

Cecil B.

De Mause



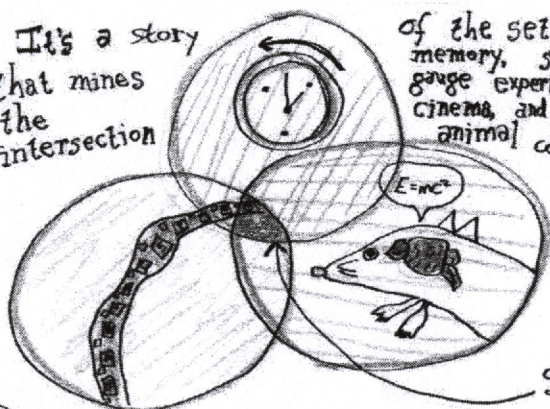
by John Akre

1 We intercept this
feeding frenzy for
a tale, strange,
twisty, and true.



It's a story
that mines
the
intersection

of the sets of
memory, small
gauge experimental
cinema, and domestic
animal cognition.



②

story

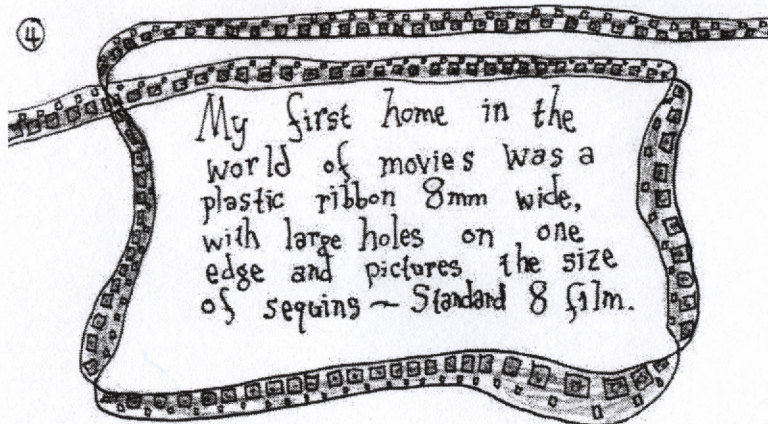
At the age
of nine, I
began in earnest
my long affair
with moving
images.



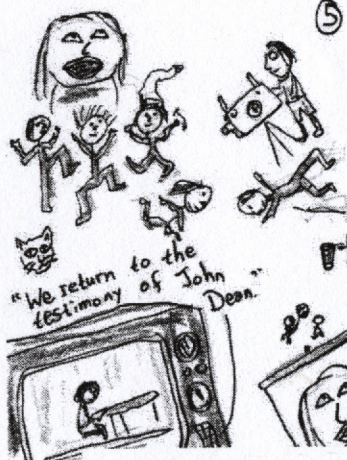
③

200/05

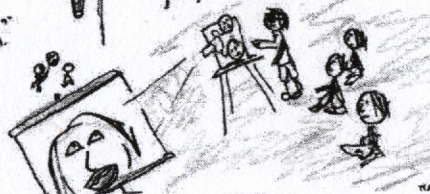
④



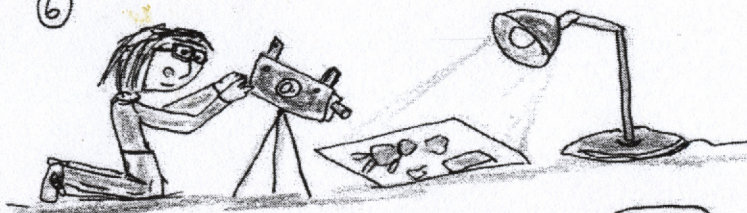
⑤



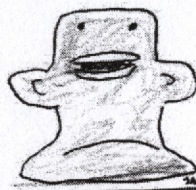
On 8mm, I made crazy, fragmented shows with my brother, sisters, and friends as the world played on.



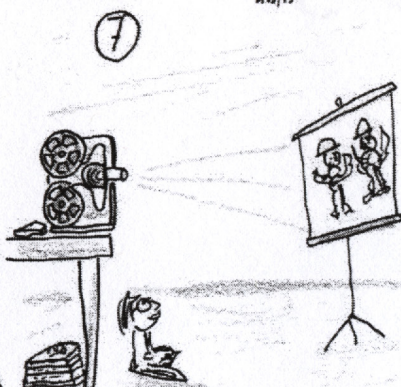
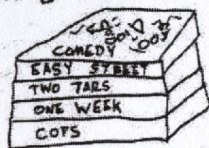
⑥



With 8mm, I could make paper cut-outs move, and small clay figures breathe.

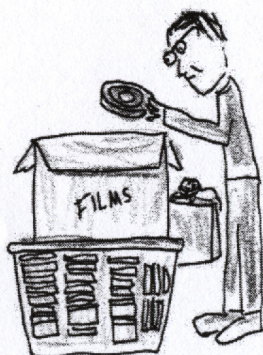


I spent my paper route and lawn mowing money on 8mm copies of silent movies, insane silent comedies, which I loved.

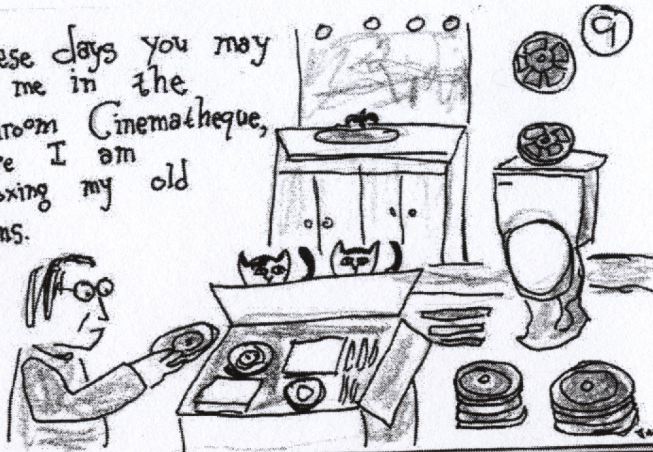


1/1/15

8 This motion picture portion of my childhood has spent most of the last few decades in cardboard boxes and plastic bins, sometimes stored in damp basements.

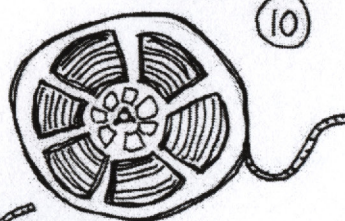


These days you may find me in the Bathroom Cinematheque, where I am unboxing my old films.

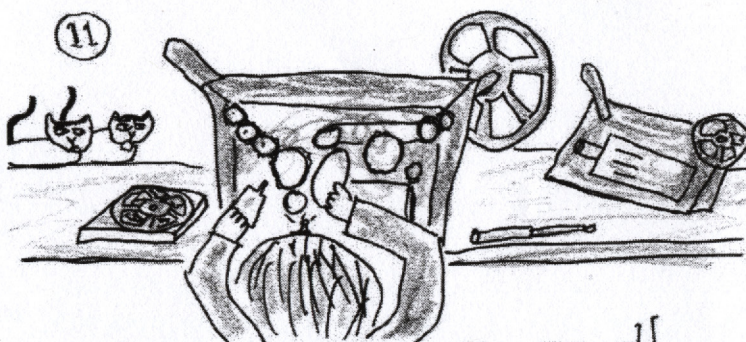
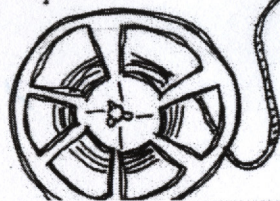


8/1/15

Just looking at
some of the
reels evokes a
vivid stream of
moving pictures
in my brain.

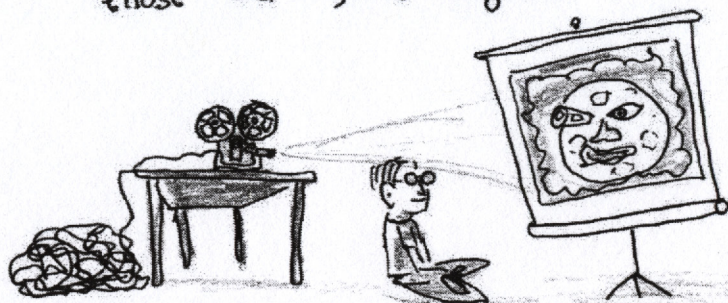


Other reels:
not so much.



I have been turning up my old
projectors with a drop of 3 in 1 oil here
and a new rubber belt there...

So I can watch
those old films again.



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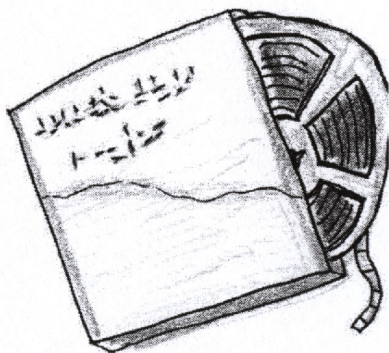


One unfamiliar reel
had yellow stains
on the box
along with
dried brown
nuggets.



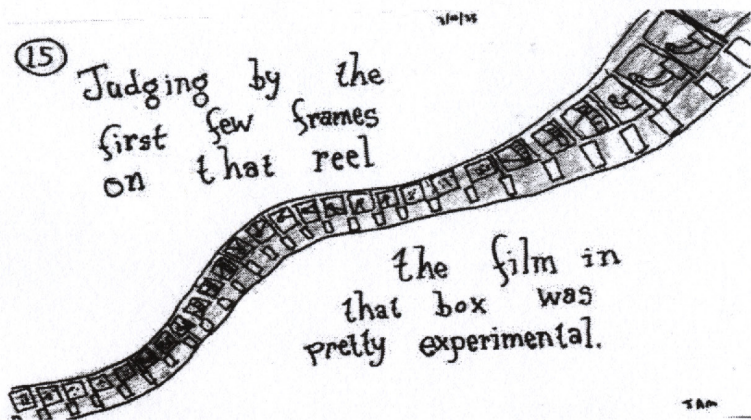
14

Did the
pattern on
the box
suggest written
language, or some
advanced symbol
system?

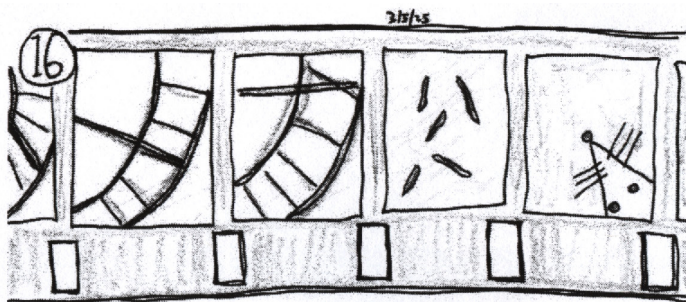


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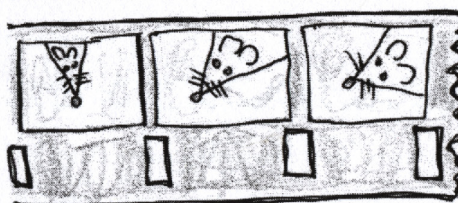
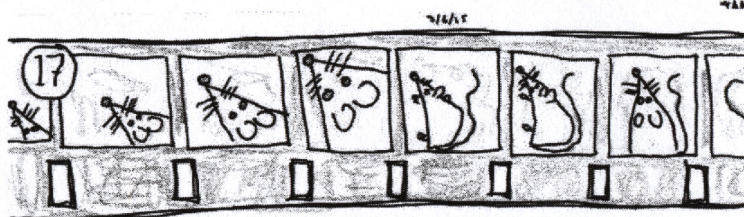
Judging by the
first few frames
on that reel



the film in
that box was
pretty experimental.



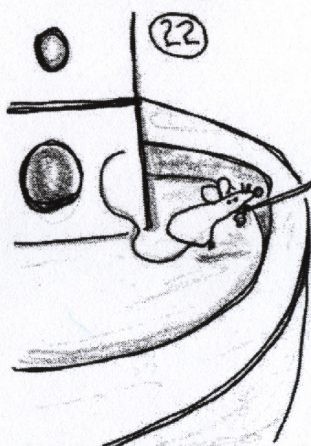
It was all strangely familiar,
but it wasn't my work.



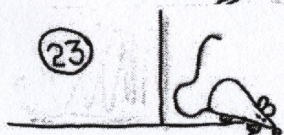
But the mouse...
the mouse in the
movie brought
memories.

⑮ Mozzarella was the 7th
Grade Science Class Mouse -
somehow, I got to take him home.

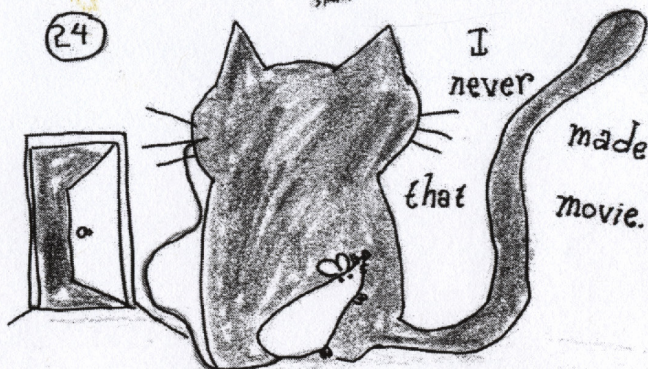
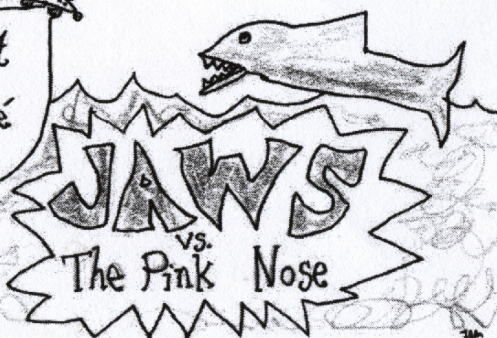




So I could
make an
8mm movie
in which he
would be a
boat captain...



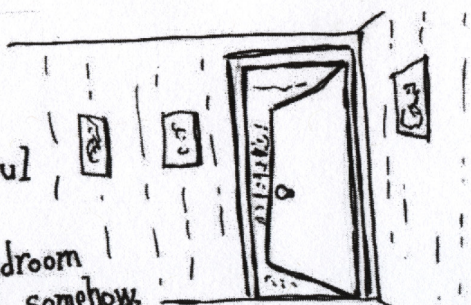
In pursuit
of a
paper-maché
shark.



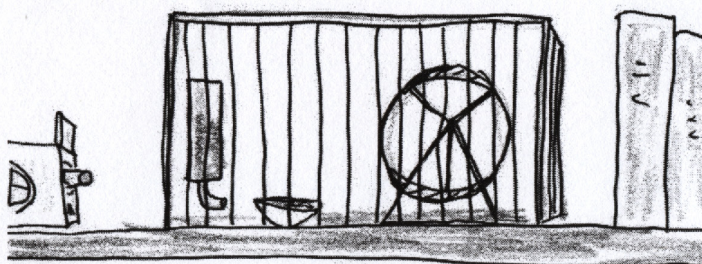
I
never
made
that
movie.

(25)

I was
always
so careful
to close
my bedroom
door, but somehow,
that day, the door was open.



(26) Mozzarella, who didn't like to
stay in his cage,
was nowhere to be seen.



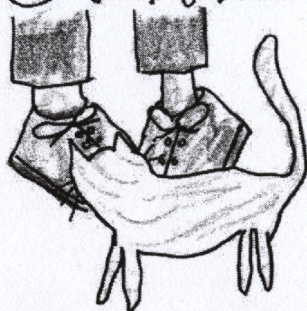
Shirley 1964

(27) I got the story



through the
family grapevine—

Felix the cat
had dropped a
lifeless Mozzarella
on my
father's shoes.



Shirley 1964

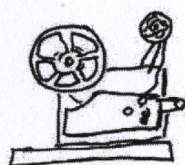
(28)

And here I have
this reel of
film with
"mouse
auteur"
written

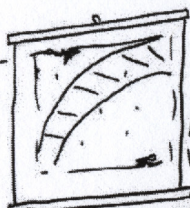


all over
it.

(29)

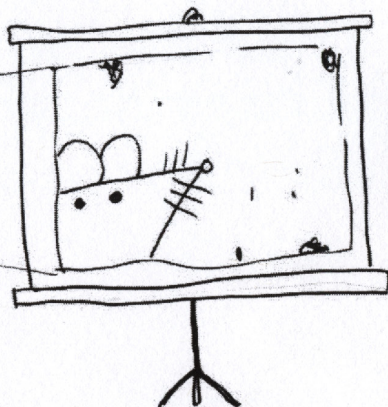


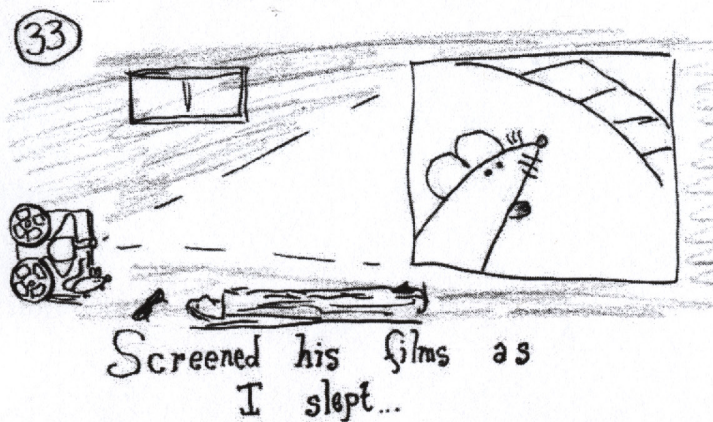
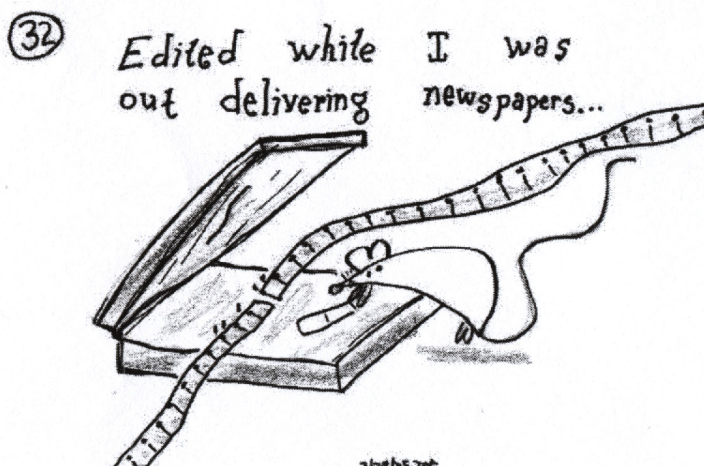
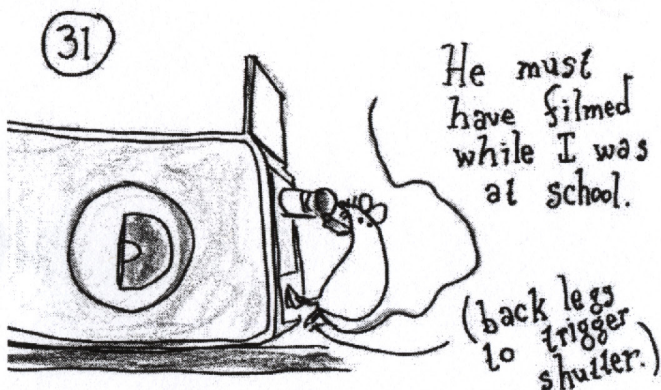
And now
we're
watching
it...



(30)

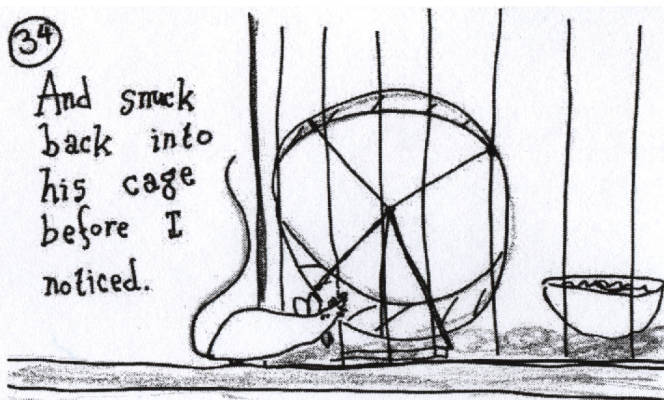
Cinema
at a pulse
rate of
500 to 700
beats per
minute (mouse
hearts are fast!)





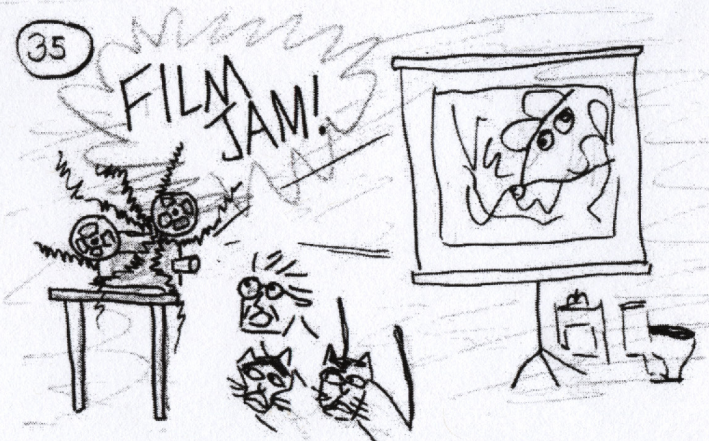
(34)

And smuck
back into
his cage
before I
noticed.

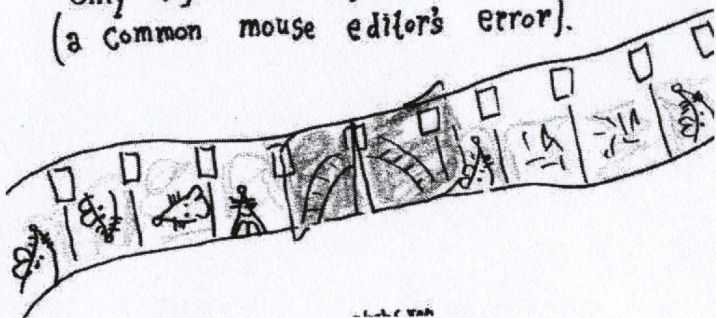


(35)

FILM
JAM!

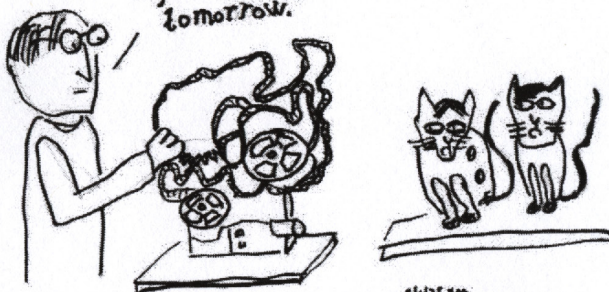


(36) The film exploded in the
projector because Mozzarella had
only taped the splices on one side
(a common mouse editor's error).

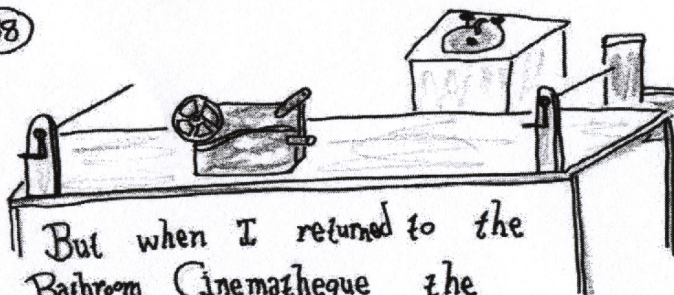


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"This is going to take some time to repair ~ I'll work on it tomorrow."



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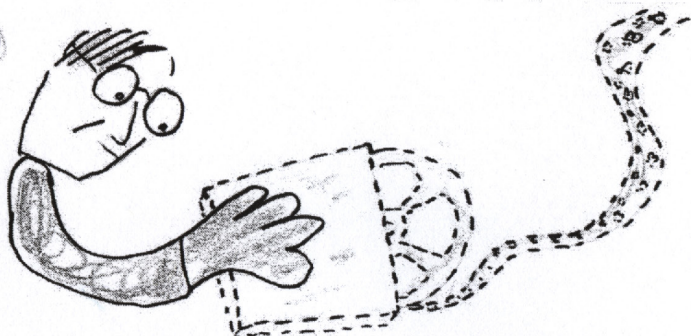
But when I returned to the Bathroom Cinematheque the next morning, the film was nowhere to be seen.

39

"Buster, Max, do you know anything about this?"



40

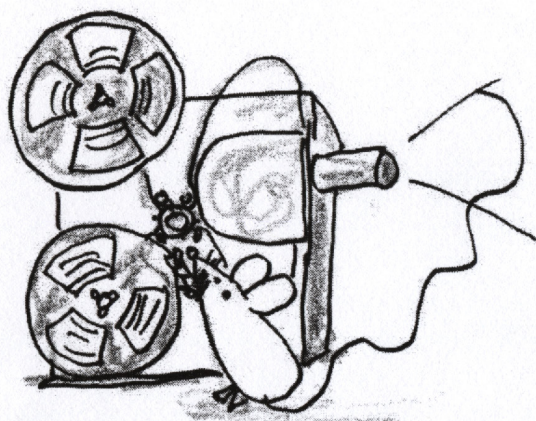


I looked all around, but I
could not find Mozzarella's
film.

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old 20 Jan



This has been a daily drawing comic made from February 16 - April 6, 2025 in Louisville, KY, USA. Special thanks to Beth Peloff, Max, and Buster for their patience and encouragement.

www.johnakre.com

Made with only Analog Intelligence