

Film Preservation CINE-GT.3402.S.001 -- **Film Preservation**  
NYU-MIAP

Spring 2015

Bill Brand

Bill Brand, semester 4, 2 points

Spring 2015 – Alternating Fridays (more or less), 12:30-4:30 PM, BB Optics, 108 Franklin Street #4W

Film Preservation CINE-GT.3402.S.001

Version: 1/29/15

Instructor: Bill Brand

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**GOALS:** This class will give students practical experience with film preservation including understanding and recognizing film elements, making inspection reports, repairing film, making preservation plans, understanding laboratory processes and procedures for making new film preservation elements through both film to film and digital intermediate processes, and writing preservation histories. The course will teach students how to work with vendors, increase knowledge of archival standards, introduce problems of decision-making, technical requirements, preparation and workflow, and overall project management. The class will undertake and complete actual film preservation projects and follow the steps from start to finish.

**EXPECTATIONS:** Each student will do several assignments involving writing a preservation grant proposal, preservation plan, inspection report and preservation history including preservation flow chart. Students will be expected to acquire practical knowledge of film handling and will be evaluated on basic theoretical and practical skills. A large portion of class time will be dedicated to completing the class projects and students will be expected to participate in every stage. Attendance at all classes is essential and expected unless excused. Lab time may be scheduled for weeks when classes are not held and students should keep these times available. Grades will be based on a combination of class preparedness and participation (50%), maintenance of project diary (20%) and written assignments including draft grant proposal, preservation flow-chart, preservation plan and to-do list, and draft preservation history (30%). Students should bring laptops or iPads to class.

**TEXTS:** There is no required text for this class but students are highly encouraged to obtain Read, Paul & Mark-Paul Meyer, Restoration of Motion Picture Film, Butterworth Heinemann, 2000, ISMB: 0 7506 2793 X. For information on the filmmaking process, a good resource is Ascher, Steven and Edward Pincus, The Filmmaker's Handbook: A Comprehensive Guide for the Digital Age Plume. 1999, ISBN 0452279577. Other readings will be provided on the class Google drive or as URL references on the World Wide Web.

**Note: This syllabus is subject to change throughout the semester.**

**CLASS 1     Jan 30**

Location: BB Optics

Introduction (30 min)

Course outline

Course expectations

Shoot a 16mm film class portraits (90 min)

Basic process of filmmaking – recognizing and understanding film elements: (60 min)

Pre-production, Production, Post-production

Conventional post-production process

Contemporary post-production process

Read: handouts - production & post-production flow charts

Film preservation plans (60 min)

Possible projects to assign to individual students (One project per person, each person will respond to two other drafts of NFPF proposal and Preservation history):

- 1) SIMONLAND by Tommy Turner
- 2) RAT TRAP by Tommy Turner
- 3) SOME FOOD MAY BE FOUND IN THE DESERT by Andrea Callard  
8 min (1977) Super 8mm sound on cassette
- 4) AUTUMNAL EQUINOX by Hollis Frampton
- 5) WINTER SOLSTICE by Hollis Frampton
- 6) REFLECTIONS by Madeline Tourtelot  
5 min, 16mm, optical sound
- 7) CONTRATHEMIS, COMPOSITION #2 by Dwinell Grant
- 8) GREEN by Luther Price (AKA Tom Rhoads)
- 9) WARM BROTH by Luther Price (AKA Tom Rhoads)

Read: <http://www.nfsa.gov.au/preservation/handbook/> by Feb 13

Read: [NFPF Grants - How to Apply](#). Look at all sections including sample applications by Feb 13

**Assignment: Begin researching individual film preservation project for class 2 (Feb 13). Be prepared to answer the following questions to the best of your ability by next class:**

- 1) Have you viewed the film or have you found a source to view it in some manner?
- 2) What extant film elements exist for this work? Where are they located and what are their conditions? Are there different versions of the film?
- 3) What reviews, notes and logs, and production/ distribution histories exist?
- 4) Have you interviewed the filmmaker or appropriate point of contact (client, estate, project manager, archivist, scholar, etc.) and/or made arrangements to do so?

**CLASS 2     Feb 13**

Location: BB Optics

Look at class portrait film and example timing report, negative & print (15 min)

Preservation process for various film gauges

16mm, 35mm, 8mm, Super-8, 9.5mm (other small gauge) (30 min)

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Inspection, identification & repair

Inspection reports (30 min)

Example forms: Screensound, NFPF, Goldbergs, Wojnarowicz, Shutter Interface,  
Schneemann example

Read: Handout - Inspection forms

Begin example *class project* inspection (***Reflections*** by Madeline Tourtelot)

Look at original picture and sound elements (60 min)

Film preservation plans and flow-charts (60 min)

Report on *class projects* research findings

Begin preservation planning for ***Class project films***:

Funding Proposal, Research, Elements, What gets preserved, Where does it live,  
Ownership & legal issues, Exhibition & distribution, Estimate, Process & time  
estimate, Writing preservation history

Read: Handout – Outline for Example Preservation Project

Read: Handout – Sample Preservation flow-chart

Read: Handout – Sample Preservation to-do list

Writing Proposal for Funding

Look at "Shades & Drumbeats" example

Read: "Film Preservation" by Karen F. Gracey Chapters 6 & 7 by Feb 27

**Assignment:** Write a rough draft NFPF proposal for your individual project. Upload your draft to the designated Google Drive folder and send an email to your two supporters requesting feedback no later than Friday, February 20<sup>th</sup>. Read two proposals for which you are the supporter and provide feedback on the Google doc prior to Class 3 (Feb 27).

**Assignment:** PROJECT DIARY - Make a step-by-step incremental “do-list” of your preservation project and post it in the designated Google Drive folder. Update the list throughout the semester on a weekly basis as a diary noting items that have been accomplished, questions that are raised in the process and new steps that emerge. Update or add the latest entry to your diary no later than one hour prior to the beginning of each class every time we meet.

**CLASS 3**     **Feb 27**

Location: BB Optics

Discuss inspection results, preservation diaries, NFPF draft proposal, flow-charts and progress for *Class project films* (60 min)

Discuss "Film Preservation" by Karen F. Gracey Chapters 6 & 7 (15 min)

Make budget (work order) and Letter to lab (45 min)

Print generations “a-wind, b-wind”, reversal to reversal, negative to positive, digital scan to film-out.

Optical positive and negative sound tracks (15 min.)

Preservation credits (15)

Optical printer, timing (scores), shooting process, step printing vs. scanning to film-out (60)

Read: "From Grain to Pixel" by Giovanna Fossati Part One, Chap. 2, pgs 103-145 by Mar 13

Read: “The Gray Zone” by Ross Lipman by Mar 13

**Assignment:** Revise NFPF proposals with budgets – on Google Drive by March 13.

**CLASS 4     March 13**

Discuss inspection results, preservation diaries and progress for *Class project films* (30 min)

Class visit via Skype with Ross Lipman on digital intermediate in preservation/restoration.

Bruce Conner - Crossroads example? (90 min)

Discuss "From Grain to Pixel" by Giovanna Fossati Part One, Chap. 2, pgs 103-145 (60 min.)

The evolving role of digital in film preservation, restoration and access. (60 min.)

Read: [Restoration Film Sound.pdf](#) by April 3

Read: TBA by April 3

**CLASS 5     April 3**

Field trip (Bill Seery – Mercer Media)

Location: Du Art Film and Video, 245 West 55th Street

Mixing and Preparing Soundtracks for Film Preservations

Inspection and preparation for *Class project films*

Creating optical sound tracks.

**Assignment: Revise your preservation history flow-chart to reflect the actual history or current expectation for the history. Bring to Class 6 by April 17.**

**CLASS 6     April 17**

Location: BB Optics

View and assess answer prints from class projects

Writing preservation histories

    Show example preservation histories

Special problems

    Vinegar syndrome, Mold, Rust, Shrinkage, Cyan dye fading (red shift), Crazying,

    Ferrotyping, Scratches, Rewashing, Wet gate printing

Cleaning film

    Hand cleaning: Cleaners & solvents, Safety

    Machine cleaning: Ultrasonic cleaners, PTR rollers, Inspection & cleaning machines

**Assignment: Write draft preservation history, Upload your draft to the designated Google Drive folder and send an email to your two supporters requesting feedback no later than Friday, April 24th. Read two preservation histories for which you are the supporter and provide feedback on the Google doc prior to Class 7 by May 1st.**

**CLASS 7     May 1**

Location: BB Optics

View *Class project* prints

Review & critique draft preservation histories

Discuss issues of exhibition, storage, distribution and scholarship

Recanning and labeling *Class project films* original and preservation materials.

Course Summary and celebration