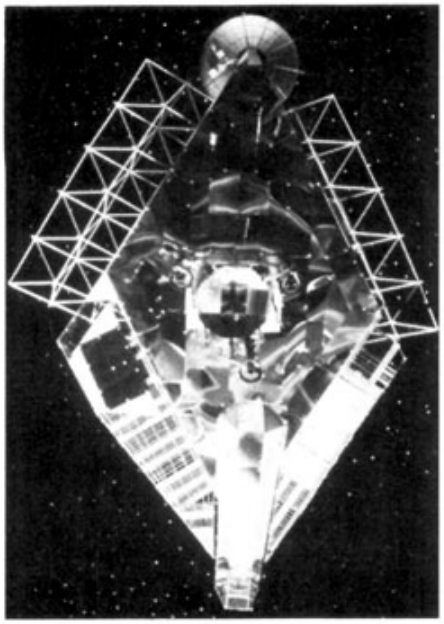
Two views of the *Einstein*, the sub light speed ship in *At Light*. Jones' design influences were the *Spirit of St. Louis* and the *Eagle* LEM.

the way it moved. *Andromeda Strain* is a very underrated film."

In order to manipulate pure light and pure color to depict the alien forms Jones used animation. "A lot of the animation techniques I've made use of are very old. Because I don't have a lot of expensive equipment, I've developed a lot of new techniques for applying the old ways. When you are making a film, especially on a low budget, you need to remember that its not the tools that are the most important thing—its the image, even if your tools are rather on the primitive side, if you have patience and go with it sometimes it works. But you have to have that original image in your mind.

"After much trial and error I was very pleased with the final models, the miniatures and the pure energy alien artifacts. In *2001* Kubrick used a very dense black object for the alien artifact. I wanted to stay away from that, to take a new approach. Then in *CE3K* Douglas Trumbull combined hardware and light, but I wanted to go beyond that. I wanted something that just looked like structured energy that didn't have any sort of hardware look to it at all. Think of minimalist abstract painting. Structured energy in light and color implies vast superiority to our tools—it looks alien and very advanced."

The problems of the low budget independent filmmaker usually revolve around money. The constant agony of deciding how to spend the few dollars you have and how to raise more to pay the endless stream of bills can serve as a stimulus to the imagination. "My philosophy is that you get yourself in hotwater and you keep yourself in hotwater," Jones reveals. "Then you are *forced* to extend yourself. You can't be afraid to ask for help. And just because



some big guys use a lot of expensive equipment, doesn't mean you can't try something your own way. I certainly don't have a lot of money, but that doesn't mean that I can't do it or can't try. If you have your back up against a wall and you're forced to think of other ways to do things, sometimes those new ways aren't bad at all and sometimes it turns out looking pretty good.

"To raise money for the project I worked on an assembly line. When the auto business took a down turn I was laid off. But I had enough seniority so that benefits continued for time. I had money to spend and could work fulltime on the film. If I hadn't worked full time in the factory for 2½ years it wouldn't have been possible; sometimes I put in 12 hours shifts just to get the overtime. I was living in an old school house that didn't have running water, but only cost me $50 a month. I cut down on my comfortable environment, but I knew that later it would enable me to do what I really wanted to do."

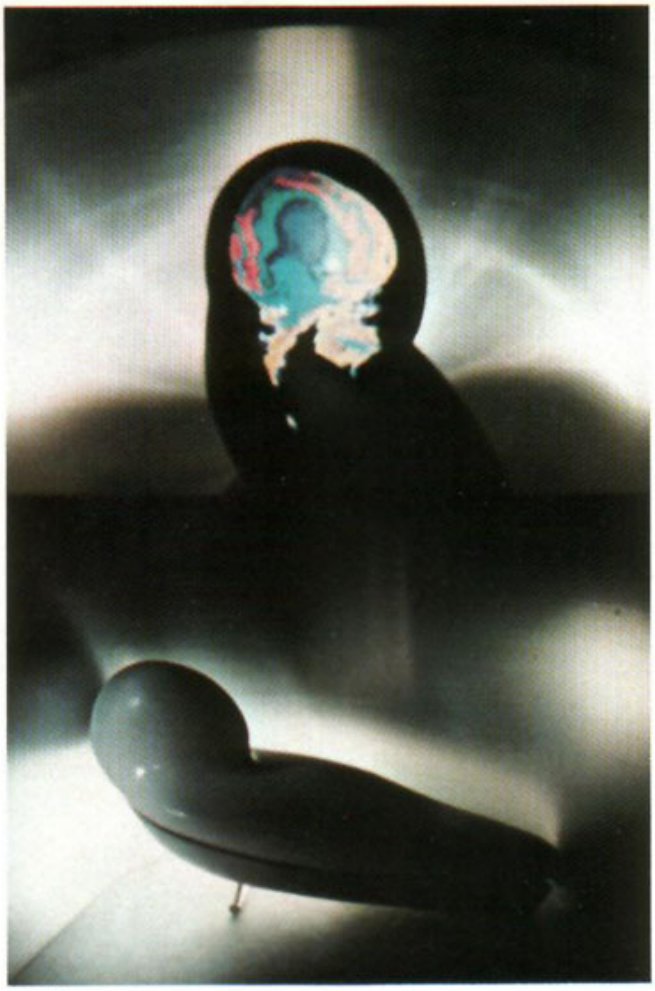
"I believe in the 'American Myth' that says if you really try and you've got good ideas and work hard enough, then when you've got the goods in your hands you can walk in and say, 'Look, I'm not really anybody and I don't know anybody, but I've got these ideas and I'd like just a few minutes to show what these ideas are.' I still believe that. But you can't just have ideas, you've got to work hard . . . and you've got to do without sometimes.

"If you have good ideas and you work hard, you can make it. If I didn't believe that, I wouldn't have done it."

Before setting out with his reel under his arms to major corporations to look for underwriting, Jones began locally by working through the programming director at his local PBS-TV affiliate. The programming director was able to give him the leads and introductions he needed to make contact in Washington and New York. His efforts did not go unrewarded. After pounding on a number of doors in Washington he found someone who would agree to put $15,000 in matching funds, if he could get other private sources to invest. Jones emphasizes the importance of first looking in your own backyard before pounding on doors in the big cities. "I wrote letters and I made phone calls, first. If it hadn't been for my local program director here at home, I wouldn't have been able to 'play ball' with the people in Washington and that's very important. It's very important to play ball in the local ball park first and get the help you can locally . . . even if it's a little ballpark. It's always important to have that interaction with the people at home. Then when you get up your courage and you think you've got something to show somebody you can go out and show them. If you have people at home that are behind you, you can do it.

Jones is back in Indiana, as we go to press looking for private investors, so that he will qualify for the PBS matching grant. He supports himself on the income from a rural newspaper route that covers several hundred square miles. "It's very interesting, I used to have one when I was a little kid. The great thing about it is that I have to get up at about 2:30 in the morning and I'm finished at 5:30. Then I can put on my suit and go talk to some of the companies in town looking for underwriters to help complete my film.

"Sometimes my head is just bursting with ideas, but I have to temper that with common sense. If I have a great idea, I'll write it down and put it away for a little while to see if it will stand the test of time. I won't put money into it until I think its really worth it. I'll make drawings and write—do the things that don't cost very much to do. There's no sense in taking a big leap unless you've really got something that's good . . . something that's original. It takes years. I'm sure its taken years for anybody that's made it with any amount of success. You can't be impatient; you've got to have confidence in yourself. That's all there is to it. It's simple, really." CM



"I am interested in images which visually convey a beautiful 'perfect' technology that is beyond the reach of our present-day tools. The images themselves do not have to be 'perfect;' I cannot make them so, nor can any other filmmaker no matter how sophisticated. One can only make an image that roughly indicates the 'perfect' ... hints at a sense of perfection."

Left: Charles W. Jones' animation of the alien artifact that is broadcasting via neutrino transmission to Earth or any sufficiently sophisticated civilization.

Right: Jones' animation of the alien cube ship capitalizes on his love of color, form and motion. Note the movement of the color and light from frame to frame.

Above: The pilot that travels aboard the *Einstein* to the alien artifact has to have his body drastically altered to survive the trip. Nearly the entire body is sacrificed the pilot becomes a brain in a box, so as to require very little life support. The above illustrations are 16mm frame blow-ups.

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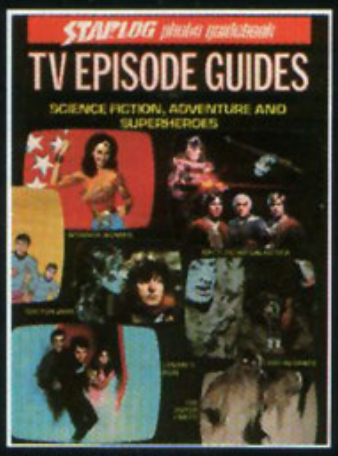

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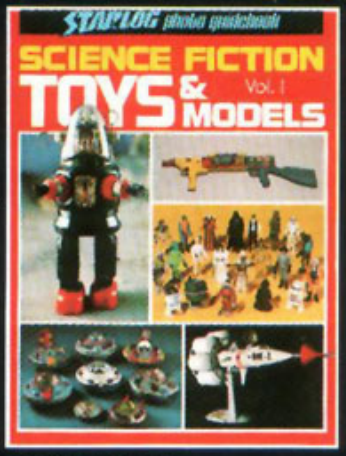

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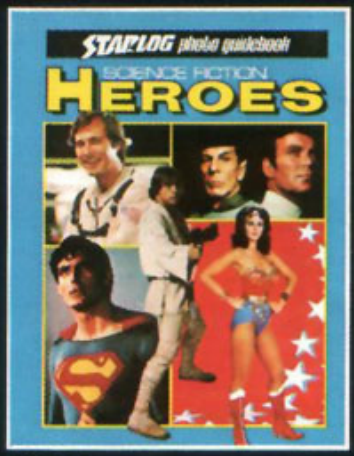

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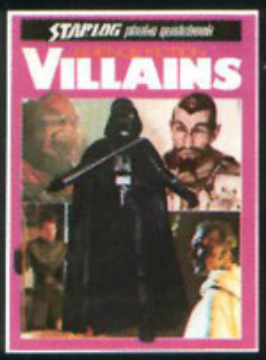

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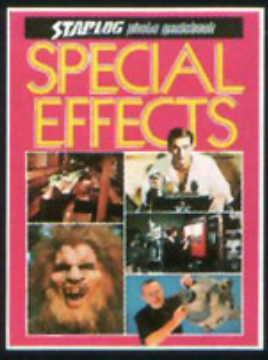

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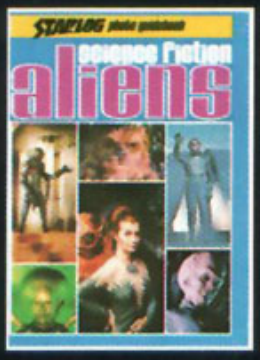

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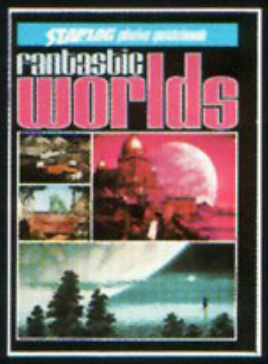

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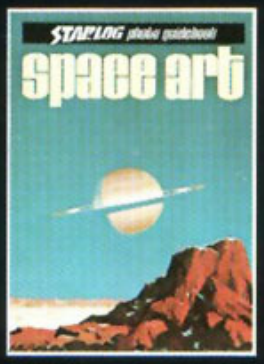

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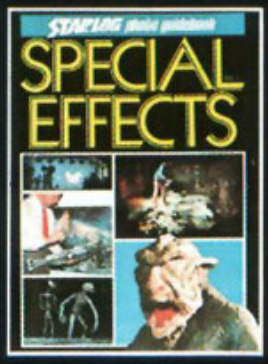

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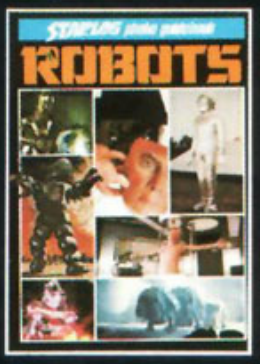

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