

PART I

The collection I have chosen for my metadata creation assignment is the George Kuchar 16mm print distribution collection recently deposited at Anthology Film Archives by the Estate of George Kuchar. This collection was entrusted to Anthology for the express purpose of distribution for theatrical and educational screenings, and though it does not contain preservation quality prints, it has immense value as a means of access to some of the most important underground works of the 1950s-1980s. George Kuchar began making Super 8mm films with his twin brother Mike Kuchar in a 1950s New York City, graduating to 16mm in the 1960s as funds became more available.¹ Kuchar defined a genre of underground film all his own, producing “idiosyncratic narrative psychodramas and pop cultural parodies […] charged with perverse humor” that would influence countless outré filmmakers after him.²

Throughout my internship this semester, I’ve had the opportunity to inspect and make minor repairs to 24 films out of several dozen from this collection. Given that these prints are the first I’ve worked on in my archival career, they play an integral role in my personal and profession development. Outside of my personal connection to this collection, these access prints are of monumental enduring value to the artistic community at large; they are not only records of a time, place, and person no longer in existence, they are also important records of the history and development of experimental cinema in New York City.

The three films from this collection that I have chosen to create records for are The Mongreloid (Print #1), Mom (Print # 1), and Portrait of Ramona. I have chosen these

¹ Anthology Film Archives. *George Kuchar Distribution Collection*. AFA, 2012. PDF
prints not necessarily on the basis of their content, but rather on the basis of their condition and the variety of data associated with each. The Mongreloid and Portrait of Ramona are 16mm prints while Mom is Super 8mm, and I have represented both color/b&w, and silent/sound prints. The condition of these films range from very mediocre to very good, and the actions taken to maintain and repair each of them were quite different. The data I have gathered on these films comes from the individual inspections of each print and includes descriptive, technical, and preservation metadata.

PART II

The qualities I have chosen for my “metadata wish-list” are primarily taken directly from the official Anthology Film Archives film inspection form. Those that are not taken from the inspection form are qualities I feel are important to this specific collection.

DESCRIPTIVE METADATA:

Creator
For the MARC 21 records of this collection, I have chosen to use field 100 – Main Entry - Personal Name with the primary indication that surname will be recorded first. I have chosen to include subfield $d for “dates associated with a name” to provide the lifespan of the creator as additional information. For the MODS record in the collection, I have chosen to include a subfield describing the role associated with the name.

Title
Though the Title field is self-explanatory, I have specifically chosen field 240 – Uniform Title to represent this field because many of the films from this collection include print versions appended to the main title. From the Library of Congress MARC 21 bibliographic information site, field 240 is “used when a work has appeared under
varying titles, necessitating that a particular title be chosen to represent the work.”3 Subfield $a$ includes the main title, while subfield $s$ includes the print number/version. The latter subfield for print number is quite necessary for the Kuchar distribution collection because it includes multiple prints for many of the same films. I have included the type “uniform” in the title section of my MODS record for this reason as well.

**TECHNICAL METADATA:**

* # of Reels
  While none of the 24 films I inspected in this collection had more than 1 reel, this number is extremely important in terms of organization within the archive. The number of reels is recorded on both the inspection sheet and on the head and tail ends of the leader so that an archivist can keep tracks of all the necessary elements associated with a work. In the MARC 21 standard I used field 300 – Physical Format subfield $a$ describing “extent”. Similarly, <physicalDescription><extent> can be used to describe the number of reels associated with an individual work in the MODS standard. The term “extent” is broad in both standards, allowing for a loose interpretation of what type of extent is being described, e.g., number of physical sections or total playing time.

* Year of Production/Edge Code
  There are two sections for dates on the Anthology inspection form, one for year of production and another for the actual edge code of the film. The edge code is a very significant piece of information to include, as it can aid in determining the generation or type of the print, as well as the age/era of the film stock itself.

* Gauge
  With the exception of two films, the entirety of the Kuchar print collection is 16mm. I have chosen to include one of the two Super 8mm films in the collection to vary the information represented in my XML records. I have included this information in field 300

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– **Physical Format** subfield $c$ for “dimensions” in the MARC 21 standard, and simply under `<physicalDescription><form type=“physical description”>` in MODS. Clearly the tag in the MARC 21 standard is richer than in MODS, but they both accomplish the same end goal.

**Frames per Second/Aspect Ratio**

I have included frames per second and aspect ration in the same description because each are representative of the “presentation format” fields. The FPS and aspect ratio are the same for all the films included in the Kuchar collection, but the information is necessarily and conventionally included in this type of inspection report, as well as on the head and tail ends of the leader. I have included this information under field 345 – **Projection Characteristics of Moving Images** subfields $a$ and $b$ for “presentation format” and “projection speed” in the MARC 21 standard. In MODS I included this under `<physicalDescription><form>` using the subelement “presentation”. Though MARC 21 will more often than not win out over MODS in richness, when implementing subelements in MODS it’s possible to increase the specificity of the record. This is a good example of enriching MODS with a subelement to differentiate a presentation characteristic from a physical format characteristic.

**Color/B&W**

The information gathered for the film inspection sheets simply referred to a film as being in color or black and white. A more in depth investigation of the type of color stock or black and white film stock would be beneficial for the purpose of a preservation project, but is not necessary for a simple inspection of a distribution print. MARC 21 has fields related to the general types of color stocks in the Control Field 007 – **Physical Description Fixed Field**, and it would certainly be possible to include further information regarding specific film stocks, perhaps in field 340 - **Physical Medium**, subfields $a$ and $c$ for “material base and configuration” and “materials applied to surface” [in the case of tinted or hand-painted films]. In MODS it is possible to put the color information simply under `<physicalDescription><form tag=“physical description”>`.
**Silent/Sound [type]**

Though a relatively simple film to report on, when a film has a sound element it is necessary to include additional information such as the type of sound [optical, magnetic, separate element], and in some cases the subtype of sound [variable area or variable density in the case of optically printed soundtracks]. I recorded this information in two MARC 21 fields: 300 – **Physical Format** subfield $b$ for a general description of “other physical details”, and in 344 – **Sound Characteristics** subfields $a$ “type of recording” $b$ “recording medium” and $e$ “track configuration” to include more specific information. I chose to include this information under the MODS field `<physicalDescription><form>` using the tag “physical description” rather than “presentation” because I felt that the optically printed soundtrack was an important characteristic of the film format itself, even though it is obviously also involved in the presentation aspect of the work.

**Generation**

The generation of a print can be difficult to determine and I did not research deeply into the specific generational information of the prints I examined from the Kuchar collection. The information I have provided in this section is in regard to whether the print is a negative, positive, or reversal, and if it can be determined whether or not it is original, duplicate, or of unknown generation. I chose to use 340 – **Physical Medium** subfield $j$ for “generation”, and `<physicalDescription><form tag= “physical description”>` for MODS.

**PRESERVATION METADATA**

**Condition**

Condition was obviously the primary focus of the film inspections, and this section includes the most data. The inspection sheet requests: an overall rating of the physical condition of a print [poor, mediocre, good, or excellent]; a rating from 0 – 4 [with 0 indicating “none/negligible” and 4 indicating “heavy”] for emulsion scratches, base
scratches, and perforation damage; the exact number of splices throughout the picture; fading [Y/N, Pink or Red]; vinegar syndrome [Y/N]; countdown leader [Y/N]; length [feet]; and shrinkage [%]. There is also an additional section for more detailed written notation. I have included most of the relevant information requested in the condition section in my records, utilizing MARC 21 field 583 – Action Note subfields $a for “action”, $c for time/date of action, and $l for “status”. For the MODS standard, I chose to use the <physicalDescription><form> field and subfield with the “type = condition”.

Preservation Actions
This field is inherently related to the Condition portion of the records, particularly in MARC 21 standard. I, again, used 583 – Action Note subfields $a for “action” and $c for time/date of action [changing the “action” from “film inspected” to “repaired”], but replaced $l with $i for “method of action” to describe the type of repairs I made. In order to record this information in the MODS standard, I had to utilize the <notes> field appending “type= “action”” to the entry. Given that I used standardized and approved MODS elements in my “type” section, it should be clear to an interpreter that the action taken was one of preservation, though this is certainly more clearly expressed in MARC 21.

Provenance
I chose to include the provenance of the collection, both in terms of ownership and collection history. I chose to use MARC 21 field 541 – Immediate Source of Acquisition Note subfields $a for “source of acquisition” $c for “method of acquisition” $d for “date of acquisition”, and $f for “owner”, to describe the ownership and collection acquisition information. I also included a privately indicated note regarding the custodial history using MARC 21 field 561 – Ownership and Custodial History subfield $a for “history”. Using MODS for this portion was less convenient and exclusively involved the <notes> field using the types “accrual method”, “acquisition”, and “ownership”. I weighed the option of using “ownership” to describe custodial history, but in the end chose to use the type “conservation history” instead. Though “conservation history”, in
my mind, connotes preservation action moreso than custodial history, I found the use of “ownership” to be problematic in this context as it might suggest copyright ownership rather than previous stewardship.

**PART III**

As previously discussed, the two standards I have chosen to use for my metadata records are MARC 21 and MODS. I chose these two standards because they are structurally related but still express information using distinct methods. The structure of MARC 21 does not initially lend itself to immediate accessibility, requiring a comprehensive knowledge of the system or a key in order to decipher the somewhat opaque system of data organization. However, what it lacks in lucidity, it makes up for in richness, codifying vast amounts of detailed information in a concise manner. With literally hundreds of fields, the potential data specificity is seemingly infinite, a particularly beneficial quality when cataloging detailed inspection information for a collection of film prints. Though the use of a MARC 21 record would not be as useful for community or user-based information access due to the complex and advanced nature of its structure, it would be appropriate for internal cataloging of the films in this collection. Considering most of the information provided by the film inspection sheets is for internal use only, if not entirely confidential, using MARC 21 could even be quite beneficial for its ability to store information regarding the specific technical/format aspects of a print, as well as descriptive, preservation, and rights metadata related to the film in a succinct yet discretely organized record.

MODS certainly has its advantages to this type of collection as well. The character of MODS rests somewhere in between the complex richness of MARC 21 and the versatile simplicity of DublinCore. MODS keeps it simple with a short list of main elements while allowing the user to further refine information using a number of additional subelements and attributes. In other words, MODS clarifies what can otherwise be abstruse catalog records without sacrificing significant amounts of content. Furthermore, MODS allows for increased interoperability between systems and standards, meaning more flexibility both internally and externally. I particularly liked
utilizing MODS to create a record for a film in this collection because it is easily human-readable without necessitating a decoding key. Anyone can look at a MODS record and comprehend that `<originInfo><dateIssued>1971</dateIssued>` indicates the year of production, whereas a novice viewing the MARC record `260 $c1971` would have difficulty interpreting the meaning of this date. This example would become even more indecipherable if we added a second subfield with another date: `260 $c1971$g1973`. One date is the year of production and the other date is the date of manufacture, in this case the film stock date. Though the MARC 21 record clearly demonstrates more detailed information, the meaning of the data is not ostensibly discernible. In MODS we could make this distinction using text by adding another line: `<originInfo><dateOther type="edge code">`.

Both Marc 21 and MODS standards have benefits and drawbacks for cataloging inspection information for the Kuchar print collection. Ultimately, I opted for these two standards over others due to their richness potential and their established relationship to the XML format.
PART IV
RECORD #1: THE MONGRELOID (Print #1)

MARC 21 format:

007/00- mr#c#aad##ada##ac201211
100 1#$a Kuchar, George$d 1942-2011
240 $aThe Mongreloid$s Print #1
260 $c 1978. $g 1986.
300 $a1 reel of 1:$b optical sound, variable area, color;$c 16mm
337 #film.
340 #j dupe pos.
344 #an analog$b optical, variable area$edgetrack
345 #a 1.33:1$b 24fps
541 1#$a Estate of George Kuchar$c deposit$d 201208$f Estate of George Kuchar
561 0#$a Previously in stewardship of Canyon Cinema
583 #film inspected$c 20121017$l mediocre physical condition
583 #film inspected$c 20121017$l moderate base and emulsion scratches
583 #film inspected$c 20121017$l moderate perforation damage
583 #film inspected$c 20121017$l no fading
583 #film inspected$c 20121017$l 2 splices in picture
583 #film inspected$c 20121017$l no sign of vinegar syndrome
583 #film inspected$c 20121017$l shrinkage 0.4%
583 #film inspected$c 20121017$l slight twisting at head of picture
583 #film inspected$c 20121017$l projection dimpling ~100 frames
583 #film inspected$c 20121017$l claw damage to 13 consecutive perforations
583 #repair#d 20121017$countdown leader attached
583 #repair#d 20121017$ repaired damaged perforations with edge tape

XML format:

<collection xmlns="http://www.loc.gov/MARC21/slim">
  <record>
    <controlfield tag="007/00"> mr#c#aad##ada##ac201211</controlfield>
    <datafield tag="100" ind1="1" ind2=" ">
      <subfield code="a">Kuchar, George</subfield>
      <subfield code="d">1942-2011</subfield>
    </datafield>
    <datafield tag="240" ind1="1" ind2=" ">
      <subfield code="a">The Mongreloid</subfield>
      <subfield code="s">Print #1</subfield>
    </datafield>
    <datafield tag="260">
      <subfield code="c">1978</subfield>
      <subfield code="g">1986</subfield>
    </datafield>
  </record>
</collection>
<datafield tag="300">
  <subfield code="a">1 reel of 1</subfield>
  <subfield code="b">optical sound; variable area; color</subfield>
  <subfield code="c">16mm</subfield>
</datafield>
<datafield tag="337" ind1=" " ind2=" ">
  <subfield code="a">film</subfield>
</datafield>
<datafield tag="340" ind1=" " ind2=" ">
  <subfield code="j">dupe pos.</subfield>
</datafield>
<datafield tag="344" ind1=" " ind2=" ">
  <subfield code="a">analog</subfield>
  <subfield code="b">optical, variable area</subfield>
  <subfield code="e">edge track</subfield>
</datafield>
<datafield tag="345" ind1=" " ind2=" ">
  <subfield code="a">1.33:1</subfield>
  <subfield code="b">24fps</subfield>
</datafield>
<datafield tag="541" ind1="1" ind2=" ">
  <subfield code="a">Estate of George Kuchar</subfield>
  <subfield code="c">deposit</subfield>
  <subfield code="d">201208</subfield>
  <subfield code="f">Estate of George Kuchar</subfield>
</datafield>
<datafield tag="561" ind1="0" ind2=" ">
  <subfield code="a">Previously in stewardship of Canyon Cinema</subfield>
</datafield>
<datafield tag="583" ind1=" " ind2=" ">
  <subfield code="a">film inspected</subfield>
  <subfield code="c">20121017</subfield>
  <subfield code="l">mediocre physical condition</subfield>
</datafield>
<datafield tag="583" ind1=" " ind2=" ">
  <subfield code="a">film inspected</subfield>
  <subfield code="c">20121017</subfield>
  <subfield code="l">moderate base and emulsion scratches</subfield>
</datafield>
<datafield tag="583" ind1=" " ind2=" ">
  <subfield code="a">film inspected</subfield>
  <subfield code="c">20121017</subfield>
  <subfield code="l">moderate perforation damage</subfield>
</datafield>
<datafield tag="583" ind1=" " ind2=" ">
  <subfield code="a">film inspected</subfield>
</datafield>
no fading
2 splices in picture
no sign of vinegar syndrome
shrinkage .4%
slight twisting at head of picture
projection dimpling ~100 frames
claw damage to 13 consecutive perforations
countdown leader attached
repaired damaged perforations with edge tape
RECORD #2: MOM (Print #1)

MARC 21 format:

007/00- mr#c###bn#zuc##a#201211
100 1#$aKuchar, George$d1942-2011
240 $aMom$sPrint #1
260 $c1983$g1982
300 $a1 reel of 1$ssilent, color$cSuper 8mm
337 ##$afilm
340 ##$areversal print
345 ##$a1.33:1$b24fps
541 1#$aEstate of George Kuchar$edeposit$d201208$fEstate of George Kuchar
561 0#$aPreviously in stewardship of Canyon Cinema
583 ##$afilm inspected$c20121128$lgood to very good physical condition
583 ##$afilm inspected$c20121128$lfair to moderate base and emulsion scratches
583 ##$afilm inspected$c20121128$lno perforation damage
583 ##$afilm inspected$c20121128$lno fading
583 ##$afilm inspected$c20121128$lvibrant color
583 ##$afilm inspected$c20121128$lno splices in picture
583 ##$afilm inspected$c20121128$lno sign of vinegar syndrome
583 ##$afilm inspected$c20121128$lno shrinkage
583 ##$arepaired$c20121128$lno repairs made

XML format:

<collection xmlns="http://www.loc.gov/MARC21/slim">
  <record>
    <controlfield tag="007/00"> mr#c###bn#zuc##a#201211</controlfield>
    <datafield tag="100" ind1="1" ind2=" ">
      <subfield code="a">Kuchar, George</subfield>
      <subfield code="d">1942-2011</subfield>
    </datafield>
    <datafield tag="240" ind1="1" ind2=" ">
      <subfield code="a">Mom</subfield>
      <subfield code="s">Print #1</subfield>
    </datafield>
    <datafield tag="260">
      <subfield code="c">1983</subfield>
      <subfield code="g">1982</subfield>
    </datafield>
    <datafield tag="300">
      <subfield code="a">1 reel of 1</subfield>
      <subfield code="b">silent, color</subfield>
    </datafield>
  </record>
</collection>
<subfield code="c">Super 8mm</subfield>
</datafield>
<datafield tag="337" ind1=" " ind2=" ">
  <subfield code="a">film</subfield>
</datafield>
<datafield tag="340" ind1=" " ind2=" ">
  <subfield code="j">reversal print</subfield>
</datafield>
<datafield tag="345" ind1=" " ind2=" ">
  <subfield code="a">1.33:1</subfield>
  <subfield code="b">24fps</subfield>
</datafield>
<datafield tag="541" ind1="1" ind2=" ">
  <subfield code="a">Estate of George Kuchar</subfield>
  <subfield code="c">deposit</subfield>
  <subfield code="d">201208</subfield>
  <subfield code="f">Estate of George Kuchar</subfield>
</datafield>
<datafield tag="561" ind1="0" ind2=" ">
  <subfield code="a">Previously in stewardship of Canyon Cinema</subfield>
</datafield>
<datafield tag="583" ind1=" " ind2=" ">
  <subfield code="a">film inspected</subfield>
  <subfield code="c">20121128</subfield>
  <subfield code="l">good to very good physical condition</subfield>
</datafield>
<datafield tag="583" ind1=" " ind2=" ">
  <subfield code="a">film inspected</subfield>
  <subfield code="c">20121128</subfield>
  <subfield code="l">fair to moderate base and emulsion scratches</subfield>
</datafield>
<datafield tag="583" ind1=" " ind2=" ">
  <subfield code="a">film inspected</subfield>
  <subfield code="c">20121128</subfield>
  <subfield code="l">no perforation damage</subfield>
</datafield>
<datafield tag="583" ind1=" " ind2=" ">
  <subfield code="a">film inspected</subfield>
  <subfield code="c">20121128</subfield>
  <subfield code="l">no fading</subfield>
</datafield>
<datafield tag="583" ind1=" " ind2=" ">
  <subfield code="a">film inspected</subfield>
  <subfield code="c">20121128</subfield>
  <subfield code="l">vibrant color</subfield>
</datafield>
<datafield tag="583" ind1=" " ind2=" ">
  <subfield code="a">film inspected</subfield>
  <subfield code="c">20121128</subfield>
  <subfield code="l">no splices in picture</subfield>
</datafield>

<datafield tag="583" ind1=" " ind2=" ">
  <subfield code="a">film inspected</subfield>
  <subfield code="c">20121128</subfield>
  <subfield code="l">no sign of vinegar syndrome</subfield>
</datafield>

<datafield tag="583" ind1=" " ind2=" ">
  <subfield code="a">film inspected</subfield>
  <subfield code="c">20121128</subfield>
  <subfield code="l">no shrinkage</subfield>
</datafield>

<datafield tag="583" ind1=" " ind2=" ">
  <subfield code="a">repaired</subfield>
  <subfield code="b">20121128</subfield>
  <subfield code="i">no repairs made</subfield>
</datafield>

</record>
</collection>
RECORD #3: PORTRAIT OF RAMONA

Simple text record:

Creator: George Kuchar (1942-2011)
Title: Portrait of Ramona
Date Issued: 1971
Date of film [edge code]: 1970
Physical Description: 1 reel of 1; 16mm; Optical sound/variable area; color; reversal print
Presentation data: 1.33:1 aspect ratio; 24fps
Provenance: Deposited by the Estate of George Kuchar; Previously in stewardship of Canyon Cinema
Physical Condition: mediocre physical condition; light emulsion scratching; fair base scratching; heavy perforation damage; no fading; 10 splices in picture; no vinegar syndrome; [more details in xml]
Preservation Actions: tape and cement splices fixed; perforations repaired; film cleaned; countdown leader added; [more details in xml]

MODS XML format:

  <titleInfo type= "uniform">
    <title>Portrait of Ramona</title>
  </titleInfo>
  <name type= "personal">
    <namePart>George Kuchar</namePart>
    <role>
      <roleTerm type="text">creator</roleTerm>
      <roleTerm type="code">cre</roleTerm>
    </role>
  </name>
  <originInfo>
    <dateIssued>1971</dateIssued>
    <dateOther type="edge code">1970</dateOther>
  </originInfo>
  <typeOfResource>moving image</typeOfResource>
  <physicalDescription>
    <extent>1 reel of 1</extent>
    <form type="physical description">16mm</form>
    <form type="physical description">color</form>
    <form type="physical description">optical sound</form>
    <form type="physical description">variable area</form>
  </physicalDescription>
</mods>
<form type="physical description">reversal print</form>
<form type="presentation">24fps</form>
<form type="presentation">1.33:1</form>
<form type="condition">mediocre physical condition</form>
<form type="condition">light emulsion scratching</form>
<form type="condition">fair base scratching</form>
<form type="condition">heavy perforation damage</form>
<form type="condition">no fading</form>
<form type="condition">6 tape splices in picture</form>
<form type="condition">4 cement splices in picture</form>
<form type="condition">no sign of vinegar syndrome</form>
<form type="condition">no shrinkage</form>
<form type="condition">edgewear cutting into soundtrack ~2 frames</form>
<form type="condition">7 consecutive claw damaged perforations at head</form>
<form type="condition">2 consecutive ripped perforations at head</form>
<form type="condition">long claw pull across 2 perforations</form>
<form type="condition">5 individual ripped perforations throughout</form>
<form type="condition">4 perforations ripped near tape splice</form>
<form type="condition">severe claw damage to 4 perforations cut into picture</form>

<note type="accreditation">deposit</note>
<note type="acquisition">from Estate of George Kuchar</note>
<note type="action">3 tape splice repairs</note>
<note type="action">1 cement splice repair</note>
<note type="action">perforation damage repaired with edge tape</note>
<note type="action">cleaned tape residue</note>
<note type="action">countdown leader added</note>
<note type="conservation history">previously in stewardship of Canyon Cinema</note>
<note type="ownership">Estate of George Kuchar</note>
WORKS CITED

Anthology Film Archives. *George Kuchar Distribution Collection*. AFA, 2012. PDF
