



NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE

Humanities

DIVISION OF PRESERVATION AND ACCESS

## **Narrative Section of a Successful Application**

The attached document contains the grant narrative and selected portions of a previously funded grant application. It is not intended to serve as a model, but to give you a sense of how a successful application may be crafted. Every successful application is different, and each applicant is urged to prepare a proposal that reflects its unique project and aspirations. Prospective applicants should consult the Preservation and Access Programs application guidelines at <http://www.neh.gov/grants/guidelines/pag.html> for instructions. Applicants are also strongly encouraged to consult with the NEH Division of Preservation and Access Programs staff well before a grant deadline.

Note: The attachment only contains the grant narrative and selected portions, not the entire funded application. In addition, certain portions may have been redacted to protect the privacy interests of an individual and/or to protect confidential commercial and financial information and/or to protect copyrighted materials.

Project Title: Purchase of Film Preservation Furniture and Supplies

Institution: Chicago Film Archives, Purchase of Film Preservation Furniture and Supplies

Project Director: Anne Wells

Grant Program: Preservation Assistance Grants for Smaller Institutions

## What activities would the grant support?

This grant would support the purchase of horizontal shelving and preservation supplies needed to fulfill recommendations made in a Chicago Film Archives Collections Assessment executed in 2007. This assessment was funded by a National Endowment for the Humanities Preservation Assistance Grant.

## What are the content and size of the humanities collections that are the focus of the project?

The entire CFA film holding is currently comprised of approximately 9,900 films. The production of these films spans from 1903 to 1990. This project would provide archival storage for CFA's first acquisition - the **Chicago Public Library (CPL) Collection** of which currently 75% remains on vertical shelving. This collection is made up of documentary, amateur, industrial, avant-garde, travel, commercial, and educational films that total approximately 3,750 16mm distribution prints. Some of these prints are rare or exist nowhere else, such as *Paracelsus* (1943) by the German director, Georg Wilhelm Pabst or *Cemetery of the Elephants* (1975), by Peruvian director, Armando Robles Godoy. Others document the social turmoil of the 1968 Democratic National Convention and 1966 civil rights marches that were associated with Martin Luther King, Jr.'s time spent in Chicago fighting housing discrimination. .

Other collections in CFA's vault include:

### ***Ron Doerring Collection (53 reels with 6 audio tapes)***

The Doerring collection is comprised of 8mm and 16mm films, both professional and amateur. Of the 43 home movies, 15 are by John and Evelyn Kibar. The Kibars were prominent in the amateur clubs around Kenosha and Racine, Wisconsin, for many decades (30s to 60s). They won many awards for their films. Among these is one honorable mention in the international Amateur Cinema League's annual 'Ten Best' amateur films competition for *Autumn Glory* (1946). Their collection shows a range of local subjects, and is interesting because it represents a rare case of extant silent 8mm amateur films, accompanied by sound tracks on reel to reel magnetic tape. This kind of sound accompaniment was common among amateurs but is rarely found in archives. Six films are accompanied by these audio tapes. Part of the funding from this NEH grant will purchase 8mm polypropylene containers for this collection.

### ***Berolzheimer Collection (99 reels)***

This collection was donated by the Berolzheimer family in Evanston, IL. It contains both 16mm and 8mm films totaling 99 reels of home movies that date from the early '30s to the early '60s. Within this collection is footage of professional sports activities at Soldiers Field in the mid 1930s, bar mitzvahs, weddings and travel. This collection has attracted the attention of the Jewish Museum in Fuerth, Germany, where this material was considered for an exhibition on Heinrich Berolzheimer, a great-Uncle of the donor.

### ***Soucie Home Movies (87 reels)***

James Soucie worked for the Pullman Railroad Company out of Indianapolis, Indiana, all of his adult life. He was an amateur filmmaker whose passion was the history and culture of America. His job allowed him to document Americana events across the country from the 40s through the early 60s. He filmed a number of historical sites, Civil War reenactments, and fairs throughout the United States. Included in the collection are films of the *Chicago Railroad Fair* of 1948 and 1949, the *Chicago Industrial Fair* of 1950, 1950s Inter-Tribal ceremonies at Gallup, New Mexico, 1952, the opening years of Freedomland, New York, one of the largest amusement parks based on themes of American History, and the Florida Everglades.

### ***Franklin McMahon Collection (Approx. 560 film and audio reels)***

Chicago artist, journalist, and filmmaker, Franklin McMahon chronicled politics and culture in the Midwest during the 60s and 70s with his drawings, tape recordings and camera. With his camera McMahon lent motion to his on-site drawings and sketches of political events such as the *Chicago 8 Conspiracy Trial* of 1969. Accompanied by interviews and recordings captured on the sly, these artistic documentations are unique representations of mid twentieth century political events. His films were shot on 16mm film, and his vast collection of audio recordings was recorded on a variety of formats: reel to reel ¼", standard cassette tapes, and magnetic tape.

***Julian Gromer Collection (32 reels and supporting print materials)***

Travelogue filmmaker and lecturer, Julian Gromer, (born in Elgin, Illinois) was represented by the Redpath Bureau of Chicago, a lecture circuit booking agency. His first travelogue, *Hawaiian Paradise*, was shot in Hawaii in 1941 shortly before the Pearl Harbor attacks. *African Life* (1947) documents his travels in Nigeria from the port cities to the village of Bukuru situated deep in central Nigeria. Included is Gromer's utilization of early time lapse photography to record the blossoming of native flowers in the region. Gromer presented his travel films hundreds of times throughout the US, accompanying the screening with his lectures and sometimes phonograph music.

***Sylvia and Russ Davis Collection (371 reels and supporting print materials)***

These wrestling films were locally produced during the late 40s and early 50s by Sylvia and Russ Davis, owners of Imperial World Films, for Chicago's first commercial television station, WBKB. Shot on Saturday nights at the Marigold Arena and the International Amphitheater in Chicago, these films feature bouts with Pat O'Connor & Ivan Rasputin, Yukon Eric & Hans Schmidt, and Gorgeous George & Cyclone Anaya, among others. Many of the fights were photographed by the young future academy award winning director-cinematographer, Haskell Wexler.

***George Hagopian Collection (14 reels)***

This collection is comprised of unique performance footage and audio tracks of folksingers Ed Holstein, Terry Collier and Bonnie Koloc at legendary Chicago folk club The Earl of Old Town. Shot in the early 70s on 35mm film.

***Krosse Collection (102 reels)***

This collection arrived from Peoria, Illinois. Early twentieth century agricultural films made by Charles L. Venard are part of this collection as well as films made for the Caterpillar Corporation and Sears. These films range from the mid 20s through the 40s.

**How are these humanities collections used?**

Films from this collection have been exhibited in public programs at the Chicago Cultural Center, the Music Box Theater in Chicago, the Block Cinema at Northwestern University, the Film Center at the University of Chicago, the Gene Siskel Film Center, the LaSalle Bank Cinema, the Willie Dixon Blues Heaven Foundation and various neighborhood theaters throughout the Chicago area. The Magic Lantern Experimental Film Festival in Providence, Rhode Island, screened three CFA films in 2005, and in 2008 Anthology Films in New York reprised a 2007 CFA program called *Chicago: My Town*. In 2006 the City of Chicago chose a Margaret Conneely film to exhibit at an outdoor film festival in Grant Park. Additionally, the University of Chicago, Loyola University, DePaul University and Northwestern University have rented films from CFA for classes and special programs. Every year, The Department of Cultural Affairs hosts the free *Out of the Vault* program which showcases films from CFA's founding collection – the Chicago Public Library (CPL) collection.

CFA periodically sponsors panel discussions to accompany these films in order to interpret and clarify past cultural and political events that are regionally significant. At our benefit on May 13, 2005, Haskell Wexler,

Edward Bland, Mike Gray and Rick Prelinger participated on a panel created to discuss the significant film work that has come out of Chicago and the importance of its preservation. In September of 2006, at our program *To Bear Witness: The Question of Violence*, CFA premiered three newly preserved films that are part of the Chicago Public Library collection: *The Cicero March*, *Black Moderates and Black Militants*, and *The Peoples' Right to Know: Police vs. Reporters*. Activists appearing in these films took part in a panel discussion that expanded upon the unrest surrounding the civil rights movement and the 1968 Democratic Convention in Chicago. During November, 2007, CFA presented *Big Picture: A New Take on Chicago*, a series of film programs portraying Chicago's urban landscape, local domesticity, the convergence of Midwest industry and design, and avant-garde films from our region. Home movies were a part of each of these perspectives. Hatulla Maholy Nagy was among the many artists and filmmakers who presented at this series. And in 2009, CFA presented a month-long retrospective on the late Chicago documentary filmmaker, Howard Alk. Filmmakers and colleagues such as Murray Lerner (*Festival*), Mike Gray (*American Revolution 2*, *China Syndrome*) and Gordon Quinn (*Hoop Dreams*) appeared at the screenings to bring context to Alk's films.

Our films have also been also screened at conferences across the country, adding to the growing scholarship aimed at the amateur and industrial film genre. In 2004, Nancy Watrous presented a 1930s Firestone promotional film at the annual AMIA Conference, (*Accidental Archives*). Charles Tepperman and Nancy Watrous presented Margaret Conneely films and a paper at the 2005 Summer Film Symposium at Northeast Historic Film (*Amateur Fiction Films*). In 2007, at the Society of American Archivists annual conference in Chicago, CFA was part of the panel, *Labor Beat: Chicago Film Archives and Labor Media*. CFA presented *Chuck Hansen: One Guy*, a 1950s CPL film that addresses prejudice in the work place. At the 2008 Summer Film Symposium in Bucksport, Maine, *City & Country*, Michelle Puetz and Andy Uhrich screened excerpts of Gordon Weisenborn films and Kenji Kanesaka's *Super Up* as part of their presentation, *Many Chicagos: Utopian Promises and Urban Ruin in Post-War Chicago*. In April, 2010, Nancy Watrous and Andy Uhrich presented *The Pictorial Story of Hiawatha* at the Orphans 7 Symposium in New York City. Shot in 1903, this newly restored film footage was of a live re-enactment of Longfellow's Hiawatha by members of the Garden City Ojibwe tribe in Ontario, Canada.

Researchers from the Chicago History Museum (CHM) have researched the history of the Catholic Archdiocese of Chicago and have located in our collection rare footage of Catholic School girls' basketball from the 1950s, as well as children's re-enactment of the Eucharist from that era. In addition, the CHM has used CFA footage to create a children's exhibit in the newly renovated museum.

Some of the CFA collections form the basis for scholarly research. Charles Tepperman, a former PhD candidate from the University of Chicago, researched amateur film clubs from the Chicago area for his dissertation. While locating and acquiring collections for CFA, he found a wealth of material that is now part of CFA holdings. Films and papers from the Conneely and the Doerring Collections served as resources for his dissertation. In addition, researchers from the Jewish Museum of Franconia in Fuerth, Germany, explored the possibility of using some of our footage for an exhibit on Heinrich Berolzheimer, and a PhD candidate from UCLA used films from the CPL collection to research his dissertation on the Chicago Chapter of the Black Panthers. In 2010, CFA created a research station with a computer and Steenbeck 16mm viewing machine for on-site research. This station has been utilized by graduate students from The School of the Art Institute, Northwestern University, University of New Hampshire, University of Chicago and Chicago Columbia College.

### **What is the nature and mission of your institution?**

Chicago Film Archives (CFA) was formed in late 2003 to house, preserve and care for the Chicago Public Library's (CPL) collection of 4,500 16mm films - a collection the library could no longer keep. These films were a springboard for CFA to develop a regional film archive committed to the acquisition, preservation,

study and exhibition of films that reflect the character and heritage of the Midwest. Over the last five years, the collection has grown to approximately 9,900 film prints and elements, all donated by Chicago-area filmmakers, collectors and institutions.

CFA's mission and purpose is to serve institutions and filmmakers of this region by establishing a repository for institutional and private film collections; to serve a variety of educational, cultural and academic communities by making the films available locally, nationally and internationally for exhibition, research and production; and to serve our culture by restoring and preserving those films that are rare or unique.

One of CFA's most valuable assets is the talented and committed staff and board members that work regularly and energetically on the growth and development of the organization. Nancy Watrous, Executive Director of CFA, holds a full-time salaried position. Anne Wells, Processing Archivist, works 30-35 hours per week and becomes a salaried employee mid 2010. Michelle Puetz, Director of Programming and film archivist, works approximately 10 hours a week. In 2010, CFA will hire a full-time digital librarian to lead a project (funded by the Gaylord & Dorothy Foundation and the NHPRC) that entails the creation of finding aids for all 44 of CFA's collections. These finding aids will be deployed on CFA's website by mid 2011. University of Indiana PhD candidate, Andy Urich will research and compile content for the finding aids. With additional office space, the archive is now open to the public at least 1,600 hours during the year. Two unpaid summer interns work at the archive each year. CFA has supervised interns from film and preservation programs at New York University, the University of Texas, the School of the Art Institute, and Dartmouth University. Board members provide in-kind legal, accounting, graphic arts, and IT services. CFA's 2009 operating budget was \$114,000.

#### **Has your institution ever had a preservation or conservation assessment or consultation?**

Chicago Film Archives, NFP completed a preservation assessment, underwritten by the National Endowment for the Humanities Preservation Assistance Grant. William O'Farrell, the former Chief of Moving Image and Audio Preservation at the National Archives of Canada, completed the assessment in May, 2007, with the assistance of moving image archivist, Carolyn Faber. This current grant application is to fulfill recommendations outlined in the assessment report.

#### **What is the importance of this project to the institution?**

In its six and a half short years, CFA has acquired more than 40 collections, totaling approximately 9,900 film items. In 2007, with the support of the National Endowment for the Humanities Preservation Assistance Grant and the Gaylord & Dorothy Donnelley Foundation, CFA initiated the multi-phased Core Collections Project (CCP), designed to more effectively process and access these collections. The CCP's first phase was aimed at stabilizing the uniquely Midwestern films described above. Collections processing standards were established and implemented by rewinding the 16mm films onto archival cores, re-canning them in archival plastic vented cans, labeling them and placing them on new horizontal shelving. In spite of this work, about half of CFA's films remain on vertical shelving, most of the McMahon interviews relating to the political events of the 60s and 70s remain on original ¼" reels, and still many of the 8mm films remain in their original boxes, cans and reels. These Regular 8mm and Super 8mm collections are comprised of home movies dating from the early 30s through the 70s as well as films that document mid-century industrial fairs, railroad fairs, civil war reenactments and national park scenes. All too often, these small gauge films are ignored and undervalued. Without being stabilized, processed and cataloged, these historically neglected films will never be accessible for research or exhibition.

With this National Endowment for the Humanities Preservation Assistance Grant, CFA would be able to purchase additional horizontal shelving for the Chicago Public Library Collection and additional 8mm/1/4" audio archival cans and cores that were recommended in the Collections Assessment of 2007.

Finally, CFA was honored to be invited to speak at the 2010 Midwest Archive Conference on the value that the NEH-PAG grant provides young institutions that incorporate preservation mandates. Because infrastructure is typically invisible to the public, it is particularly important when behind-the-scenes costs are at the forefront of a grant opportunity. Without this essential funding that the NEH-PAG provides, access would be impossible.

**What are the names and qualifications of the consultant/staff involved in the project?**

Director Nancy Watrous will coordinate the acquisition of the equipment and supplies. Anne Wells, CFA Processing Archivist, will supervise the migration of films from the vertical to horizontal shelving. Nancy Watrous, who has twenty years experience as a film producer, is the founder and Executive Director of CFA. She negotiates contracts, writes grants, manages the budget, designs programs and sets goals to ensure the sustainability and growth of CFA. She will administer the grant. Anne Wells has worked with CFA for over three years. Her work has included accessioning and inspections of films; transferring the films to video and organizing the digital assets for easy accessibility.

**What are plan of work and timetable for the project?**

Week one and two

- Research current pricing for shelves, cans and reels (Watrous)
- Plan for placement of new shelving and transfer of films (Watrous, Wells)
- Order shelving, cans and reels (Watrous)

Week three and four

Put up shelving and arrange films and tapes on new shelving to be stored and processed as time allows. (Wells, intern)

*The following portion of the project (the labor) would be partially funded by another grant and CFA general operations funds.*

Week five – twenty-five

- Re-core and re-can 8mm films and 1/4" audio tapes (Wells)