Moving Image Preservation Educational Programs

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http://www.tisch.nyu.edu/preservation

History of Moving Image Preservation

- Learning through apprenticeships
- Each institution does things their own way
- “Professionalism” is a relatively recent idea
- 1990s studies recommending offering MAs to help standardize good practices and professionalize the field

3 Educational Programs recently established

- Jeffrey Selznick School (1 year, no academic degree)
- UCLA (2 years, Masters degree)
- NYU (2 years, Masters degree)

NYU’s MIAP: A curriculum for studying Moving Image Archiving & Preservation

- Film History/Historiography and Film Style
- Conservation, Preservation, Storage, and Management
- Legal Issues and Copyright
- Laboratory Techniques
- Moving Image Cataloging
- Curatorial Work and Museum Studies
- Programming
- New Media and other Digital Technologies
- Access to Archival Holdings

Interdisciplinary; students need to

- learn the context in which each of these cultural artifacts were made
- know the history of changing formats
- need to be scientists and technologists who understand:
  - the process of color changes
  - how certain materials become too brittle to provide a flat image for copying
  - how magnetic particles are laid on videotapes and what causes the various types of deterioration
  - how digital computer files link and interact, and how certain compression algorithms cause various types of loss so that they understand the problems of compressed and hyper-linked digital works
- understand that preservation does not exist in a vacuum, and that they may have to become activists to prevent outside political forces from inadvertently trampling on our ability to preserve
Competencies

- Handling film, video, new media, and understanding how these artifacts are made
- Collections assessment, risk assessment
- Selection & appraisal
- Collection management (labeling, storage, cataloging)
- Repair and transfer
- Navigating through different institutional cultures
- Programming and exhibition
- Budgeting, justifying projects, and grant-writing
- Donor relations and intellectual property
- Research & access
- Scholarship
- Historical Research

Ethics

- Readings touching on ethics and values in both our domain (Philosophy of A/V Archiving) and related domains (Enola Gay)
- Examination of daily occurrences for ethical and value-based responses (news articles, “wardrobe malfunctions”, Lucas’ “restoration” of THX, sound “restoration”)
- Extensive discussions on contemporary incidents, and the role that the professional community should play in these
  - Screensound Australia
  - BFI

Visits & Practice with Equipment

MIAP Projects (Paper Tiger)

MIAP Projects (Paper Tiger)
Internship Project
Amer Museum of Natural History

Student Projects in Intro Class-

- Historical context for 1920s/1930s Fox Newsreels being preserved and presented at Orphans Symposium
- Case History of Productions
- Final open-ended projects

Fox Newsreel: The Leila Roosevelt Expedition

Fox Newsreel (tracing route on map): The Leila Roosevelt Expedition

On Safari

the last Indian being
its rudder in a storm
Fox Newsreels

NY Street Scenes & Noises

Fox Newsreels (narrating):

NY Street Scenes & Noises

Engineers of Bell Telephone Laboratories

Dr. R.H. Galt
J.H. Parkinson
A. Meyer

Fox Newsreels (background):

NY Street Scenes & Noises

Fox Newsreels (shot locations):

NY Street Scenes & Noises

Fox Newsreels (dating):

NY Street Scenes & Noises

Fox Newsreels (then & now):

NY Street Scenes & Noises

THE STRAND

1929

2003

DATING THE FOOTAGE

Besser-McCoy Image Edit, 2005
Case Studies of Production History (1/2)

- Standing with Palestine: documentary film of interviews with members of U.S. activist groups supporting the Palestinian cause of the Israeli/Palestinian conflict, by the Paper Tiger Television Collective
- Momento Mori: A film by filmmaker and preservation specialist Jim Hubbard
- Divine Possibilities: Short Mini-DV by filmmaker M.M. Shapiro
- Maria Movie: Short film by filmmaker Jeanne Lottis
- Radio Row: Radio production by New York based independent producer Ben Shapiro
- Sid at 90: Video documentary by New York based documentary film and television producer Howard Weinberg

Case Studies of Production History (2/2)

- The Uprising of 34: Documentary film about the General Textile Strike, by documentary filmmaker George Surname
- Living Voices/Voces Vivas: Audio series produced by the Community Services Department and the Film and Video Center of the Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian
- Cyborg Oracle: CD-ROM by web artist Diane Bertolo.
- Youth Channel: production and programming by low-income youth, led by Program Director Hye-Jung Park.
- La Lecon: Narrative short film by filmmaker Craig Marsden
- Doris Chase: Portrait of an Artist: A video documentary produced by video artist and producer Robins Schmutzbach

Final Projects (1/2)

- Organization of print files on Kenneth Anger and Jonas Mekas at Anthology Film Archives: analysis of archival organization and arrangement at Anthology and another institution
- Case study: physical examination and subsequent reports on *Film*; Samuel Beckett's only film project in conjunction with Filmmaker's Cooperative
- History of *naked films* preservation funding, and implications for public access to the films given changing notions of intellectual property and copyright
- History and development of the 2" quadruplex format and subsequent archiving problems, and a videoography of 2" programs, 1956-1959
- Creation of an exhibition design investigating issues of authenticity in the work "Peggy and Fred in Hill" by video artist Leslie Thornton
- Exploration, through a series of interviews, of the technological and lexical aspects of MLB (Major League Baseball) Advanced Media games
- Biographical/filmographic research on copyright in relation to media and the arts
- Biographical/filmographic research and identification and condition assessment of the Al Robbins Collection at Anthology Film Archives

Final Projects (2/2)

- Cataloging and assessment of video interview materials within the Abraham Lincoln Brigade collection in the Tamiment Library of the Elmer Holmes Bobst Library
- Examination of the technical, ethical and archival arguments surrounding film colorization
- Research and creation of a finding aid for US government films produced before and during the New Deal
- Creation of a treatment and fundraising plan for an unidentified 35mm film shot at the 1936 Summer Olympics that is part of the NYU University Archives.
- Assessment and preservation plan for audio and video materials in the Institute for Afro-American Affairs Collection, University Archives, Elmer Holmes Bobst Library
- Preparation of a film exhibition of contemporary Chinese independent documentaries and an analysis of the state of independent production, archiving and preservation in China
- Creation of an accurate filmography of the work of Joseph W. Sarno, a key figure in sexexploitation film production in New York City in the 1960s and 1970s

Ways our program interacts with other organizations/professionals

- Internship sites (and can even cooperatively apply for grants for paid internships, reformatting costs, etc.)
- Student projects that help an institution
- Student visits to site and professionals guest-lecturing in class to further encourage collaborative projects
NYC Internships

- Whitney Museum
- Guggenheim Museum
- Museum of Television & Radio
- American Museum of Moving Image
- Anthology Film Archives
- Jewish Museum (Nat Jewish Archive of Broadcasting)
- American Museum of Natural History
- NYPL Performing Arts Library--Theater on Film & Tape Archive
- Tamiment/Wagner Labor Archive
- Latin American Video Archives
- WNET Public Television
- UNICEF
- Electronic Arts Intermix
- ABC News Archive
- Miramax Archives
- Cinemex Film Restoration Labs
- Vidicas Video Restoration Labs
- Mercer Media
- NYU Archives
- Fales Downtown Arts Collection

Our Graduates

- We are training a new generation of custodians of our cultural heritage.
- This training has to involve more than the kind of apprenticeship that has traditionally characterized this field.
- To be an effective Moving Image Archivist in the future will require a combination of the professional and the theoretical, and the ability to apply important traditions and concepts to communications technology of the future that we’ve never even dreamed of today.
- We want our graduates to act as “change agents” in the organizations they go into.
- We want to instill in them a commitment to preserve the future as well as the past.
- Many of us will need to work together to make sure that the moving image artifacts of the 20th century and beyond are available to our grandchildren’s grandchildren’s grandchildren.

Full-time Summer Internships

- Peabody Awards Collection (GA)
- Appalshop (KY)
- Archives of Appalachia -- Eastern Tennessee State (TN)
- Henry Hampton Collection (MO)
- Sacramento Archives and Museum Collection Center Television Collects (CA)
- Northeast Historic Film (ME)
- Transit Museum (NY)
- NYPL Performing Arts
- need more funding for Ghana, Singapore, Brazil, …

Research: NYU/Public Television Project

- $6 million project -- 50% from Feds
- Marry asset management to preservation
- Preserve a broad set of elements (including ancillary material)
- Life-cycle mgmt (add metadata as soon as a clip comes in)
- Establish a community of stakeholders, working together for preservation (stations, university, librarians, journalists, historians, producers, scholars, …)
- Build an OAIB Server
- Explore appropriate file formats, wrappers, METS extensions
- Develop sustainable business model

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http://www.tisch.nyu.edu/preservation

- http://www.amianet.org/
- http://www.imagepermanenceinstitute.org/

Intro Class

Case Studies of Production History

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