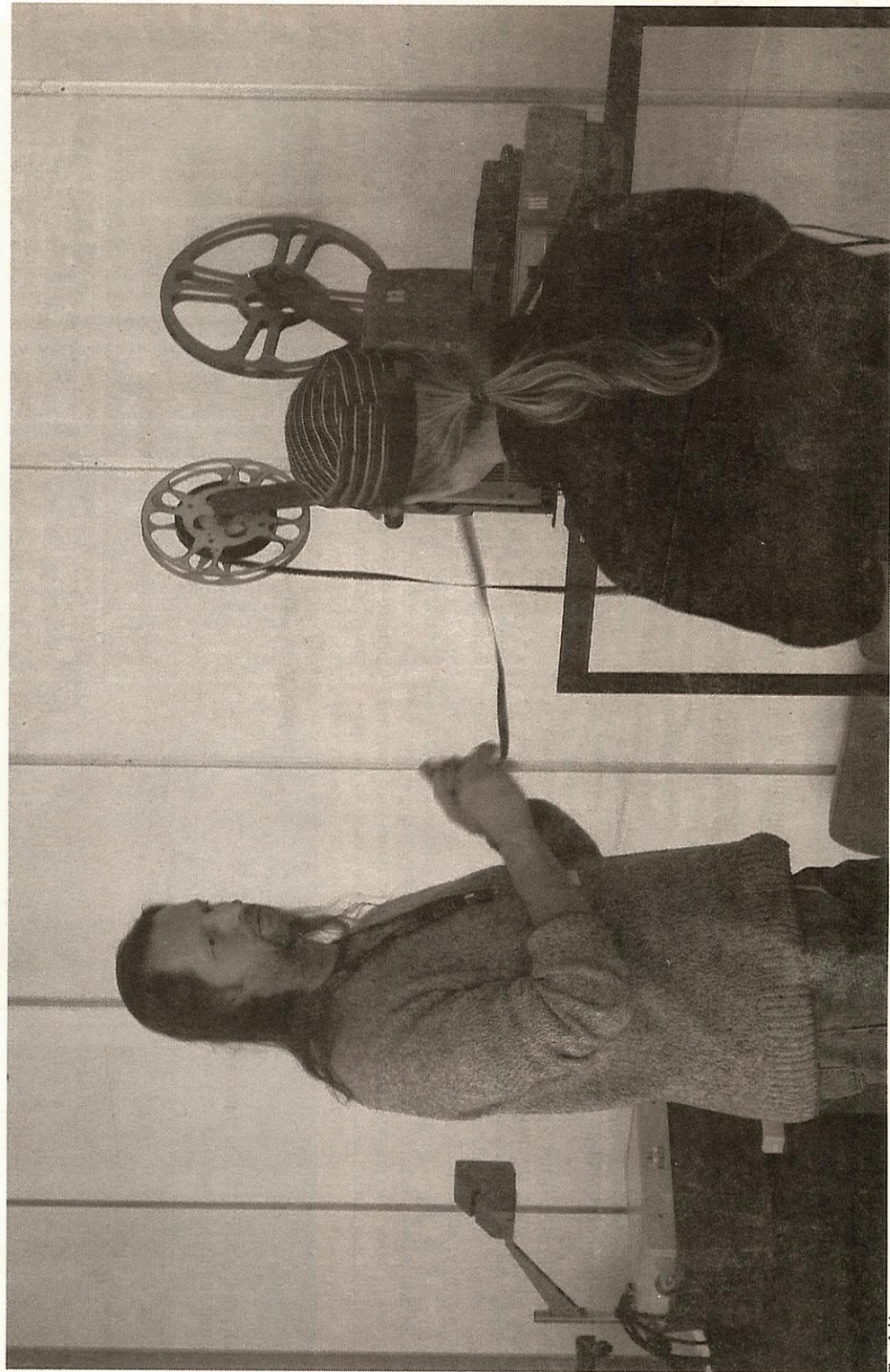


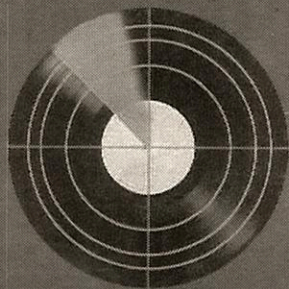
Do-it-yourself cinema

Terrible Film Festival showcases student filmmakers at their most vulnerable



Troy Julé

Gerald Saul does his thing loading traditional 16mm film into a projector



Arts Radar

Schoolhouse
University Theatre
Nov. 3-5
7:30 p.m.
\$10 for students; free
with student ID

**You're A Good Man,
Charlie Brown**
Schumiatcher Theatre,
Mackenzie Art Gallery
Nov. 3-6
7:30 p.m.; 2 p.m. on
Sunday
\$15 for students

Black Mastiff
O'Hanlons
Nov. 4
7 p.m.
Free admission

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Performance and
Opening Reception
First Nations University
Nov. 4
7:30 p.m.
Free admission

Pass The Hat

Nov. 4.
9 p.m.
Pay what you want

Zachary Lucky, Carly
Maicher, and Danny
Goertz
Creative City Centre
Nov. 5
8:30 p.m.
\$8 advance; \$10 door

Halcyon Chamber
Choir's Fire and Ice
Knox Metropolitan
Church
Nov. 6
8:30 p.m.
\$10 for students

Rich Aucoin
The Distrikt
Nov. 7

Tom Wilson with
Carleton Stone
The Exchange
Nov. 8
8 p.m.
\$15 advance; \$20 door

Combat Improv
The Exchange
Nov. 9
8:30 p.m.
\$5

Terrible Film Festival
Creative City Centre
Nov. 4
8 p.m.
Free admission

"I've never had a good film festival," said a chuckling Gerald Saul, a professor in media production and studies at the University of Regina. Saul's decided to roll with the punches; this Friday, the students in his Directing the Experimental Film course are putting on the tenth annual Terrible Film Festival.

The focus of the Terrible Film Festival is not so much creating conventionally enjoyable films, but ones that challenge and engage the audience in ways they haven't before.

"Some of them are good, and some of them aren't," Saul said with a laugh. "We just live with it. This particular festival is mostly about breaking rules. I've been saying in this course that we can break every rule as long as you have a reason."

The Terrible Film Festival is much smaller and quite different than traditional film festivals.

"A lot of film festivals are very big. They require advertising, various promotion, communication with people in other cities, and bringing together all of these things," Saul said. "We're dispensing with all of that, and we're going to just get our films, and ready or not here they come. Let's go out and book a small venue, put a projector in the middle of the room, and show them."

The low-tech films and do-it-yourself nature of the festival likely won't attract large crowds, but that's not a large concern for Saul.

"We're not worrying about making a profit with it; these are films that

will never make a profit," he said. "They're not commercial films at all. They're not the sort of things that people are paying money to go see in most cases. I still think they can be enjoyed."

"Even if the enjoyment doesn't come from the screen, it comes from the event. It comes from everybody coming together in one room and laughing and cheering and mocking and whatever they're going to do. It's about not getting caught up in thinking if it's going to affect your future or career in film. Let's use our skills to have some fun and share something with some people."

One of the goals of the festival is to make students comfortable with imperfections and problems with their work.

"One of the main purposes is to have some pride in what you're doing, to be able to go out in public and say, 'This work may not be perfect.' In fact, it's the antithesis of perfect work," Saul said. "It can't be refined all that well because it's made using so many chaotic principles; by nature it's going to be imperfect work. The students have to rise above that and say, 'I'm going to show this anyways. I'm going to go out in public and show this work even though it is inherently flawed.'"

Saul believes that this attitude is necessary to develop for a future in filmmaking where problems and complications inevitably arise.

"The reality is they're never going to be able to make perfect work," Saul said. "You never have enough money. You never have the right conditions. You never have everything right that you could say, 'I would never change a thing in this.'"

"Hopefully it will get closer to perfection than in this class, but they can't have perfection. This way they start to have to suppress their ego a little bit and still be proud of their"

film. I still think an audience can enjoy something that isn't perfect."

The films in the Terrible Film Festival are all shot with film. This may seem obvious, but it is actually becoming less and less common in the age of digital photography, which is one of the reasons that Saul started the festival.

"Once you get out of second year, you don't really have to use cameras anymore. It's all digitally based. Using film is pretty neat because you just don't get to use it very often," said Luke Patterson, a fifth-year media production student.

Saul noted this emphasis on digital divorces students from the medium that started it all.

"You learn a lot from eavesdropping on students. I was listening to students talking one day, and one guy was saying that he was a fourth-year film student at the time, and he's never shot a roll of film. That just hurt me because I love film. That's what I learned to use," Saul said. "I thought that at the very least, I'll make sure my students shoot a little bit of film. Even if it wasn't a good film they made, at least they made a film."

Furthermore, the films are all hand-processed. Generally, films are sent to a laboratory to be carefully developed with chemicals and machines, but they were done by the students' hands in a darkroom at the

university and then dried in the sun. The films are also manipulated in other ways such as applying colour directly to the film.

"There are scratches, and gouges, and problems. Every time you see a scratch on the screen, that's something that the filmmaker's handmade," said Saul. "The hand of the filmmaker is evident on the screen at every moment."

Despite being filmed for the "big screen", some of these experimental films won't even be displayed on a screen at all. In the past, films have been shown on cloth, floors, ceilings, bodies, and reflected surfaces.

"I know that one person is going to project onto cloth or leaves or something," said Saul. "Another couple people are undecided as to exactly how they're going to be projected."

Doing this further plays on the aforementioned notion of the Terrible Film Festival's attempt to challenge cinema.

"[We want to] wake up an audience and show them that all the things they expect from cinema aren't necessarily absolutes," said Saul. "Just because for the last 100 years we've been presenting things on a screen in a rectangle doesn't mean that they have to be on a rectangular screen, or that they're run at twenty-four frames per second, or in colour, or have a story."

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U of R professor in media production and studies