

# Burning remains one in a time

## The Terrible Film Festival is back for another round.

destiny kaus  
a&c writer

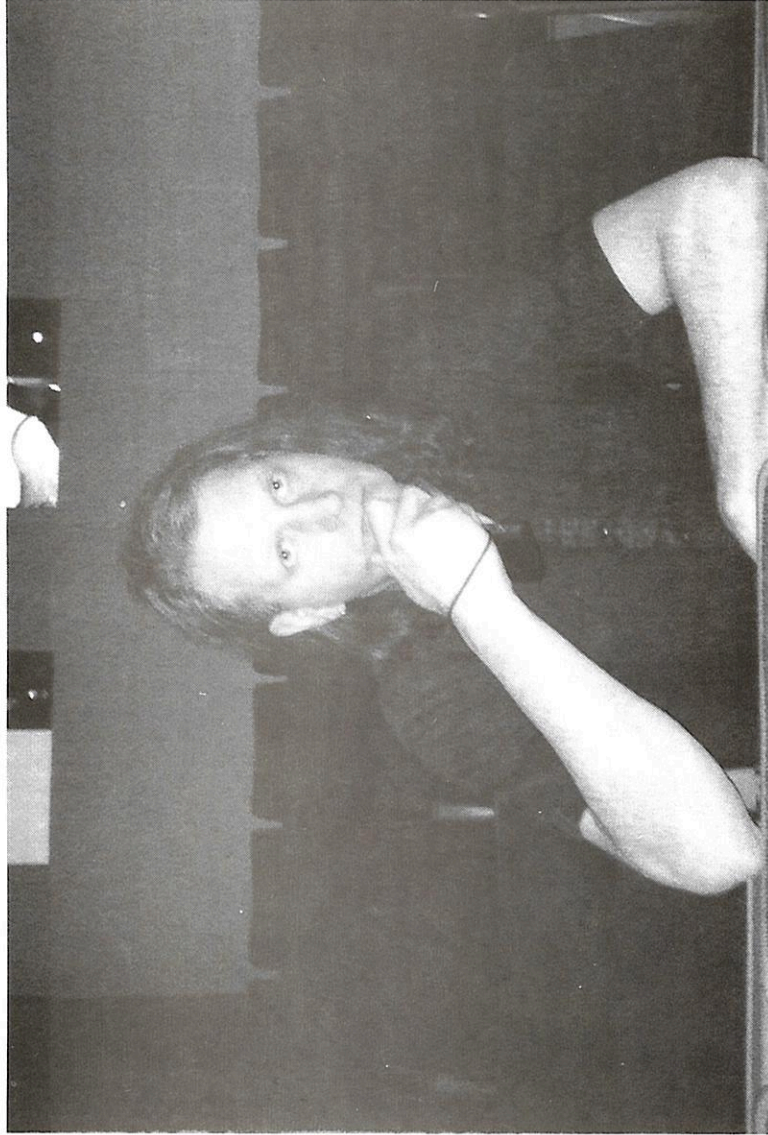
Hmmm, what to do this upcoming Sunday? Who knows? Instead of sitting around in my pink cat onesie, eating ice cream, and avoiding doing my homework, I might just check out The Terrible Film Festival put on by Gerald Saul's Film 412 class. And why, one might ask, would I spend my evening watching terrible films? Well, because this event is going to be free, dang awesome, and freaking hilarious!

The Terrible Film Festival got its start back in 1999 when Professor Gerald Saul inherited the Film 412 class (experimental film production) from another professor who left last minute. This class had already started to plan a festival of sorts before their teacher ditched them, so Saul took it upon himself to lead them in organizing a festival focused around their own work.

But, here's the catch: students had to use real film. Yes, real film, the kind one develops in a dark room and runs through an old-school projector. I didn't even know this stuff still existed.

Saul says, "This is a way to shoot film, develop it ourselves ... and show it on film with an old projector making the clack clack clack noise."

Ah, such an antique, rhythmic sound that can transport an audience back in time to the early days



geraldsaul.blogspot.com

### Gerald Saul, attempting to make a film spontaneously combust in the gate.

of film. Beautiful. After the first festival in 1999, students realized their films were not turning out the way they planned. In fact, they sucked. Everything from underexposed images to blank images plagued these poor students' films. But, once they accepted this harsh reality that their experimental films were awful, they came up with the idea to call their festival The Terrible Film Festival. "Then they got really engaged

with it because then the embarrassment about the films became something to rejoice," says Saul.

A hopefully bountiful audience will gather at 7:30 p.m. at the Artful Dodger on Nov. 10 to view these terrible films. Who cares if

hours of hard work don't turn out that night? No one! The more awful the film, the better. Students get a good laugh, the audience loves it, and Saul can see how his students think on their feet.

"Part of [their mark] is based on the film itself, so I can look at that outside of the event," says Saul. "But then part of it is on the presentation. So how do they respond to it not working out? If it breaks in the gate, can they do shadow puppets on the screen? Can they fill the three minutes they're required to fill?"

So, while students freak out when their film starts on fire and scramble to fill this three-minute time slot, Saul sits and watches in glee, hoping for the worst.

"I love when projectors aren't quite running right. If we're lucky, one of them will jam and it'll melt in the gate. It's the best image in the world when it melts on the screen, the scream of horror from the filmmaker, and almost the applause from the crowd. Hopefully that'll happen."

I hope this happens, too, because, snap, that would make for an exhilarating evening. Who knew terrible films could be so exciting?

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Gerald Saul