

cameras. Not surprisingly, the work being done by amateurs with Super-8 cameras has attracted a great deal of attention, particularly in professional 16mm circles, and there have been increasing demands for a range of equipment and facilities needed to undertake full scale motion picture production with the Super-8 medium.

A serious handicap for the professional has been the lack of synchronous sound recording facilities. Amateur movie makers, for the most part, have been satisfied with silent pictures; the more aggressive had a magnetic stripe applied to the edited films to record sound over the pictures. Some cameras were supplied with an attachment putting out electrical pulses that could be carried to a separate ¼-in. tape recorder by a cable, so as to allow synchronous picture and sound recordings to be made. At the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Prof. Richard Leacock developed crystal-controlled double-system equipment that eliminated the cable between camera and recorder. Then in 1974 Eastman Kodak Co. announced that Super-8 camera films with magnetic stripe would be available in 50-ft. cartridges. Already several manufacturers are producing single-system cameras to take advantage of this very important breakthrough. Now the Super-8 filmmaker can choose from a wide range of silent cameras, or a single-system camera using striped film for the sound, or separate picture and sound recording with the sound recorded synchronously on ¼-in. tape. Available also is a great variety of editing equipment including multiple track flat bed Super-8 editing tables.

For the amateur, Super-8 Kodachrome film offers the advantage that the cartridges can be returned to the manufacturer for processing, simply by dropping the exposed film in the nearest postoffice box. Kodachrome is a reversal material that gives colour pictures of excellent quality. Also available in 50-ft. cartridges are the Ektachrome films that can be processed by commercial motion picture laboratories, thus saving the time needed for shipping the film to the manufacturer for processing. For still greater convenience, the Eastman Kodak Co. has developed and put on the market a small Super-8 processing machine, completely automatic in operation and designed for use in an office environment. This machine, the Kodak Supermatic-8 processor, with a dry-to-dry time of only 13 minutes, gives

the Super-8 filmmaker almost immediate access to the pictures and sound from a camera.

Learning to Use the Super-8 Medium

Here we come to a parting of the ways with conventional 16mm or 35mm production practices. The normal course to take would be to make film prints from the edited originals, and use these for projection and distribution while the originals are retained in a safe place. Making prints from Super-8 originals is rather difficult, and some degradation of picture quality cannot be avoided. Besides, there is the cost of printing to be considered, especially when optical effects are needed. A more promising course to take is to transfer the edited originals to video tape with relatively inexpensive helical scan equipment, and one of the popular videocassette formats. There are now several ways to make the transfers. The simplest method is to utilize the Kodak Supermatic Film Videoplayer, a low cost semi-automatic device that gives a standard colour video output from Super-8 films recorded at either 18 or 24 frames/sec. Better picture

quality can be obtained by projecting the films on a translucent screen and picking up the images with a television studio camera.

Taking the electronic transfer route, all of the effects normally available in the television studio control room can be incorporated in the videotape recordings. Once a transfer to videotape has been made the tape can be played back into television picture monitors or receivers for viewing, by a simple video patching procedure.

For a long time, some filmmakers have been making derogatory remarks about television's small picture display. This attitude can be readily understood and appreciated by anyone who has been involved in producing the overwhelming wide-screen picture and sound presentations in theatres. But television displays have their merits too – although on an entirely different scale. If we can begin to think of television as an intimate medium for small numbers of viewers, an entirely different presentation approach can be taken. And here Super-8 really comes into its own, because it is not suitable or appropriate for producing large screen displays. Super-8 is at its best as an intimate communications medium, starting with the camera, and the man behind the camera with the ideas. □

EQUIPMENT NEWS



5.7mm f/1.8 Super Wide Angle Lens in Arri Mount.

A new 5.7mm f/1.8 super wide angle lens for Arriflex 16 has been developed by Century Precision Cine/Optics of North Hollywood. It is now available for Eclair and CP-16R

bayonet mount cameras. The lens is only 2 ins. in diameter, the smallest ever achieved for a lens of this type, and it weighs only 7 ounces. The angle of view is 100 deg. and optical resolution is 260 lines/mm. Price is \$575.00. For further information write the manufacturer at 10661 Burbank Ave., North Hollywood, C.A.

New Tyler Camera Mount

Tyler Helicopter Camera Systems now has available its new vibrationless 35mm B-2 Middle Mount, equipped with Arriflex 11C and Angenieux 25:250mm zoom lens.

This mount, which can be used in copters, airplanes, boats and other moving vehicles, features new control handles with contour grips and plug in modular electronics which control camera, variable speed focus and super smooth variable speed zoom.

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