



AVMPI



Smithsonian
Libraries and Archives

IMPACT REPORT 2023



avpreservation.si.edu



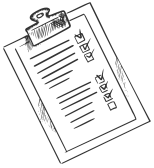
Year in Review

In 2023, the Audiovisual Media Preservation Initiative saw overwhelming growth--in people, resources, and enthusiasm. By July, we had all six team members on board, and we hit the ground running with vendor procurement packages, cataloging and preparing collections for digital transfer, planning and acquiring equipment for in-house lab spaces, hosting online and in-person events, and looking for sustainable funding resources both within the Smithsonian and with external partners.

As our program continues to blossom, AVMPI seeks to broaden our understanding and access to the Smithsonian's audio, video, and film collections. By providing pan-institutional preservation and accessibility-compliant services, while also creating transparent standards and documentation, we strive to support our colleagues on their own individual preservation journeys within the Smithsonian and, more widely, in the field of audiovisual preservation.

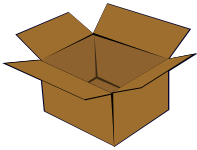
The statistics, events, and stories reflected in this report provide a small window into the impact AVMPI has had since its inception in 2021. Our sincerest thanks to our colleagues caring for these unique collections and to our supporters who continue to champion our efforts.

Alison Reppert Gerber
Head of Preservation Programs
Smithsonian Libraries and Archives



32

projects initiated



9

projects sent to
vendors



6

Scan Club
collaborations

206

files ingested
into the DAMS

10



unit partners

AAA, AAG, CFCH, HSFA,
NASM, NMAAHC,
NMAfA, NMAH-AC,
NMAI, NPG

Funder Spotlight



20 projects | 6 units



National Collections Program
Celebrating 30 Years of Stewardship

\$302,200.00

Supported primarily by the Smithsonian's National Collections Program (NCP), AVMPI has received Collections Care Initiative (CCI) funding for vendor digitization services (\$155,000), equipment (\$47,600), supplies (\$5,000), captioning and audio description services (\$50,700), professional development opportunities (\$45,000), and workshops (\$8,900). This level of funding enables AVMPI to achieve its most critical goals, including the holistic preservation and management of SD600 collections, the building of Institutional capacity for continued preservation, and the training of staff who play a vital role in the long-term care of our audio, video, and film collections.

In addition to NCP's generous support of our operational needs, they support the six (6) full-time staff members who make up the amazing AVMPI team!

15 films | 5 units

National  Foundation

\$94,026.50

With assistance from AVMPI, five (5) Smithsonian units received funding from the National Film Preservation Foundation (NFPF) to preserve some of our most important film collections. The NFPF offers several types of preservation grants supporting the creation of preservation and access copies of American films of historic and cultural interest.

Archives of American Gardens | \$20,000 Basic Grant

"Where New Flowers Are Bred" (1947-48) and "Growing a Flower Garden from Seed" (1950)

Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage | \$19,285 Basic Grant

Film documenting the CFCH's second Mall folklife festival, "Festival in Washington" (1968)



Human Studies Film Archives | \$20,510.08 Matching Grant

Four documentary motion picture films from the Bess Lomax Hawes Collection: "Georgia Sea Island Singers" (aka Yonder Comes Day), "Buckdancer," "Pizza Pizza Daddy-O," and "Say Old Man Can You Play the Fiddle"

National Air and Space Museum | \$12,000.10 Basic Grant

FAA-produced documentary film, "Dulles International Airport Engineering Progress Report," Part 2 (1961)

**National Museum of American History – Archives Center |
\$22,231.32 Matching Grant**

Seven (7) films from the Hills Bros. Coffee Company, Incorporated Records (NMAH.AC.0395), "Construction of the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge (1933-1937)"

11 films | 2 units

BECAUSE OF
HER STORY



\$70,200.00

The historic importance of women's creative labor and contributions to motion picture film production, behind-the-camera, has gone largely unrecognized. AVMPI's pan-Institutional Splice: Her (Piecing Together the Hidden Histories of Women Film Editors) project highlights and celebrates these collections across the Smithsonian through the digitization, restoration, and streaming of 11 remarkable women-edited short films.

Human Studies Film Archive, National Anthropological Archives (HSFA-NAA)

Patricia Jaffe, Editor: "The High and Lonesome Sound" (1963); Helen Levitt, Editor: "The End of an Old Song" (1973); Pam Wintle, Archival Editor: "Btsunchun" (1979) and "Heruka" (1980); Barbara Johnson, Cinematographer and Archival Editor: "Jyapu" (1981) and "We Know How to do These Things: Birth in a Newar Village" (1978)

Smithsonian Institutional Archives (SIA)

Sophy Burnham, Director and Editor: "The Smithsonian Whale" (1963) and "The Leaf Thieves" (1964); Karen Loveland, Co-Producer and Editor: "From Clay to Kiln" (1968), "Endangered Species" (n.d.), "The Sawyer and His Mill" (1969), "Volcanoes" (1970), and, "Stamps" (n.d.)



1 machine | 1 unit



Smithsonian

\$32,800.00

According to pan-institutional collection survey data, there are over 13,000 3/4-inch U-matic videotapes held across eleven (11) museum units and research centers, making 3/4-inch U-matic videotape one of the most significantly held formats at the Smithsonian. This format also faces widespread physical deterioration issues, most notably binder hydrolysis. To alleviate binder hydrolysis, a two-step desiccation and cleaning process is essential to prepare the videotapes for a successful digital transfer.

To support this process, the Smithsonian's Research Equipment Pool fund awarded funds for the equipment purchase of MMT Tape Chek 8600 cleaning machine for 3/4-inch U-matic videotapes.



Sunday at the Smithsonian



On April 30, AVMPI co-presented Day 4 of the Library of Congress' Radio Preservation Task Force (RPTF) conference in the NMNH's Baird Auditorium. Radio-centric audio artists Anna Friz and Jeff Kolar performed live and held a post performance conversation with amateur HAM radio enthusiast/media archivist Rick Prelinger.

Presenters from American History and OCIO spoke about SI's radio collections and broadcasting history, and a 'Listening Party' of clips from academic and archive participants concluded the final day of the conference.

Including the Radio Preservation Task Force, the AVMPI Team had the opportunity to attend and present at several other conferences throughout 2023.

Putting the Audio in the Audiovisual Media Preservation Initiative

[Association of Recorded Sound Collections \(Pittsburgh, PA\)](#)

Siobhan Hagan, Dan Hockstein

The Smithsonian's Audiovisual Media Preservation Initiative

[Audio Engineering Society Conference \(Culpeper, VA\)](#)

Siobhan Hagan, Dan Hockstein, Alison Reppert Gerber

AVMPI Tour at Capital Gallery

[The Society for American Archivists \(Washington, DC\)](#)

Felicia Boretzky, Siobhan Hagan

The Smithsonian's Audiovisual Media Preservation Initiative

[International Association of Sound Archives \(Istanbul, Turkey\)](#)

Felicia Boretzky, Walter Forsberg, Dan Hockstein, Kayla Henry-Griffin

The Smithsonian's Audiovisual Media Preservation Initiative

[No Time to Wait 7 \(Prague, Czech Republic\)](#)

Siobhan Hagan, Dan Hockstein, Brianna Toth

Building a Sustainable Initiative within the World's Largest Museum Complex

[Association of Moving Image Archivists \(Tulsa, OK\)](#)

Walter Forsberg, Alison Reppert Gerber, Brianna Toth

To further the mission of AVMPI, staff are actively involved with committees both within the Smithsonian and with the broader audiovisual preservation community.

- **Audiovisual Archivist Institutional Leadership (AVAIL)**
- **DATs True project**



- **DV Commander project**
- **Federal Agencies Digital Guidelines Initiative (FADGI)**
 - Audiovisual Working Group + Collaborators on Guidelines for IRENE System Products for Long Term Retention
- **Strategic Plan Implementation Team D5 (Digital)**

Welcome to Scan Club

To encourage resource-sharing among audiovisual archivists and collection managers, the AVMPI Team and the staff of the National Museum of African American History and Culture (NMAAHC) piloted the concept of a shared resource film scanner through collaboration on a project termed, 'Scan Club.' Across six half-day sessions, motion picture film collection items from five (5) SI museum units were transported to NMAAHC's extant motion picture film scanner on the Mall. Through knowledge-exchange and digitization sessions, the collection items were scanned and, later, ingested into the DAMS. The following collections have been successfully digitized via Scan Club:



Archives of American Gardens

W. Atlee Burpee & Company Collections [3 home movies and 1 television kinescope from the 1950s]

National Museum of African Art

Priya Ramrakha Collection [1 sound newsreel from the 1960s]

National Museum of American History – Archives Center

Allen Balcolm Dumont Collection [7 television commercials from the 1950s and 60s]

National Museum of American History – Archives Center

Hills Bros. Coffee Company Collection [2 television kinescope broadcasts, including “lost” episode of 1961’s Meet Me at Disneyland]



National Zoological Park, Exhibits Collections

[1 documentary film about the history of feline evolution]

National Museum of American History – Archives Center

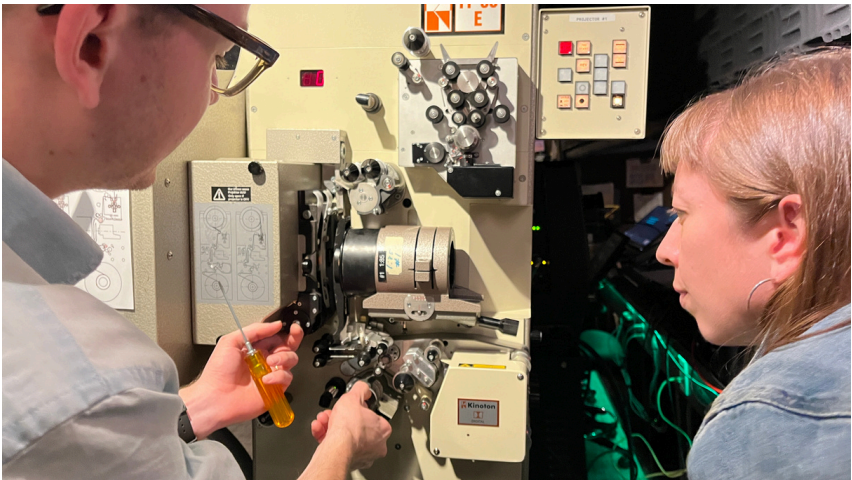
Miscellaneous Film Collection [1 SI-produced exhibit film featuring John Belushi and Gilda Radner]

Smithsonian Institution Archives – Records of the Office of Telecommunications

[2 SI-produced documentary and exhibits films made for the Freer Gallery in the 1970s]

A Focus on Skill-Sharing

Title : Federal Projection Society
Instructor(s) : Chicago Film Society



On October 16-17, AVMPPI's spearheading of the Federal Projection Society subcommittee of AVAIL led a two-day workshop on film projection. Taught by Julian Antos and Rebecca Lyon of the Chicago Film Society, and hosted by our SI cousin-bureau National Gallery of Art, the workshop twinned detailed lectures on the history of film presentation with hands-on practice in film inspection, prep, threading, and projection, and show-personship.



Visitor
Escort Required
The University
of
Hertfordshire
Hertfordshire



Increasing Discoverability

Project : National Congress of American Indians

Unit : National Museum of the American Indian

The National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) contains over 800 audio and video assets documenting the oldest and largest American Indian and Alaskan native organization in the United States. Founded in 1944, the NCAI is still active today. This collection documents organizational proceedings and events between 1952 and 1997. The AVMPI team has been working closely with NMAI archivists to rehouse, catalog, and barcode collections, while simultaneously updating the unit's finding aid for improved discoverability.

This collection is an excellent example of AVMPI's two-pronged approach to digitization: shuttling our most common formats to newly-optimized, in-house labs and utilizing vendors for formats that are less frequently encountered or require specialized expertise. (Left) Felicia Boretzky barcodes NCAI collections in preparation for digitization.

Learn more about the collection:
<https://sova.si.edu/record/NMAI.AC.010.001>



Use in the office, home and school; for all applications and reliable performance. The immediate Start features give instant, from end to end, you can record conveniently. Each Bud Cassette has special high-contrast and telephone answering equipment, and stacks of ultra-reversing high-reel speeds.

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Smithsonian Institution
Audiovisual Media Preservation Initiative
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Smithsonian Institution
Audiovisual Media Preservation Initiative
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NMAI.AC.010.001 AC0022
NCAI Collection
0000302

AVMPI Presents



AVMPI's inaugural streamcast brought together media archivist staff from NMAAHC, NMAH-AC, CFCH, and SLA to share a smorgasbord of audiovisual collections, including:

- Clips from "H2 Worker," a film restoration in-progress introduced by Blake McDowell;
- DuMont Television commercials introduced by Leigh Gialanella;
- Computer pioneer Margot Comstock video oral history introduced by Kira Sobers;
- Documentation of the "Silk Road" Folk Life Festival introduced by Dave Walker.

Rewatch here! <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xwRXkJn3h5E>

AVMPI's second streamcast celebrated women's history month with four clips and an engaging post-show Q&A.

- Whitney Houston's 1991 Super Bowl rendition of the US national anthem, from the collections of NMAAHC;
- Pearl Bowser's cable access cooking show, "A Pinch of Soul," introduced by Emily Nabasny;
- SLA's Video History Collection interview with Marie Bastarache from Waltham Clock Company, introduced by Kira Sobers;
- "Toccata for Coy Contracts," an enigmatic SI inside-joke film made for Charles Eames, introduced by Walter Forsberg.

AVMPI's third streamcast welcomed NASM's resident Sally K. Ride expert archivist Patti Williams, to share newly-digitized clips from Ride's Papers. This project received support from the American Women's History Initiative Pool Fund.

Rewatch here! <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gao3PR8SUIs>



AVMPI PRESENTS A Zoom With a View

Premiering the
Audiovisual Media Preservation Initiative

Online Screening
January 17th, 2023
6pm ET
library.si.edu/AVMPI-Presents



Smithsonian
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AVMPI PRESENTS THE VIEW FROM HER

Highlights from the
Audiovisual Media Preservation Initiative

Online Screening
March 15, 2023
6pm ET
<https://s.si.edu/avmpi-whm>



Smithsonian
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AVMPI PRESENTS LUNCH WITH SALLY RIDE

Highlights from the
Audiovisual Media Preservation Initiative

Online Screening
May 25th, 2023
12pm ET
<https://s.si.edu/avmpi-sally>



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AVMPI in the Classroom

From August 14-18, Walter and Siobhan taught eleven (11) students in the week-long “Intro to Audiovisual Preservation” course of the UCLA-Smithsonian co-presented 2023 California Rare Book School. This course introduced the practice of audiovisual preservation and access through a balance of lectures and experiential, hands-on activities working directly with the equipment and expert guidance at the Smithsonian.

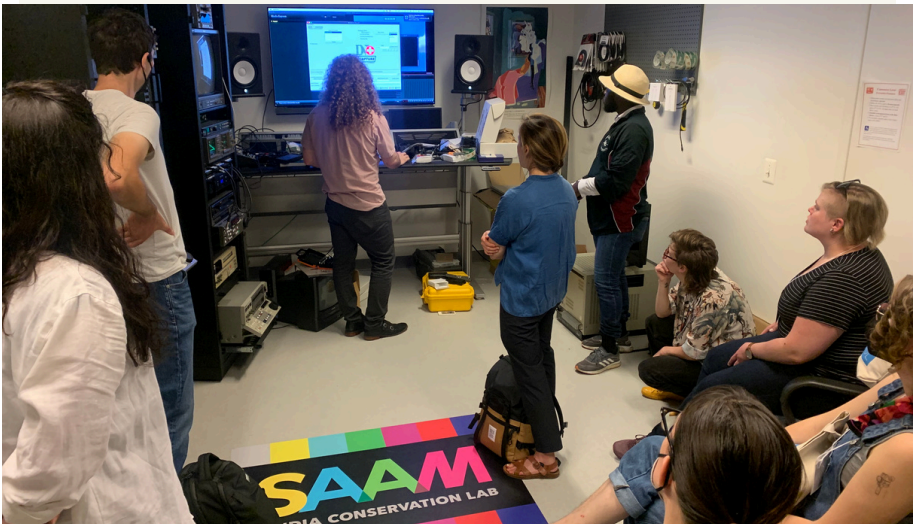


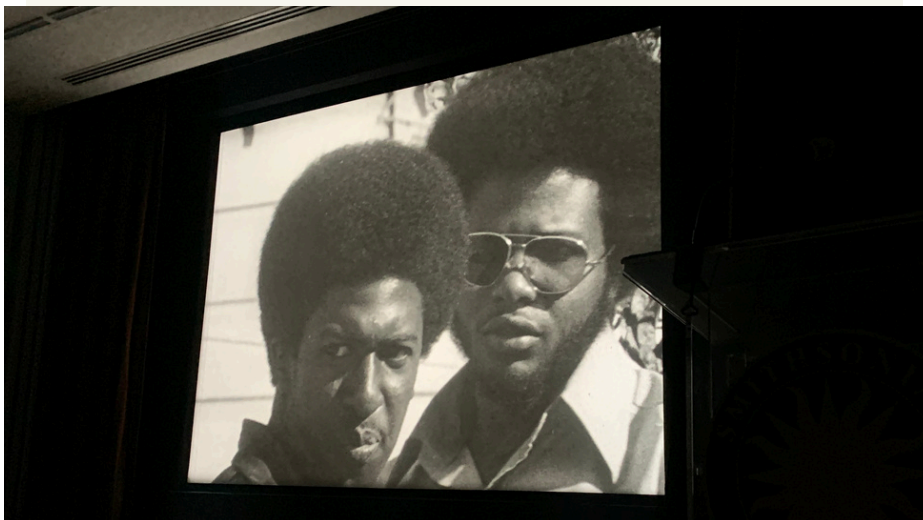
Throughout the week, students were able to build conceptual and linguistic vocabularies about audiovisual collections care, including: handling, conservation, storage, and digitization reformatting; gain exposure to key technologies, historical developments, texts and documents about the discipline and practicum of audiovisual preservation; learn basic handling and care procedures for a variety of physical analog media carriers;

visit Smithsonian media conservation and digitization laboratories, meet staff and expand professional networks and educational resources for audiovisual preservation; and have much fun!



Students also visited the Colorlab motion picture film laboratory in Rockville, MD and several SI media preservation laboratories, including our colleagues at NMAAHC, CFCH, and SAAM (below).





On August 16, as part of the California Rare Book School, AVMPI presented an evening film screening in the Freer's Meyer Auditorium. The program paired NMAAHC's archival 35mm print of Charles Burnett's 1977 landmark feature "Killer of Sheep," made while a graduate student at UCLA, with a premiere of the AVMPI's first 16mm film preservation project: a restoration of Charles and Ray Eames' 1970 Smithsonian exhibition film, "The Black Ships."





California
RARE
BOOK
SCHOOL

Through the Loupe

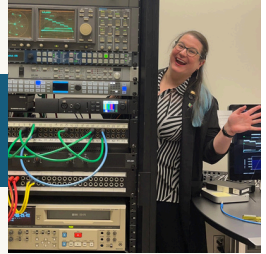


Pamela Wintle

Human Studies Film Archive | ["Unbound" blog link](#)

Emily Nabasny

NMAAHC | ["Unbound" blog link](#)

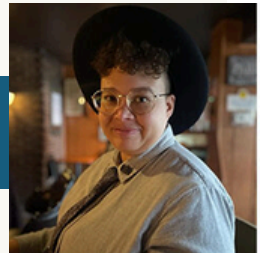


Analiese Oetting

NMAH Archives Center | ["Unbound" blog link](#)

CK Ming

NMAAHC | ["Unbound" blog link](#)



Rick Prelinger

Office of Telecommunications | ["Unbound" blog link](#)

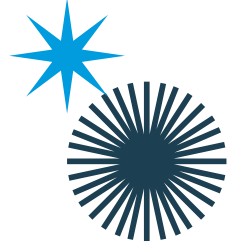
to the Year Ahead

- 1** Build and optimize digital transfer suites at Capital Gallery, the Cultural Resource Center, and the National Museum of American History.
- 2** Increase capacity for conservation stabilization and treatments at Capital Gallery.
- 3** Increase partnerships and program awareness across the Smithsonian to maximize AVMPI impact.
- 4** Complete all FY2023 in-house, grant-funded, and AVMPI-identified projects.
- 5** Develop operating standards and optimize workflows.
- 6** Increase funding to support current and future goals.

The Magic Makers



Alison Reppert Gerber
Head of Preservation Programs



Walter Forsberg
Curator of Audiovisual Media



Siobhan Hagan
Initiative Coordinator



Dan Hockstein
Audio Preservation Specialist



Brianna Toth
Video Preservation Specialist



Kayla Henry-Griffin
Media Collection Specialist



Felicia Boretzky
Media Collection Specialist

