



# Legacy Business Registry Staff Report

HEARING DATE OCTOBER 24, 2016

## ODDBALL FILMS

*Application No.:* LBR-2016-17-007  
*Business Name:* Oddball Films  
*Business Address:* 275 Capp Street  
*District:* District 9  
*Applicant:* Stephen Parr, Director  
*Nomination Date:* August 15, 2016  
*Nominated By:* Supervisor David Campos  
*Staff Contact:* Richard Kurylo  
legacybusiness@sfgov.org

### BUSINESS DESCRIPTION

Oddball Films is a stock footage licensing company in the Mission District on Capp Street between 16th Street and 17th Street that has served as an archival and teaching facility focusing on film collection and film preservation. Stephen Parr, the owner, has been a collector of rare and unusual historical films since 1984 and officially registered the business in 1994 after gaining a following of film industry clients seeking unique and rare footage to use. Oddball Films has worked with many renowned, innovative, and pioneer filmmakers and film professionals often seeking footage to use for films based on telling the stories and histories of underrepresented groups. The business has grown in its library and archive collection and has become a "service hub" for award-winning filmmakers in San Francisco. Oddball Films also offers a film and media intern training program that teaches students about archiving and film preservation and, for the past ten years, has offered public screenings, seminars, classes, and benefits.

### CRITERION 1: Has the applicant has operated in SF for 30 or more years, with no break in SF operations exceeding two years?

No, the applicant has not operated in San Francisco for 30 or more years.

275 Capp Street from 1994-Present (22 years)

**PER CRITERION 1:** Has the business operated in San Francisco for more than 20 years but less than 30 years, had no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years, significantly contributed to the history or identity of a particular neighborhood or community and, if not included in the Registry, face a significant risk of displacement?

Yes. The building lease for Oddball Films is up for renewal in January 2017, and they face a significant risk of displacement. If they were to be displaced, they would face extreme difficulty in finding another 6,000 square foot space.



SMALL BUSINESS COMMISSION

MARK DWIGHT, PRESIDENT  
REGINA DICK-ENDRIZZI, DIRECTOR



CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO

EDWIN M. LEE, MAYOR

**CRITERION 2: Has the applicant contributed to the neighborhood's history and/or the identity of a particular neighborhood or community?**

Yes, the applicant has contributed to the Mission District neighborhood's history and identity.

The Historic Preservation Commission recommended the applicant as qualifying, noting the following ways the applicant contributed to the neighborhood's history and/or the identity of a particular neighborhood or community:

- Oddball Films is associated with the craft of film preservation.
- Oddball Films has contributed to the Mission District and greater San Francisco history and identity by actively preserving an eclectic array of historical footage of San Francisco. The business recognizes the importance of preserving these films not only as a way to understand film making as it has evolved throughout history but also as a way to understand the history of San Francisco and to offer their archives as a resource for filmmakers. Oddball Films also sees the importance of passing on their knowledge by offering an internship that introduces students and aspiring film professionals in the Bay Area to the art of archiving and film preservation.
- The business has been cited in the following publications:
  - Screen Magazine, 11/30/1998, "Truly an Oddball: Finding freaky footage," by Carl Kozlowski
  - Screen Magazine, 10/16-23/2000, "Oddball gets even: Eclectic film footage collector turns art into business," by Jane Burek
  - SF Chronicle, 8/19/2003, "Wait! Planning to toss that old home movie of Granny's birthday? It may be a dust collector to you, but it's a historical treasure to the San Francisco Media Archive," by Peter Hartlaub
  - "Stock Footage Re-Constructs an American Experience," by Iain Stasukevich
  - AMIA Newsletter, Spring 2010, "Oddball Reunites Director Peter Clifton with Lost Easybeats Film," by Ellie Duddridge
  - Mission Local, 10/5/2010, "Keaton's 'Steamboat Bill Jr.' Plus 'Buster Keaton Rides Again.'"
  - Mission Local, 10/5/2010, "Oddball Films: Let's Get Schooled"
  - Moholy Ground Magazine, "Where Analog is King: Oddball Film + Video," by Aimee Pavy
  - The Evening Class Blog, 3/31/2011, "The Disposable & The Discontinuous: The evening Class Interview with Stephen Parr," by Michael Guillen
  - SF Weekly, "Best of San Francisco: Arts & Entertainment"

**CRITERION 3: Is the applicant committed to maintaining the physical features or traditions that define the business, including craft, culinary, or art forms?**

Yes, the subject business is committed to maintaining the physical features and traditions that define the business.

**HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION**

The Historic Preservation Commission recommends that Oddball Films qualifies for the Legacy Business Registry under Administrative Code Section 2A.242(b)(2) and recommends safeguarding of the below listed physical features and traditions.



SMALL BUSINESS ASSISTANCE CENTER / SMALL BUSINESS COMMISSION  
1 DR. CARLTON B. GOODLETT PLACE, ROOM 110, SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA 94102-4681  
Small Business Assistance Center (415) 554-6134 / Small Business Commission (415) 554-6481

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**Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business:**

- Extensive film library stacked on shelves (houses upwards of 50,000 films).
- Tradition of teaching and practicing film archiving and film preservation.
- Vintage freight elevator.
- Wooden stairs leading up to archive.
- Collection of ephemera that includes vintage signs, antique film projectors, movie cameras, and other film-related antiques, among other eclectic items; including the "Reasons" portion of the iconic "17 Reasons Why!" sign that once sat on top of Thrift Town on Mission & 17th Street.
- Walls in the restrooms with pop art images by San Francisco stencil artist Scott Williams.
- A number of murals created by community muralists as well as local artist Stephen Bauer located on the side of the building that houses Oddball Films.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that the San Francisco Small Business Commission include Oddball Films currently located at 275 Capp Street in the Legacy Business Registry as a Legacy Business under Administrative Code Section 2A.242.

Richard Kurylo, Manager  
Legacy Business Program



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## Small Business Commission Draft Resolution

HEARING DATE OCTOBER 24, 2016

### ODDBALL FILMS

#### LEGACY BUSINESS REGISTRY RESOLUTION NO. \_\_\_\_\_

<i>Application No.:</i>	LBR-2016-17-007
<i>Business Name:</i>	Oddball Films
<i>Business Address:</i>	275 Capp Street
<i>District:</i>	District 9
<i>Applicant:</i>	Stephen Parr, Director
<i>Nomination Date:</i>	August 15, 2016
<i>Nominated By:</i>	Supervisor David Campos
<i>Staff Contact:</i>	Richard Kurylo legacybusiness@sfgov.org

#### **ADOPTING FINDINGS APPROVING THE LEGACY BUSINESS REGISTRY APPLICATION FOR ODDBALL FILMS, CURRENTLY LOCATED AT 275 CAPP STREET.**

**WHEREAS**, in accordance with Administrative Code Section 2A.242, the Office of Small Business maintains a registry of Legacy Businesses in San Francisco (the "Registry") to recognize that longstanding, community-serving businesses can be valuable cultural assets of the City and to be a tool for providing educational and promotional assistance to Legacy Businesses to encourage their continued viability and success; and

**WHEREAS**, the subject business has operated in San Francisco for 30 or more years, with no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years; or

**WHEREAS**, the subject business has operated in San Francisco for more than 20 years but less than 30 years, with no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years, and the Small Business Commission finds that the business has significantly contributed to the history or identity of a particular neighborhood or community and, if not included in the Registry, the business would face a significant risk of displacement; and

**WHEREAS**, the subject business has contributed to the neighborhood's history and identity; and

**WHEREAS**, the subject business is committed to maintaining the physical features and traditions that define the business; and

**WHEREAS**, at a duly noticed public hearing held on October 24, 2016, the San Francisco Small Business Commission reviewed documents and correspondence, and heard oral testimony on the Legacy Business Registry application; therefore





SMALL BUSINESS COMMISSION

MARK DWIGHT, PRESIDENT  
REGINA DICK-ENDRIZZI, DIRECTOR



CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO

EDWIN M. LEE, MAYOR

**BE IT RESOLVED** that the Small Business Commission hereby includes Oddball Films in the Legacy Business Registry as a Legacy Business under Administrative Code Section 2A.242.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Small Business Commission recommends safeguarding the below listed physical features and traditions at Oddball Films:

Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business:

- Extensive film library stacked on shelves (houses upwards of 50,000 films).
- Tradition of teaching and practicing film archiving and film preservation.
- Vintage freight elevator.
- Wooden stairs leading up to archive.
- Collection of ephemera that includes vintage signs, antique film projectors, movie cameras, and other film-related antiques, among other eclectic items; including the "Reasons" portion of the iconic "17 Reasons Why!" sign that once sat on top of Thrift Town on Mission & 17th Street.
- Walls in the restrooms with pop art images by San Francisco stencil artist Scott Williams.
- A number of murals created by community muralists as well as local artist Stephen Bauer located on the side of the building that houses Oddball Films.

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I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was ADOPTED by the Small Business Commission on October 24, 2016.

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Regina Dick-Endrizzi  
Director

RESOLUTION NO. \_\_\_\_\_

Ayes –  
Nays –  
Abstained –  
Absent –



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## Legacy Business Registry

# Application Review Sheet

*Application No.:* LBR-2016-17-007  
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*Nomination Date:* August 15, 2016  
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**CRITERION 1:** Has the applicant has operated in San Francisco for 30 or more years, with no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ ☒ No

The business start date according to SF OpenData was 1994. The building lease for Oddball Films is up for renewal in January 2017, and they face a significant risk of displacement.

**PER CRITERION 1:** Has the business operated in San Francisco for more than 20 years but less than 30 years, significantly contributed to the history or identity of a particular neighborhood or community and, if not included in the Registry, face a significant risk of displacement?  
\_\_\_\_\_ ☒ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

**CRITERION 2:** Has the applicant contributed to the neighborhood's history and/or the identity of a particular neighborhood or community? \_\_\_\_\_ ☒ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

**CRITERION 3:** Is the applicant committed to maintaining the physical features or traditions that define the business, including craft, culinary, or art forms? \_\_\_\_\_ ☒ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

**NOTES:** NA

**DELIVERY DATE TO HPC:** September 3, 2016

Richard Kurylo  
Manager, Legacy Business Program





Member Board of Supervisors  
District 9

City and County of San Francisco

**DAVID CAMPOS**

August 15, 2016

Re: Nomination of Oddball Films to the Legacy Business Registry

Dear Director Kurylo:

I am writing to nominate to the Legacy Business Registry – Oddball Films. Oddball Films is a business located on Capp St since 1994 and has been in existence since 1984. The Oddball houses an ever expanding film library. It is an educational space which teaches about archiving and film preservation.

Oddball films is undoubtedly a cultural asset for our City, having provided footage for many iconic films. As the business states on the application, "With its strong local presence, Oddball Films is a service hub for award-winning filmmakers in San Francisco. We supply footage for their productions and license clips of their work to third parties. The archive is a premier source of historical material about the Bay Area, providing footage for major motion pictures such as Milk and Zodiac, as well as recent documentaries like The Freedom to Marry and Political Animals"

This Mission-based business plays an essential role in the cultural identity of San Francisco and it is my distinct honor to nominate Oddball Films to become part of San Francisco's Legacy Business Registry.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Campos".

David Campos



Legacy Business Registry  
City Hall, Room 110  
1 Dr Carlton B. Goodlett Place  
San Francisco, Ca 94102

Hello:

We are excited about the opportunity that the Legacy Business Registry provides for helping businesses in San Francisco survive and maintain the character and services that help our communities thrive. And we are thrilled to be among the first group of applicants to this important program.

We have done our best to follow the guidelines in the application to make the process as straightforward as possible. Our materials are submitted in folders and sub-folders following your outline. If any attachments cannot be opened or you have any questions for us, please contact our office and we will respond right away.

Thank you for the opportunity to apply to the Legacy Business Registry and for your consideration of our application.

Best regards,

Stephen Parr  
Director

Oddball Films

275 Capp Street, San Francisco, CA 94110  
tel 415.558.8112 fax 415.558.8116 [www.oddballfilm.com](http://www.oddballfilm.com)

## Section One:

### Business / Applicant Information. Provide the following information:

- The name, mailing address, and other contact information of the business;
- The name of the person who owns the business. For businesses with multiple owners, identify the person(s) with the highest ownership stake in the business;
- The name, title, and contact information of the applicant;
- The business's San Francisco Business Account Number and entity number with the Secretary of State, if applicable.

NAME OF BUSINESS:		
Oddball Films		
BUSINESS OWNER(S) (identify the person(s) with the highest ownership stake in the business)		
Stephen Parr		
CURRENT BUSINESS ADDRESS:	TELEPHONE:	
275 Capp Street, San Francisco, CA 94110	((415) 558-8112	
	EMAIL:	
	info@oddballfilms.com	
WEBSITE:	FACEBOOK PAGE:	YELP PAGE
www.oddballfilms.com	https://www.facebook.com/oddballfilm/	N/A

APPLICANT'S NAME	
Stephen Parr	<input type="checkbox"/> Same as Business
APPLICANT'S TITLE	
Director	
APPLICANT'S ADDRESS:	TELEPHONE:
275 Capp Street	(415) 902-1502
	EMAIL:
	stephen@oddballfilms.com

SAN FRANCISCO BUSINESS ACCOUNT NUMBER:	SECRETARY OF STATE ENTITY NUMBER (if applicable):
0936119-01-001	N/A

OFFICIAL USE: Completed by OSB Staff	
NAME OF NOMINATOR:	DATE OF NOMINATION:

## Section Two:

### Business Location(s).

List the business address of the original San Francisco location, the start date of business, and the dates of operation at the original location. Check the box indicating whether the original location of the business in San Francisco is the founding location of the business. If the business moved from its original location and has had additional addresses in San Francisco, identify all other addresses and the dates of operation at each address. For businesses with more than one location, list the additional locations in section three of the narrative.

ORIGINAL SAN FRANCISCO ADDRESS:	ZIP CODE:	START DATE OF BUSINESS
275 Capp Street	94110	10/18/94
IS THIS LOCATION THE FOUNDING LOCATION OF THE BUSINESS?	DATES OF OPERATION AT THIS LOCATON	
<input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	10/18/94-to present	

OTHER ADDRESSES (if applicable):	ZIP CODE:	DATES OF OPERATION
		Start:
		End:

OTHER ADDRESSES (if applicable):	ZIP CODE:	DATES OF OPERATION
		Start:
		End:

OTHER ADDRESSES (if applicable):	ZIP CODE:	DATES OF OPERATION
		Start:
		End:

OTHER ADDRESSES (if applicable):	ZIP CODE:	DATES OF OPERATION
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		Start:
		End:

OTHER ADDRESSES (if applicable):	ZIP CODE:	DATES OF OPERATION
		Start:
		End:



## Section Three:

### Disclosure Statement.

#### San Francisco Taxes, Business Registration, Licenses, Labor Laws and Public Information Release.

This section is verification that all San Francisco taxes, business registration, and licenses are current and complete, and there are no current violations of San Francisco labor laws. This information will be verified and a business deemed not current in with all San Francisco taxes, business registration, and licenses, or has current violations of San Francisco labor laws, will not be eligible to apply for the Business Assistance Grant.

In addition, we are required to inform you that all information provided in the application will become subject to disclosure under the California Public Records Act.

Please read the following statements and check each to indicate that you agree with the statement. Then sign below in the space provided.

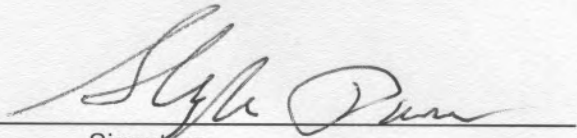
- ☒ I am authorized to submit this application on behalf of the business.
- ☒ I attest that the business is current on all of its San Francisco tax obligations.
- ☒ I attest that the business's business registration and any applicable regulatory license(s) are current.
- ☒ I attest that the Office of Labor Standards and Enforcement (OLSE) has not determined that the business is currently in violation of any of the City's labor laws, and that the business does not owe any outstanding penalties or payments ordered by the OLSE.
- ☒ I understand that documents submitted with this application may be made available to the public for inspection and copying pursuant to the California Public Records Act and San Francisco Sunshine Ordinance.
- ☒ I hereby acknowledge and authorize that all photographs and images submitted as part of the application may be used by the City without compensation.
- ☒ I understand that the Small Business Commission may revoke the placement of the business on the Registry if it finds that the business no longer qualifies, and that placement on the Registry does not entitle the business to a grant of City funds.

Stephen Parr 8/8/2016

Name (Print):

Date:

Signature:





## Historical Narrative Guide:

### Criterion 1: A short history of the business

Stephen Parr has been a collector of rare and unusual historical films since the early 1980s. He was a fixture of the art, literary, and music scene in San Francisco and often screened ambient visuals and curated films for live events around the city. His inventive film montages combined pop, history, technology, and unexpected cultural elements in a unique visual mix that made for an intriguing atmosphere for nightclub and gallery crowds.

In 1984, Parr's reputation for innovative work using film footage caught the attention of *Blade Runner* director Ridley Scott. Scott licensed Parr's footage for a project he was shooting in San Francisco. Having secured his first client and a well-known one at that, more clients followed and the business grew over time. As Stephen's initial part-time endeavors began to coalesce into a full-time occupation that required a commercial space, he moved to his current location at 275 Capp Street, and began to build his film archive, officially registering as a business in 1994.

During the 1990s, 16mm film was becoming more and more obsolete. School districts with massive libraries of educational films switched to video. They were eager to throw out large collections of 16mm for additional storage space. We gladly accepted these historically important collections that were otherwise destined for a landfill. Private collectors and movie theatres donated their holdings to us. What appeared as junk to some turned out to be valuable cultural artifacts to film producers, educators, and scholars.

Oddball Films gradually accumulated thousands of 16mm, 35mm and small gauge films. With a burgeoning film library, the business could provide an opportunity for others to learn about archiving and film preservation. In 1996, Stephen founded a film and media intern training program in which students inspect and catalogue celluloid donated to Oddball. He partnered with various institutions of higher learning such as the Library Science program at San Jose State so that students received college credit while interning. Oddball also trained students from local institutions such as San Francisco Art Institute, California College of the Arts, and San Francisco State University. Many interns later matriculated to film archiving programs at NYU and UCLA, and many were accepted to the prestigious film preservation program at the Selznick School.

With its strong local presence, Oddball Films is a service hub for award-winning filmmakers in San Francisco. We supply footage for their productions and license clips of their work to third parties. The archive is a premier source of historical material about the Bay Area, providing footage for major motion pictures such as *Milk* and *Zodiac*, as well as recent documentaries like *The Freedom to Marry* and *Political Animals*.

For over ten years, Oddball Films has held public screenings, seminars, speaking events, benefits, discussions, archive tours and classes integrating films from its highly curated archives. Today, Oddball Films works with an extensive range of clients from film students to new media makers to documentary and major feature film producers and directors. It provides pro bono services to local documentarians and also supplies footage to studios for productions like *Steve Jobs* and *OJ: Made in America*. And, of course, the archive continues to collect rare and fascinating films from around the world. What began organically as an activity and a passion for a local San Francisco artist, eventually became Oddball Films, one of the largest film archives in Northern California.

### How would the community be diminished if the business were sold, relocated, shut down, etc.?

First and foremost, Oddball Films is a part of San Francisco history. Its archive actively preserves the history of San Francisco on film. We are constantly in search of new acquisitions that chronicle the city, be it a 1941 amateur film of the Chinese community, *SF Rice Bowl Parade* or the avant-garde film by noted auteur Carroll Ballard, *Crystallization*. While it might be an exaggeration to say these films would end up in the trash if we closed, our collection would be scattered to the four winds, and most likely relocated in decentralized archives far away from San Francisco. The city would be losing a major cinematic resource.

Secondly, all of the services discussed in this application would be disrupted, if not eliminated entirely. No other archive in San Francisco trains interns to become film professionals. No other archive in San Francisco regularly programs non-commercial films on as regular a basis. No other archive collaborates with local filmmakers to get their visions realized. Because the Oddball collection is so vast and diverse, it has provided rare and critical footage available from no other source for films like *Milk*, and most recently *Political Animals* and *Freedom to Marry*. Filmmakers would lose the leading source of footage and the expertise our staff provides. The public would lose a venue in the neighborhood where they spent many hours being educated by a vast array of cinematic histories.

Finally, the greatest loss might be an intangible one. People came to and continue to live and work in the Mission because of the neighborhood's eclectic environment. And storefront by storefront, the area is losing the distinct and diverse personality that defined it. A singular sensibility has always been a cornerstone of Oddball Films' identity. Oddball Films not only provides employment for archivists and filmmakers representing the unusual, the underrepresented alternatives, as well as the historical iconic moments; we also preserve, discuss, and demonstrate in our films and in our business, the ideas that underscore those moments on film. We celebrate the offbeat, the alternative and attempt to preserve and regenerate those memories found on film.

The building lease for Oddball Films is up for renewal in January 2017, and we face a significant risk of displacement. If we were to be displaced, due to the ever-increasing rents in San Francisco alone, only a real estate miracle would allow us to reclaim the 6000 feet of square footage we hold. As an intangible, this building holds irretrievable history for the owner, staff, the filmmakers, interns, and many visitors to its doors. The development of a business is heavily influenced by time and place, by shared history in a particular community. If displaced, we can't imagine that Oddball Films would ever again be the vital central film resource for professionals, students and the surrounding community it is now. Oddball Films currently holds an irreplaceable position in the Bay Area as a primary film resource and has a dedicated community that cherishes its presence.

### **Criterion 2: Contribution to the history/ identity of the neighborhood, community or San Francisco**

As a center of creativity, Oddball Films epitomizes the appeal of the Mission District. Oddball Films is located in a mixed-use neighborhood of residential and commercial spaces, many of which house other creative businesses such as woodworking, painting, dance and recording studios. Within this building, our business continues a legacy of housing eclectic and artistic artifacts and being a tangible resource for the local and larger arts community. Before Oddball Films, 275 Capp Street housed Ephemera, an innovative novelty products company and the non-profit Museum of Modern Mythology, dedicated to advertizing icons and their cultural impact. Our archive possesses the artful and eccentric charm that has long attracted people to the neighborhood. Within the local film community, we have provided archival footage to Bay Area filmmakers and housed and showcased their work in our screenings, soirees and discussions. Oddball also regularly collaborates with local non-profits and charities such as SF Cinematheque, Canyon Cinema, SF Bike Coalition, Ladyfest, and Mother's Kitchen on screening community events and benefits.

### **How the business demonstrates its commitment to the community**

Oddball Films is part of the social and cultural fabric of the Mission district and greater San Francisco. We are committed to maintaining our business as a resource that both draws from the considerable strengths and talents of our community and gives back in both immediate and far-reaching ways. As a stock footage licensing company, we represent the work of San Francisco filmmakers, licensing their footage worldwide. We provide important local services to the Bay Area film community, providing research about and masters of footage for their films. Our staff is particularly adept at researching requests that involve Bay Area history. The Oddball Films research staff has been referred to as a "cinematic think tank", as they creatively respond not just to footage orders, but to the deeper needs of a local film professional's project. Our representatives' collections encompass a deep and broad filmic history of the Bay Area and beyond. Oddball Films' commitment to the community is demonstrated by our providing employment to these local filmmakers, collectors and archivists. In turn, their contribution to the community is held not only in the films they possess, but also in the filmmakers' in-depth knowledge about that material, an immeasurable resource for the community.

In addition to working with established filmmakers and archivists, Oddball Films has a long-standing commitment to the development and training of aspiring film professionals. Students from local, national, and international colleges and universities receive college credit in our rigorous internship program as they learn to become archivists and film preservationists. Many alumni from Oddball's intern training program have gone on to work for the Library of Congress, Lucasfilm, Witness.org, Pacific Film Archive, and the Motion Picture Academy of Arts and Sciences.

Oddball Films provides physical space and resources to the San Francisco Media Archive (SFMA). Established in 2000, SFMA is a non-profit institution dedicated to acquiring, preserving, and making available film and media materials to historians, researchers, and the general public. The SFMA sub-collection in our archive is comprised of many films about historical San Francisco and includes donations from the Stanford University Speakers Bureau. Film scholars and students are welcome to study our collection for their research projects (see [sfm.org](http://sfm.org)) As a way to share information about our mission, we offer tours of our archive to the public. We also host an annual "Home Movie Day" in which we provide visitors with an opportunity to see and share their home movies with audiences. Our archive accepts donations of home movies and provides video transfers of the films so visitors can watch them at home. San Francisco residents have often told us how grateful they are to have their cherished memories restored. In this way, we have been able to

collect valuable films that show forgotten fragments of everyday life in historical San Francisco and we have rescued valuable films. One of our Home Movie Day visitors brought us a film can found in the dump. Unsure of its value, our staff projected it and found it contained rare and valuable landscapes of San Francisco taken before the Golden Gate Bridge was built.

We share our rare films with the public in regularly scheduled unique screenings, interactive events, seminars and presentations by authors and filmmakers every year. Our screening series is locally popular and has become a fixture for cinephiles in the Mission. Very few archives and no stock footage companies that we know of take the time and effort to curate and present their films. Our weekly screenings and moderated presentations have not only entertained and educated many archive visitors over decades, but have also inspired them to archive, curate, and collect films themselves; a few have even become filmmakers!

### **A description of the community the business serves**

Innovators, independent thinkers, cinematic pioneers, famous and infamous directors and producers, documentarians that represent social breakthroughs, environmental issues, and represent marginalized populations; these are the clients and collaborators that come to us. Oddball Films supplies key footage to prominent filmmakers in all areas including new media artists, students, and renowned and celebrated filmmakers focusing on the histories of underrepresented groups such as the LGBT community, African-Americans, Asian-Americans and Chicanos. The filmmakers, representatives, and other artists that we work with come from a myriad of backgrounds and richly represent the multiplicity of cultures within the Bay Area.

Our dedicated staff has assisted on finding footage for films from celebrated and well-known filmmakers such as Spike Lee, Gus Van Zandt, and Alex Gibney to local luminaries such as LGBT historian and award winner, Jenni Olson, Jen Petrucelli, director of an upcoming documentary about labor activist, Dolores Huerta, and director of *The Weather Underground*, Sam Green. Sam Green's film was nominated for an academy award. Although his film didn't win, here at Oddball Films, we were proud to hear his name called and know our footage provided drama and historical accuracy to its opening scene.

In addition to our holdings, Oddball Films represents the collections of numerous SF-based independent film curators, collectors and historians. With a wide range of cultural, ethnic, and political lifestyle footage, Saul Rouda's collection encompasses a myriad of California cultural references: 1960s spiritual movements, musical events such as the Altamont Rock Festival, political movements such as the American Indian Movement with Dennis Banks, and the Sausalito houseboat community. LGBT historian Jenni Olson's Queer Film Archive is a curated collection of rare, one-of-a-kind films that depicts gay culture and social politics through the lens of home movies, amateur films, and movie trailers. One of our most requested and valuable collections is the Bay Area News Outtakes Collection (BANO), unseen and rarely broadcast chronicles of news events from the free speech movement through the AIDS crisis, all key aspects of Bay Area history.

Our larger community includes educators, students, and film enthusiasts from all walks of life. Oddball Films regularly offers college credit based internships to students from all over the country. Open house tours are offered biannually to San Francisco State University, California College of the Arts, and the San Francisco Art Institute. Oddball Films has its doors open weekly to the public offering unique screenings, seminars, filmmaker talks and collaborative events. People from all walks of life have visited our archive.

### **Criterion 3: The business and the essential features that define its character**

Oddball Films is unique at its core. Our archive specializes in preserving, providing and licensing offbeat and unusual films that complete the histories of our cinematic culture. We embrace film in all genres, from educational, industrial, medical, military to newsreels, news outtakes, and amateur films. From 1906 films of the San Francisco earthquake to 1950s home movies to 1960s footage of civil rights protests to 1980s music videos right up to the current day, our holdings define our history. If you want footage of a horse swimming the Golden Gate, witness our original 1936 print of *Blackie, the Wonder Horse*. A filmmaker looking for a shot of San Francisco movie theaters in the 60s would undoubtedly want to see our 1961 amateur film shot by a local from the seat of his car cruising Mission Street, *San Francisco in Cinemascope*.

Oddball Films serves the community directly as a local resource and extends that resource globally, proudly representing San Francisco as a major cinematic institution. We represent film for the community in three ways; as a stock footage licensing company, as a film archive, and as a sponsor for public events, including screenings, seminars, and public talks

with filmmakers that include discussions. Within our central mission as a stock footage company, Oddball Films licenses stock footage in all genres for documentaries, feature films, and other media from our collection of 50,000 films. Watch for us in the credits at the next film you attend; you're likely to spot us!

As a fully functioning archive, Oddball Films trains interns and gives them college credit within a gold standard program. Interns from our program have proudly gone on to receive highly coveted scholarships and to become archivists for major institutions such as the Library of Congress and the Motion Picture Academy of Arts & Sciences. An important facet of our archive is the hosting of our non-profit organization, San Francisco Media Archive. San Francisco Media Archive is dedicated to the preservation of culturally significant film related to the history of San Francisco, including reels donated by schools, libraries and private donors. Educators, film scholars and authors also use this collection for their own research. Oddball Films serves as a highly engaged host for public screenings, seminars, and filmmaker discussions in the archive's screening room twice weekly throughout the year. We are a nerve center for all things cinematic in San Francisco; if it has to do with film in or from San Francisco, Oddball Films has probably contributed to it, trained its professionals, documented or preserved its media or provided a public forum for its understanding.

### **How the business demonstrates a commitment to maintaining historical traditions**

Ever since Eduard Muybridge made his iconic photographic studies of motion and moving image projection here in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, the Bay Area has been an important center of film culture. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, San Francisco became a haven for experimental and documentary filmmakers who took cinema in a different direction than Hollywood. At Oddball Films, we want to carry on this tradition.

We are a *film* archive. While you can find plenty of video online, the physical medium of film is unique. The difference between a film and a digital copy is the difference between a painting and a photocopy; digital data duplicates itself, while film literally expresses its subject through light. For economic and other pragmatic reasons, only a fraction of films in the world have been digitized; we hold many films not available online. Although we routinely digitize films from our archive, we also preserve and understand the value of the original prints. When you watch a rare 16mm film projected in our screening room, you are beholding a form of mid-century magic that has been lost in the digital age. A great archival film can take you into another time and place. History becomes an experience.

Because digital formats are constantly changing, we need to keep our original source material, i.e. film, available for future transfers. Our archive observes precise temperature controls in our space to keep films from decaying. A properly maintained film is durable enough that it can play as well today as it did 100 years ago. Our company is dedicated to preserving the legacy of celluloid film in its original presentation format.

### **How the business demonstrates a commitment to maintaining special physical features**

Oddball Films thrives upon the aesthetics of the past. History defines our business as a film archive. Accordingly, our space preserves the past while still utilizing archival technologies of the present.

A vintage freight elevator offers a lift up to the archive, though most visitors use the wide, well-worn wooden stairs. As you enter Oddball Films, the most prominent feature you see is shelf after shelf of precisely stacked film cans as you walk through the heart of the space. Along with housing 50,000 films, the space is also something of a museum of Americana; an original Taco Bell sign, industrial chrome beauty parlor hair dryers, old library card catalogs, as well as antique film projectors and movie cameras are on display. A hidden chamber around a corner houses yet another now disappearing medium: videotape; VHS, Beta sp, Umatic, and Hi8 line the walls floor to ceiling. In the back of the building, the walls of our restroom are covered with the pop art images of San Francisco stencil artist Scott Williams. On the side of the larger building that houses a number of studios including Oddball Films, local artist, Stephen Bauer has painted a golden beehive that hosts the work of a number of other community muralists.

In 2002, Oddball became the new home of the iconic "17 Reasons Why!" sign that used to sit atop Thrift Town on Mission and 17<sup>th</sup> Street (<http://missionlocal.org/2013/12/17-reasons-remembered/>). After it was taken down -to the horror of preservationists- Parr rescued the sign piece-by-piece from a Benicia scrap yard. The "Reasons" portion of the sign hangs in a central room. It is a constant reminder of our business mission to preserve history, and not just on film, but in the resources and artifacts of our own community.

We make a point of using and maintaining our analog equipment. Much of this equipment is no longer being produced and is the only means to view our film and video in its original form. Further, as demonstrated by our adoption of the local "17 Reasons Why!" sign (See <http://missionlocal.org/2013/12/17-reasons-remembered/>), we take an active role in preserving the character of our immediate neighborhood.

## Section Five:

### Supplemental Historical Documents.

In addition to the narrative, please include as many supplemental historical documents as are available. This information will provide the Commissioners a visual context to build an argument for listing on the Legacy Business Registry.

Materials should include information on all physical features, traditions and practices noted in the written narrative and that identify the business for the Legacy Registry.

### Historic Legal Documents, such as:

- ☐ Change in Business Ownership (if current business ownership is less than 30 years)
- ☐ San Francisco Business Registration Certificate (original or dating back to 30+ years)

### Photographs:

#### Required

- ☒ 1 overall exterior photo (a current photo is fine, including older photos is a plus to help to provide historical context)
- ☒ 1 photo of exterior and interior business signage (a current photo is fine, including older photos is a plus to help to provide historical context)
- ☒ Additional photos of any unique interior and exterior features of the location called out in the list of "physical features or traditions" that are closely and strongly associated with the significance of the Community engagement

#### Supplemental If Available

- ☐ Historic photos of the business location
- ☐ Historical events
- ☒ Photos of the unique craft, art, cuisine, or tradition that define the business
- ☒ Visual support to what is written in the historical narrative

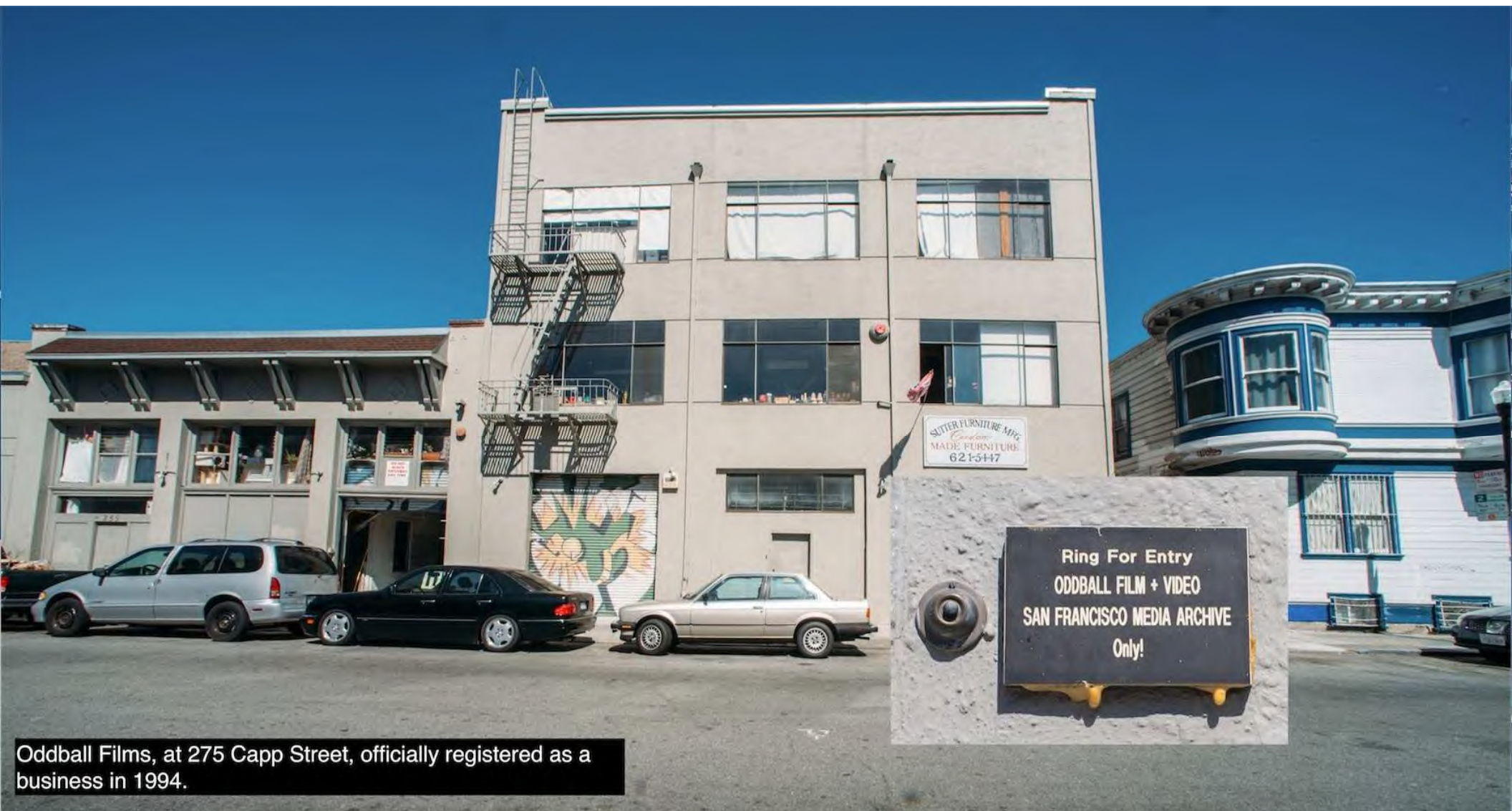
### Ephemera and Memorabilia:

(Example: advertising print, audio and video, advertising trade cards, bookmarks, catalog, greeting cards, letters, magazines, matchbooks, menus, pamphlets, postcards, posters, prospectuses, and tickets.)

- ☐ Newspaper Clippings from past and present newspapers that support the historical narrative. (please include publication and date of clipping)
- ☒ Audio and Video News stories
- ☒ Letters of Support

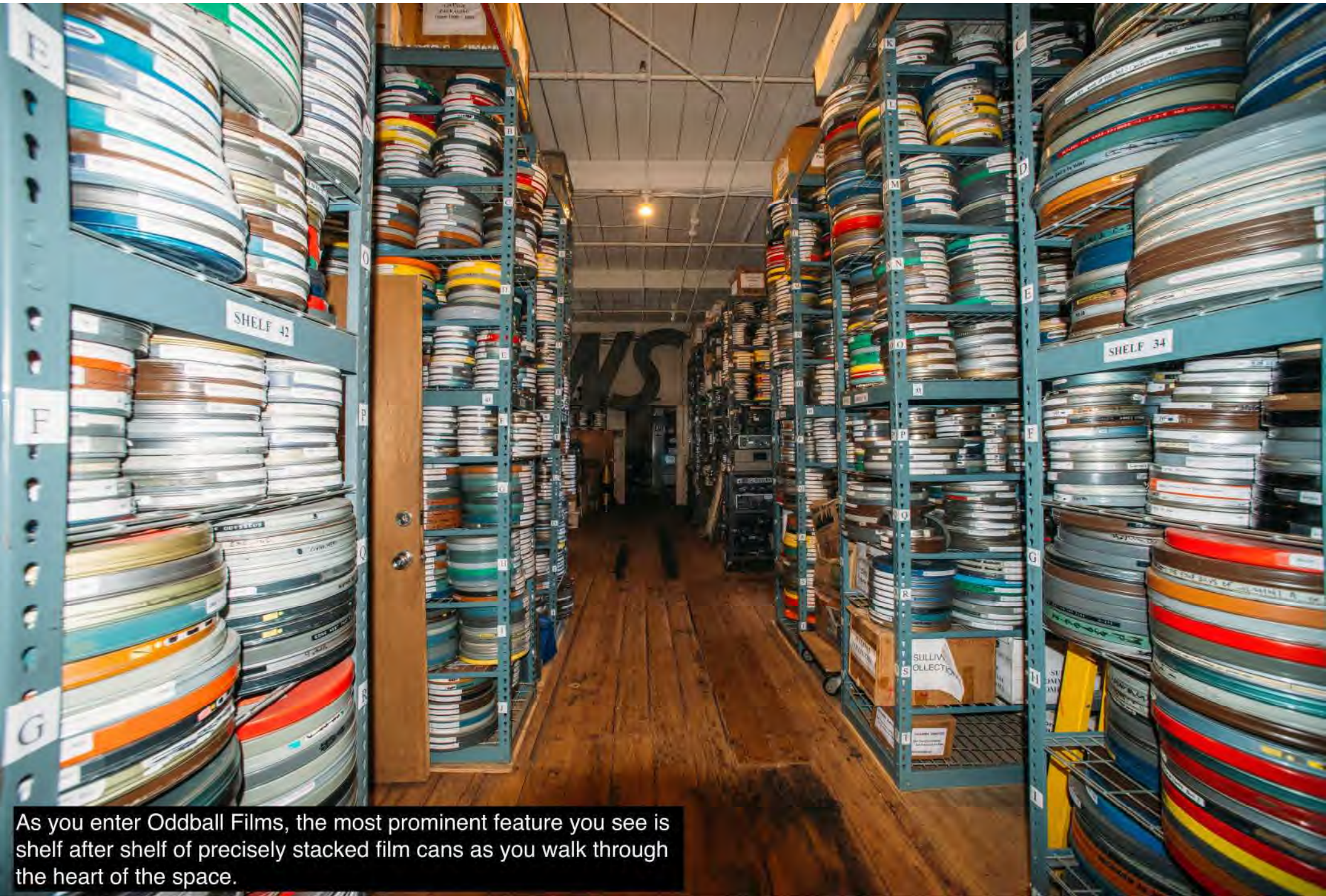
SF Heritage has a Historical Research Guide (<http://www.sfheritage.org/resources-links/researchguide/>) on where to locate possible supplemental documents or materials.





Oddball Films, at 275 Capp Street, officially registered as a business in 1994.





As you enter Oddball Films, the most prominent feature you see is shelf after shelf of precisely stacked film cans as you walk through the heart of the space.





The Oddball Films research staff has been referred to as a “cinematic think tank”, as they creatively respond not just to footage orders, but to the deeper needs of a local film professional’s project.



As a fully functioning archive, Oddball Films trains interns and allows them to receive college credit within a gold standard program. Students from all over the country apply to land a coveted position at one of the few archives left in the U.S. that offer training that fully integrates film handling with state of the art digital media archiving.



Oddball Films hosts a wildly popular annual "Home Movie Day" in which we provide visitors with an opportunity to see and share their home movies with audiences. Our archive accepts donations of home movies and provides video transfers of the films so visitors can watch them at home.







Along with housing 50,000 films, the space is also something of a museum of Americana. We display an original Taco Bell sign in our screening room.





A museum of Americana: Industrial chrome beauty parlor hair dryers on display.





A museum of Americana: An old library card catalogue in the screening room.

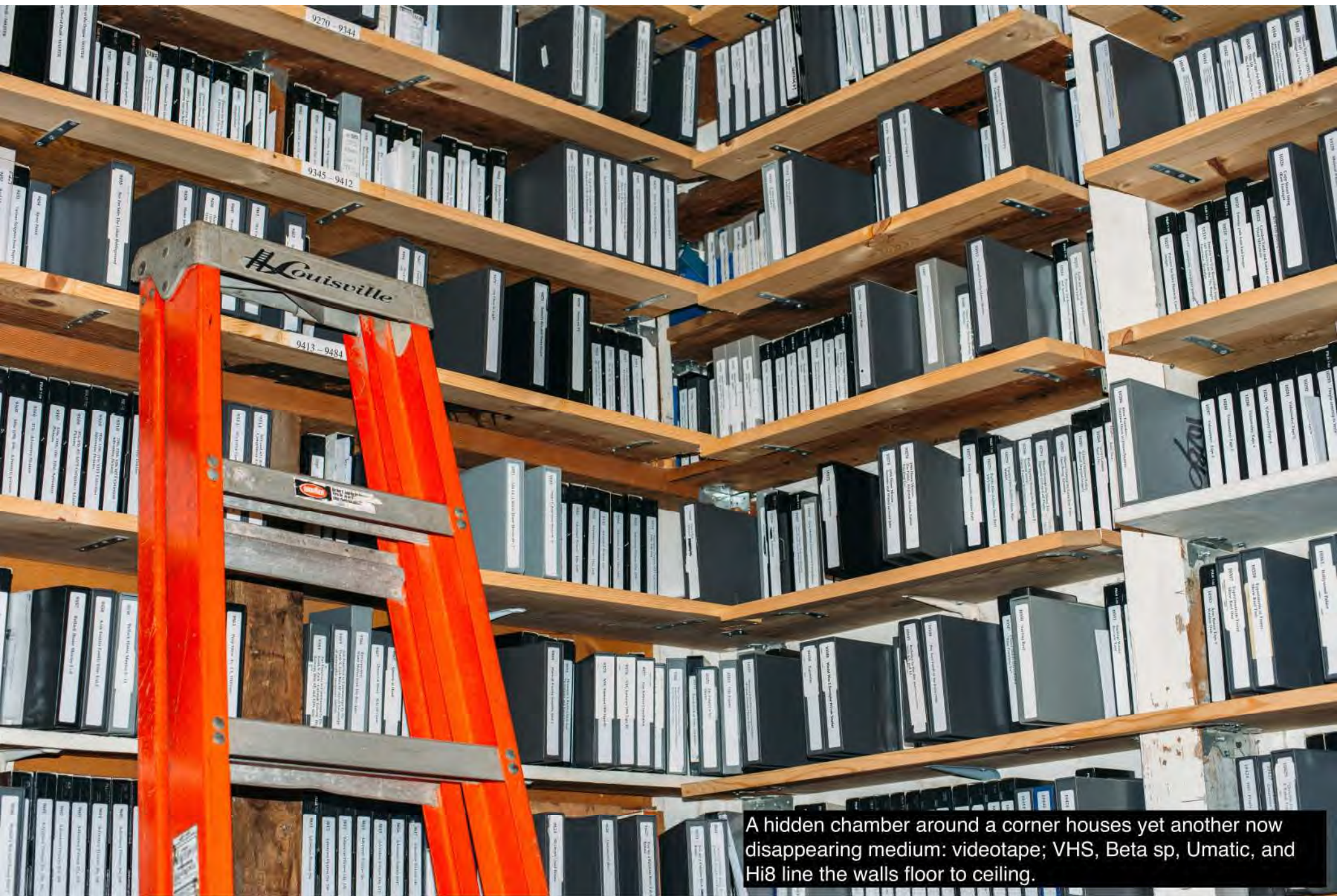






A museum of Americana: A scopitone, a type of jukebox featuring a 16mm film component. Scopitone films are the forerunner of music videos.





A hidden chamber around a corner houses yet another now disappearing medium: videotape; VHS, Beta sp, Umatic, and Hi8 line the walls floor to ceiling.





In the back of the building, the walls of our restroom are covered with the pop art images of San Francisco stencil artist Scott Williams.





On the side of the larger building that houses a number of studios including Oddball Films, local artist, Stephen Bauer has painted a golden beehive that hosts the work of a number of other community muralists.





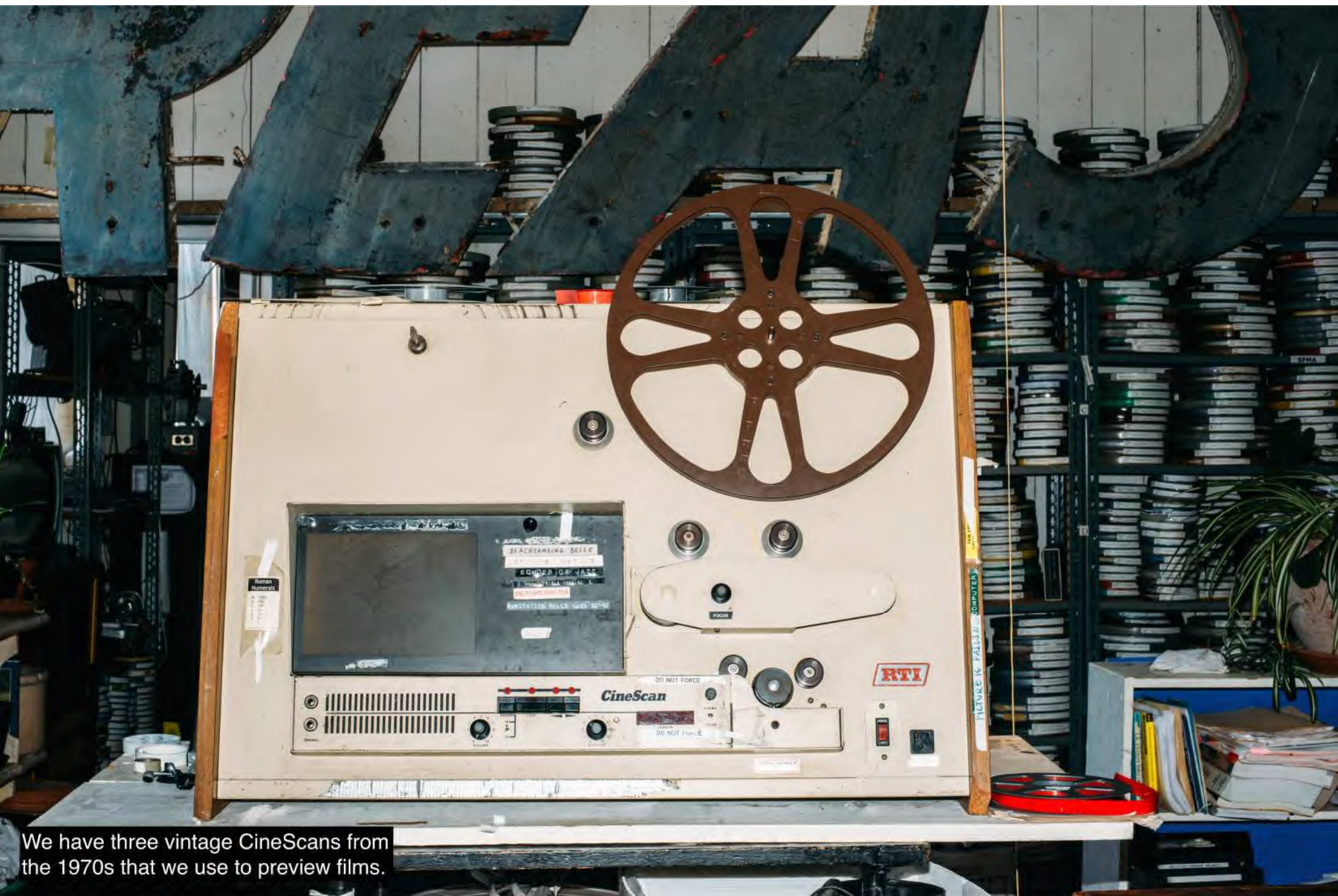
In 2002, Oddball became the new home of the iconic "17 Reasons Why!" sign that used to sit atop Thrift Town on Mission and 17th Street. It hangs on our wall as a constant reminder of our business mission to preserve history, and not just on film, but in the resources and artifacts of our own community.





At Oddball Films, we make a point of using and maintaining our analog equipment.





We have three vintage CineScans from the 1970s that we use to preview films.





Much of our analog equipment is no longer being produced and is the only means to view our film and video in its original form.

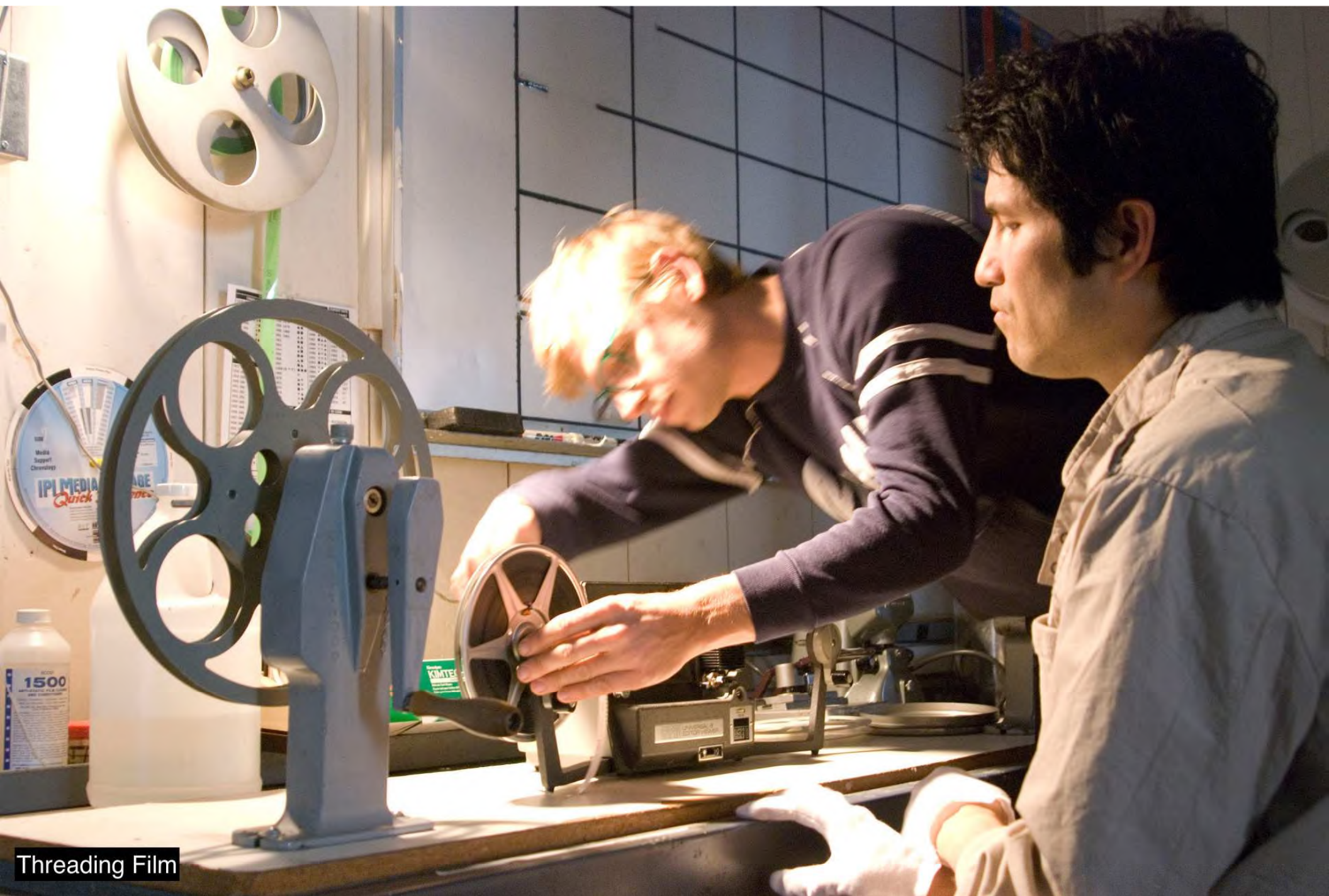


# Photographs of the Tradition and Craft of Oddball Films



Inspecting Film





Threading Film



Blackie The Wonder Horse Swims the Golden Gate - 1936





Castro Street - 1970s



Chinese Rice Bowl - 1941





Black Panther Protest- 1968



Mission Mural - 1970s





SF in Cinemascope - 1961



Sonic Oddities - 1961



## **News Stories**

### **Film shorts:**

***Oddball* (4 min, 2016) a documentary by Joshua Moore:**

<http://vimby.com/video/1422/Oddball-Films>

***An Oddball Trove of Celluloid Dreams* (2 min, 2016) a short by Tom Gorman**

<http://www.ozy.com/good-sht/an-oddball-trove-of-celluloid-dreams/41299>

### **Radio interview:**

**Oddball Film and Video creates an unusual night at the movies (5:31 min, 2014) interview by Jennie Butler**

<http://kalw.org/post/oddball-film-and-video-creates-unusual-night-movies>

# Film

Reviews by Allen Barra, Judi Blackwell, Broos Campbell, Michael S. Gant, Don Hines, Todd S. Inoue, Rob Nelson, Zack Stentz, Ella Taylor, Richard von Busack, Bernice Yeung and Heather Zimmerman.



## NEW MOVIES

**Booty Call** (R; 77 min.) An urban comedy about two couples grappling with the difference between lust and love. Jamie Foxx and Vivica A. Fox star. (Opens Fri in Fremont at Cinedome 8 East; in Morgan Hill at Cinema 6; in Mtn View at Century Cinema 16; and in San Jose at Century Capitol 16, Century 23, Century 10 Berryessa and Capitol Drive-in.)

**Cine16** San Francisco's Stephen Parr hosts the Feb. 27 program, bringing with him selections of industrial films from his archive Oddball Film and Video. He will focus on "wasn't

the future wonderful?" films made between 1955 and 1975. These include: *Talking Machine: From Tinfoil to LP* (1968), a history of sound recording narrated by an apparently bored Walter Cronkite; an untitled short produced by a well-known local computer company, showing off the Gerald Ford-era vision of state-of-the-art computing (crewcut guys with big necks and thick glasses are your hosts); *Is a Career in Technology for You?* a '70s career-opportunities short bedecked with the fine polyester styles and insistent disco beat of the era; and "Space Age Shaver," a '60s commercial showcasing the impact of space exploration on modern shaving techniques. (Plays Feb 28 at 7:30pm in the basement of the Agenda Lounge, 399 S. First St, San Jose; free; 408/292-3593.) (RvB)

**Donnie Brasco** (R; 121 min.) In a drama from the director of *Enchanted April* and *Four Weddings and a Funeral*, Al Pacino



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## **Stock Footage**

# **Truly an Oddball**

## ***Finding freaky footage***

by **Carl Kozlowski**

**I**t's nice to have a friend like director Ridley Scott, as Steven Parr learned back in 1984.

Scott saw some of Parr's bizarre footage projected as background inside a club Scott was using for a movie location. Scott hired Parr to find footage for another film, leading the former "P.T. Barnum of San Francisco" to realize he had a thriving business locked away in storage.

"I started to get a lot of requests for footage because I'm connected with a lot of weird people in the Bay Area," says Parr. "I started hearing from computer and CD-ROM companies that were producing corporate videos and found I had a lot of old technological films to offer them."

These days, San Francisco-based Oddball Film & Video lives up to its name by supplying unconventional and outlandish footage. Comedy Central bought scenes of 100 performance-artist Santas being chased by a SWAT team and motorcycle-driving monkeys for European TV shows.

San Francisco-based Parr has established a career that blends with his unusual personal background. A concert promoter during the mid-'70s San Francisco alternative scene, Parr found that filming his events was an extension of his favorite childhood hobby and a great way to store unique historical footage for future productions.

"I've always embraced the unusual, hard-to-find and bizarre," says Parr. "If you collect hubcaps, you'll find them because you look on the side of the road. By the same token, I've got more than 100 contacts sending me bizarre films from around the world."

Parr's collection of 15,000 films is housed in a 6,000-square-foot warehouse. His four-person staff enjoys the weird footage as much as he does. In fact, Parr feels one advantage Oddball has over bigger stock footage houses is that his staff has seen every single image in their archives, rather than searching a computer database to find desired footage.



**Finding Oddball's doesn't have to be painful.**

Such intimate knowledge of their films, he believes, enables Oddball to find footage that expresses emotional concepts rather than just straightforward imagery.

"If a client wants general footage of basketball, we try to incorporate images that express the sport's aggression as well," says Parr.

**A**n Upstate New York native, Parr studied film at the Center for Media Study at the University of Buffalo. Taught by Nam June Paik ("the Andy Warhol of video") and Woody and Steina Vasulka of the famed Kitchen performance gallery, he developed a love for documenting the cutting edge of culture.

Beyond containing scenes of alternative luminaries like Timothy Leary, John Cage, Allen Ginsberg and the Ramones, Oddball's offbeat collection has brain surgery footage and images of people in the 1940s having their feet X-rayed.

On Oddball's diverse client list are bands including Motley Crue and KISS seeking footage to project during concerts, The Cartoon Network and Walt Disney Pictures.

"My philosophy is that content dictates the whole medium," he says. "We document the underbelly of culture, so we have footage you can't just make up anywhere else."

*Oddball Film & Video is located at 257 Capp Street, San Francisco, 94110; phone, 415/558-8112. ★*



# Oddball gets even

*Eclectic film footage collector turns art into business*

by Jane Burek

**SAN FRANCISCO**—For more than 20 years, Stephen Parr has been a collector of imagery that's strange, rare, quirky—or all of the above—within about 50,000 reels of film and tape.

His company, Oddball Film+Video, stems from his passion for the eccentric and from his personal archive of footage that he initially used for his nightclub act.

Parr employs five full-time researchers and five interns, working from a 6,000-sq. ft. eclectic home/office, whimsically decorated with hair dryer chairs from the 1950s and '60s, vintage lamps, planters, collectibles and a stage for his occasional multimedia performances.

As a multimedia concept artist in the late 1970s, Parr produced "burlesque and strange" montages for nightclubs. "I took 1950s footage of crazy inventions and cut shots of gogo dancers, people on treadmills and military staff undergoing gravitational testing. Ridley Scott saw some of my clips in a nightclub and asked if he could use some footage," he recalls.

"From that point movie and commercial people heard about my collection and I eventually started the company to serve that market."

Recently, Parr provided:

- obscure Spanish cartoons for the Disney movie "At 17;"
- rare African American historical footage for Spike Lee's new film "Bamboozled;"
- footage for local Future/Now Films' documentary, "MC5: A True Testimonial," about the militant and controversial Detroit rock band of the 1960s;
- dozens of images "a second or less each" for a montage on Michael Moore's Bravo program "The Awful Truth;"
- footage of contemporary Argentina for a John Deere commercial via FCB, Chicago;

And technological footage from the '50s and '60s has proven a recent hit for high-tech corporate sales meetings.

"Silicon Valley clients, such as Sun Microsystems, like my crazy inventions material," he says. "I have a lot of old technology video of early punch card computers and communications tech-

nology and footage of some really kooky inventions that never made it. Corporations love using this off-beat stuff because, in an entertaining way, the footage articulates a certain iconographic concept."

Although Oddball carries historical footage of every high cultural and politi-

that we're really good at digging up."

Acquiring unique San Francisco scene images has long been a keen interest of Parr, who grew up in the Bay area. Recent acquisitions include gay lifestyles footage and recently unearthed news footage of the Haight Ashbury scene of the 1960s.

"Everything is cyclical but there is definitely a market for this era. People are continually taking another look at history, and scenes of the '60s and '70s gay lifestyles are very in demand, especially for documentaries."

Oddball's continuing success in licensing quirky footage rests in the fact that "producers constantly have to reinvent concepts and present them in a creative way. Our footage suits that objective well," Parr explains.

Although Oddball has a Web site ([www.oddballfilm.com](http://www.oddballfilm.com)) for searching clips and downloading samples, it's vital for staff members to answer the phone.

"Clients tend to make broad requests, such as 'I need a shot of a car with broken headlights.' Our staff is very familiar with our collections as are producers and editors themselves. They put considerable time into researching the most relevant clips for the project," he says.

"Searching by key word in a database doesn't always yield what a client is looking for. Talking to someone on the phone is still the best way for us."

Oddball Film+Video is 275 Capp St., San Francisco, Calif., 94110; phone is 415-558-8112. ★



One of the many rare clips in the Oddball Film+Video collection.

cal point in the 20th century, Parr prides himself on being able to provide producers with a fresh angle for those events, such as scenes from the assassination of San Francisco mayor George Mascone and political aide Harvey Milk.

Parr says plenty of footage is available of police breaking down doors to get into the room where the two were killed. "We, however, have footage from inside that room of the breaking door of doors broken down. That's the kind of footage



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San Francisco Chronicle

# DATEBOOK

SECTION



Tuesday,  
August 19, 2003

Wait! Planning to toss that old **home movie** of Granny's birthday? It may be a dust collector to you, but it's a historical treasure to the San Francisco Media Archive.

By Peter Hartlaub  
CHRONICLE STAFF WRITER

Spend a few hours trying to figure the filing system in the San Francisco Media Archive's dozens of shelves stacked with films, and it's still impossible to find the movie you're looking for.

A canister marked "Nudism: A Way of Life" flirts next to "President Reagan Speaks to Boy Scouts" — which is perilously close to "Marx for Beginners."

What at first appears to be a librarian's nightmare is a lot less random than it seems. Together, the 45,000 films in the Mission District archive represent a comprehensive history of San Francisco.

"We'll take anything on film, for the most part. There's always a value to it," said Stephen Parr, the archive's director, caretaker and resident pack rat. "Sometimes someone will call me up and say, 'We have 3,000 films. We're taking them to the dumps today.' Sometimes someone

films," he said. "I thought they should be preserved."

A nonprofit was set up about five years ago. Parr says about half of the films in the space are his and half belong to the Media Archive, although he said they will all eventually be in the archive, which has oversight from a board of directors.

The only thing older than the films is the building, a pre-1906 behemoth with 4-inch-thick floorboards and a ceiling high enough for a volleyball game.

Upon entering the Media Archive, visitors discover 6,000 square feet of open space that is definitely more "Sanford and Son" than





sees films in the Dumpster. ... When people say, 'Oh, it's probably no good,' that's when I get there in a hurry."

Parr got a boost last weekend from Home Movie Day, an international event celebrating the amateur movies that have enjoyed widespread popularity since the 1950s.

The Media Archive has shelves filled with educational and governmental films, films made by the military and police, and commercial movies by accomplished directors. But Parr said the most valuable additions to the archive come from the rank amateurs who create films with honesty that the other filmmakers can't match.

"Home movies are the most accurate record of how we live," Parr said. "Most movies are made to make money. They have a particular viewpoint, and that viewpoint is biased. ... (A home movie) is history being told through the eyes of people as they're living it."

Parr was working as a filmmaker in the 1980s when the archive was born. His first client was "Blade Runner" director Ridley Scott, who needed some stock footage for a commercial he was shooting. (Parr doesn't remember specifics but thinks it was for Michelob.)

As Parr's collection grew, he realized how much the public could benefit if it were more like a library than a business.

"I started seeing we have some really valuable



GINA GAYLE / The Chronicle

**Nothing seems** too obscure for the archive, where stacks of films on all topics line the shelves.

tially disassembled and is hanging from the ceiling from chains.

The real fun in the free museum is perusing the stacks of film canisters.

A double feature of "Behind the Scenes at the Supermarket" and "Something Queer at the Library" sits on one shelf, while "The Solar System," "The Star-Spangled Banner" and "The Story of Menstruation" share space on another.

Miraculously, Parr knows where everything is. The films are all cross-referenced on a computer database, although Parr can find some of his most valuable treasures by memory.

Among his finds is amateur film taken of Richard Nixon in a parade and Gary Cooper running a swim meet in California — which Parr discovered at a local flea market. He recently bought a canister from a homeless San Franciscan, and was surprised to find it contained old San Francisco Police Department footage of a training officer whaling on a dummy with a baton.

Parr said he gets contacted at all hours, some-

Smithsonian. Random projector parts are scattered everywhere; Parr has a collection of a dozen old-time beauty-salon hair dryers; a giant "TACO" sign hangs over the kitchen.

Wondering where that "17 Reasons" billboard that watched over the Mission for several decades went? It was liberated when a beer billboard took its place, partially



GINA GAYLE / The Chronicle

**Stephen Parr**, director of the San Francisco Media Archive, runs an old home movie.

times just minutes before valuable film is about to be destroyed or hauled away.

"I've got a guy with a truck I can call 24 hours a day," Parr said.

People who bring in their home movies have to sign them away in a deed of gift to the Media Archive, which in some cases will take video testimony of the donor.

Parr gives donors disc or videotape copies of their family treasure, both of which are more durable and compatible with modern electronics. Donors also get the pleasure of knowing that Grandma's birthday party from the 1940s becomes part of the history of San Francisco. Parr said the films are used by historians, researchers and the general public.

Sarah Klein dropped by on Saturday to bring her Super 8 footage of Alaska, but plans to return with home video from her grandfather's era. Like many who come to the Media Archive, the 35-year-old walked slowly to appreciate the scenery.

"It's fantastic. I didn't know it existed," said Klein, as she entered the building's kitschy projection room, which is filled with old projectors, bowling trophies and a pinball machine that looks as if was salvaged from the Eisenhower years. "It looks like a really amazing resource and now I want to find out more about it."

Parr said the next goal is more interaction with the public, though a series of film exhibitions that will begin this fall. He also wants to take home videos from various San Francisco neighborhoods and compile them on DVDs.

"Home movies are the most accurate record of how we live. Most movies are made to make money. They have a particular viewpoint, and that viewpoint is biased. ...

(A home movie) is history being told through the eyes of people as they're living it."

STEPHEN PARR, archive director

the Media Archive. Since most people don't have a way to store or watch their film, they often want to get rid of it.

"A lot of these movies are in a closet or under a sofa somewhere," Parr said. "Most people don't have projectors anymore, so they don't know what's on these reels."

More information about the San Francisco Media Archive is available at [www.sfm.org](http://www.sfm.org). The Media Archive can be contacted at (415) 558-8117.

E-mail Peter Hartlaub at [phartlaub@sfgate.com](mailto:phartlaub@sfgate.com).





# The Evening Class

"Cinema is the evening class for discriminating adults."--Ousmane Sembene

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 31, 2006

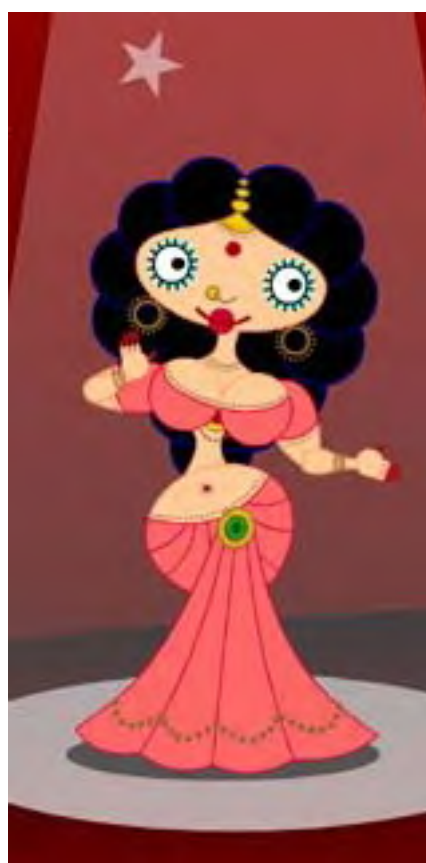
## ANIMATION—Nina Paley at Oddball Films



Stephen Parr continues to curate some of the most interesting programs in the Bay Area at his delightfully informal aficionado's salon [Oddball Films](#). This last Friday I caught his "Night of Hell" Halloween offering, "an evening of apocalyptic mayhem" which showcased "cinematic scraps from the devil's junkyard", including rare exploitation horror shorts, idiotic Goth public access clips, San Francisco devil-worshipping cult icon Anton La Vey, teenage Super 8mm home movie monster films, and the gory *Seytan* (a Turkish *Exorcist* remake). The unquestioned gems, however, were a classic [Scopitone of Joi Lansing singing "Web of Love"](#), Serge Gainsborough singing, "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde", and the rare *LSD: A Case Study*, which proves once and for all that hotdogs and hallucinogens just don't mix!

This coming Saturday, November 4th at 8:00 PM I'm anticipating Oddball Films' presentation "Myth and Music —*Sita Sings the Blues*", a screening of [Nina Paley's](#) mythic, animated work-in-progress opus plus animated gems. *Sita Sings the Blues* is a unique combination of the ancient Indian epic [Ramayana](#), the 1920's torch vocals of the great [Annette Hanshaw](#), and classically informed and inventive, eye-popping animation.

Nina Paley admits the subject matter of *Sita Sings the Blues* is controversial: "While I've been greatly encouraged by the overwhelming positive response from *desis* (South Asian expatriates), some viewers in India have been outraged. *The Ramayana* is a perplexing tale, and Sita is its most misunderstood character. I've heard from more than one Hindu American woman that *Sita Sings the Blues* is the first *Ramayana* retelling that offers them a real connection to Sita. My retelling is also humorous, which some people interpret as irreverent, and therefore an affront. Not that this has any bearing on my work; as I learned from *The Stork*, the greater the risks in art, the greater the rewards. I have nothing but love and admiration for my source material now. I hope to show how the genius of *The Ramayana* transcends societies and generations, and is as relevant today as it was 3,000 years ago."



## ABOUT ME



 [Michael Guillen](#)

Member of the San Francisco Film Critics Circle.

[View my complete profile](#)

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Me").

Relating the genesis of ***Sita Sings the Blues***, Paley writes: "In June 2002 I moved to Trivandrum, India, following my (American) husband who had taken a job there. Upon my arrival I was confronted with his mid-life crisis, a complete emotional withdrawal. This left me without support in a city in which women were second-class citizens, unable to walk alone at night, and not expected to have an identity separate from their husbands. It was in Trivandrum I encountered the Indian epic, **The Ramayana**, for the first time. Like many westerners, I initially considered **The Ramayana** little more than misogynist propaganda. Meanwhile I was in the midst of developing a new comic strip for King Features Syndicate, *The Hots*. After three months in Trivandrum, King Features flew me to their New York headquarters for a launch meeting. Then my husband dumped me by email.

"Unable to return to my former apartment in San Francisco, or my new apartment in Trivandrum, I moved to Brooklyn. My professional life benefited, as I began teaching animation at Parsons School of Design and acquiring New York freelance clients. Emotionally, however, my relocation commenced a terrible year of grief. **The Ramayana** took on new depth and meaning for me.

"It no longer resembled a sexist parable; rather, it seemed to capture the essence of painful relationships, and describe a blueprint of human suffering. My grief and longing for the man who rejected me increasingly resembled Sita's; my husband's withdrawal reminded me of Rama. In Manhattan I heard the music of Annette Hanshaw for the first time. A radio star of the late 1920's, Hanshaw specialized in heartfelt blues and torch songs. In my grief-addled state, her songs, my story, and **The Ramayana** merged into one: ***Sita Sings the Blues***.



At the ***Sita Sings the Blues*** website you can view Quicktime clips of the first five chapters of Paley's work-in-progress, including ***Dandaka Dharma*** (with Hanshaw singing "Here We Are"), ***The Abduction of Sita*** (Hanshaw sings "What Wouldn't I Do For That Man?", ***Hanuman Finds Sita*** ("Daddy, Won't You Please Come Home?"), ***Battle of Lanka*** ("Who's That Knocking At My Door?") and ***Trial By Fire*** ("Mean To

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"Originally, I hoped to expel my demons of heartbreak with a single short film, ***Trial By Fire*** (2003). This set a pivotal scene from **The Ramayana**, Sita's walk through a funeral pyre, to Annette Hanshaw's 1929 rendition of "Mean to Me." ***Trial By Fire*** won second Place in New York's 2004 ASIFA-East Animation Festival, and screened in festivals in San Francisco, Latvia, and Red Bank, but I refrained from promoting it further. Audiences loved the design and animation, but were not sufficiently familiar with **The Ramayana** to really understand the story. Furthermore, my demons weren't adequately expressed; I was still tormented by grief and heartache. When another relationship failed in November of 2004, I saw only one course of action: I had to tell the whole Ramayana story from Sita's point of view. ***Sita Sings the Blues***, a 72-minute feature, would be my salvation.

"I began production in December 2004. In April 2005, a popular weblog called *BoingBoing* reported on my work-in-progress; within hours, thousands of viewers were downloading the movie clips I posted online, temporarily shutting down my web site. Reviews began appearing on hundreds of other weblogs, all positive. This was followed by print newspaper and magazine coverage in Switzerland, Korea, and India, as well as India Abroad in New York. Artwallah, Los Angeles' South Asian Arts Festival, solicited and screened a chapter called ***Dandaka Dharma***, which also won an Excellence in Design award from ASIFA-East's 2005 festival."



Nina Paley's career began in 1988 with her self-syndicated comic strip, *Nina's Adventures*, which appeared in several alternative newspapers and two paperback collections, *Depression is Fun* and *Nina's Adventures*. She created two solo comic books for Dark Horse Comics, and various graphic short stories for Last Gasp Comix, Rip Off Press, Laugh Lines Press, Grateful Dead Comix, Kitchen Sink Press, and the Japanese artist volume Jarebong. Her first mainstream daily comic strip, *Fluff*, was distributed internationally by Universal Press Syndicate between 1995 and 1998; in 2002 she drew *The Hots* for King Features Syndicate.

Comics burn-out drove Nina to animation. Her first film, ***Luv Is...*** (1998), was clay stop-motion shot with a vintage super-8 camera. She went on to make three more films in 1998, each exploring a different medium or technique: ***Cancer*** (drawing and scratching on 35mm), ***I Heart My Cat*** (16mm stop-motion) and ***Follow Your Bliss*** (traditional pencil and ink on paper). In 1999 she made the world's first completely cameraless IMAX film, ***Pandorama***, and received a grant from the Film Arts Foundation to produce ***Fetch!*** (2001), a short film incorporating optical illusions. In 2002 she created a controversial series about overpopulation and the environment, including ***The Stork***, which won first prize at the EarthVision Environmental Film Festival and an unsolicited invitation to Sundance (2003). ***Cancer***, ***Pandorama*** and ***Fetch!*** will be some of the additional animated shorts included in the Oddball Films program.



In addition to making independent animated festival films, Nina teaches at Parsons School of Design in Manhattan. She lives in New York with her cat, Bruno.

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Oddball Films is located at 275 Capp St. Info and reservations at [info@oddballfilm.com](mailto:info@oddballfilm.com) or 415-558-8117. Admission is \$10.00 (Limited Seating RSVP Preferred).

"That's all!"

Posted by [Michael Guillen](#) at 10/31/2006 01:37:00 PM

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1 comment:

 **Debbie Ann** said...

hi Michael - I was just wandering around the internet reading about Nina Paley and hoping the same thing won't happen to me regarding breaking up! and ended up at your blog. thanks for posting about Nina.

Debbie

Sunday, February 18, 2007 at 5:50:00 AM PST

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[Tavo Amador on Edith Head / \*All About Eve\*](#)



# Stock Footage Re-Constructs An American Experience

## PRODUCTION ON PBS' **STONEWALL:** THE BIRTH OF THE GAY RIGHTS MOVEMENT

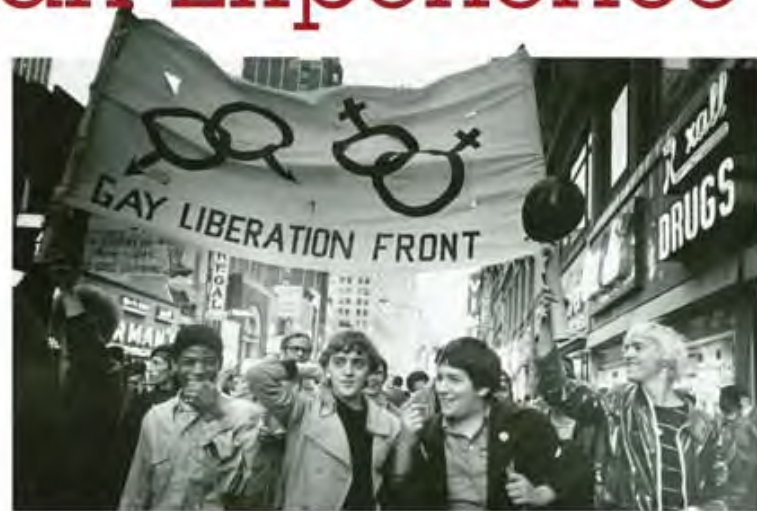
After documentarians David Heilbroner and Kate Davis were commissioned by WGBH Boston to make *Stonewall: The Birth of the Gay Rights Movement* for PBS's *American Experience* series, the first obstacle they encountered almost immediately ended the entire effort: there was no filmed footage of the event.

### IAIN STASUKEVICH

When New York City police entered the Stonewall Inn on June 28, 1969, as part of what had come to be a routine series of raids, the unforeseen explosion of violence that ensued—four days of citizens and police clashing in the streets—galvanized the gay community into taking a more aggressive stand for its civil rights.

"The riots were all but ignored by the press," Heilbroner says. "There were plenty of iconic events in that year that were filmed, but nobody bothered sending a camera down because, some speculate, it was a 'gay event.'"

Aside from present-day commentary and the recollections of those who were there, Heilbroner and Davis had but seven photographs (courtesy of the estate of *Village Voice* photographer Frank McDarragh and the *New York Times*) to work with. A live reenact-



ment was briefly considered, but the costs proved prohibitive.

Instead, Heilbroner and Davis approached New York photographer Heather Gude to shoot some photographs with young actors around Manhattan's Greenwich Village neighborhood. Gude used Adobe Photoshop to edit her photos, matching grain with the archival stills, as well as desaturating and throwing them slightly out of focus.

The filmmakers amassed a collection of timely and relevant but otherwise unrelated media of citizens versus the police. Through the Miami-based Wolfson Archives, they uncovered some photographs and motion footage of a bar raid in Florida and similar establishments across the country. The images depicting confrontations with the police were intercut with Gude's stills and the seven stills from Stonewall.

For historical context, Heilbroner turned to San Francisco's Oddball Films. "We were looking for the petri dish in which everybody was raised in that era, and Oddball in particular had some incredible bits of homosexual Americana," he says.

One clip features a young Mike Wallace speaking in what the director describes as "the most blithe fashion" about the dangers of homosexuality. "This was at a time when the news was all about an omniscient white male handing down information as if it were undeniable fact," Heilbroner says.

The result is a compelling mix of real, recreated and contextualized footage, indistinguishable from one another, affecting a truthful account of an important civil rights event. "Our goal is to make gay history American history," Heilbroner states.



Association of Moving Image Archivists spring 2010 | vol 88

## From the President's Desk Wendy Shay

As I write this column, I have been serving as the president of the Association of Moving Image Archivists for almost six weeks. So far, my presidential activities have included "chairing" a conference call meeting of the board, participating in a meeting of representatives of audiovisual archives associations, and writing quite a few emails. Most importantly, however, I have discovered that despite my long involvement, I didn't realize just *how* vibrant AMIA really is. Since being elected AMIA president I have discovered that:

The Board is made up of people with hidden talents and unending energy. They are knowledgeable, skilled, and committed professionals determined to ensure that the organization fulfills its mission and serves its members. I now know that while the time the board members give to AMIA is important, they give something even more significant – their creativity.

Laura, Beverly, and Kristina run the AMIA office like a well-oiled machine. They take care of everything, quietly and without fanfare, so that we members don't even realize how much they do. They make everything possible. With Laura's guidance (and Janice's well-considered suggestions) I am learning how to be the AMIA president.

Thanks to the efforts of many, many members AMIA is involved with numerous, wide-ranging activities. In addition to participating in the international Coordinating Committee of Audiovisual Archives Associations, we have AMIA members organizing panels and screenings for the film Biennale, planning the joint conference with IASA, helping with the JTS, and applying for UNESCO NGO status. Of course, all of this is in addition to the more regular activities of chairing and serving on committees, publishing the newsletter, and publishing the journal.

I attend the annual conference, read the newsletter, journal, subscribe to the list-serve, and have served on a number of different committees. But as President, I am seeing "the big picture" and beginning to understand AMIA's current scope. And I'd be willing to bet that the newest Board members are feeling the same.

Being totally involved with AMIA is challenging, rewarding, and fun. I hope you will all become more active in AMIA so that you too will have close-up and personal relationship with this wonderful organization.

*Note: By the next Newsletter, I'll have a few more weeks in my new role, and I intend to write presidential columns that focus more specifically on AMIA activities and opportunities. If there are areas of AMIA you would like me to address – let me know!*

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## Oddball Reunites Director Peter Clifton With Lost Easybeats Film

Ellie Duddridge

Peter Clifton, an Australian film director and producer, is best known for directing the Led Zeppelin concert film *The Song Remains the Same* (1976), *The Punk Rock Movie* (1978) and having filmed Jimi Hendrix live in concert. Clifton's first film was *Somewhere Between Heaven And Woolworths* (B+W, 30 min.), now re-titled *Easy Come, Easy Go*, a documentary short about the Australian band the Easybeats' tour of England in 1967. Inspired by the Beatles and the British Music Invasion, the Easybeats are widely regarded as the greatest Australian pop band of the 1960s and were the first Australian rock and roll act to score an international rock hit with their classic 1966 single "Friday on my Mind." The 16mm film, produced for the Australian Broadcasting Corporation was somehow damaged before it was released. It was shelved and misplaced, never to be seen by the public (and its director) until Oddball Film + Video uncovered the lost film in its archives.

Clifton was reunited with his film under very interesting circumstances. Writer John Tait, while researching his book *Vanda & Young – from the Easybeats to AC/DC* (to be released in August 2010) contacted Peter Clifton to hear the details behind his lost film. Tait was eager to investigate further so he contacted the National Archives and National Film and Sound Archive in Australia, to no avail. It was only when Tait's research partner, Mike Griffiths, stumbled upon Oddball Films' (the programming component of Oddball Film+Video) screenings during a Google search that he turned up the film. In September 2009, Oddball Films' Pete Gowdy curated a music film program entitled "Friday on My Mind: Beat Group and British Invasion on Film". Peter Clifton's film happened to be the center piece of the screening and shortly after hearing about the existence of a copy of his first film, Clifton contacted Stephen Parr, Director of Oddball Film + Video in San Francisco.

"I grew up listening to the music of the Easybeats and was familiar with Peter's career" says Parr, "so it was an uplifting experience to speak with him and make arrangements for him to put this film back together." The provenance of the film is still unclear though Parr says "While we're not clear of the provenance as of yet it appears as if we acquired the film in a lot of miscellaneous musical materials from an as of yet unknown collector. It wasn't until Pete Gowdy, a musicologist and researcher, discovered this was a "lost" film that we realized it might be "THE only copy" in existence." This hasn't been the first time Stephen Parr has discovered rare and unusual films in his collection. Previously he unearthed an Andy Warhol appearance at the Rhode Island School of Design in 1968 (slated to be screened at The Orphans Film Symposium in NYC this April) as well as one-of-a-kind Cinemascope home movies of San Francisco in the 1960s, which he donated to the San Francisco Media Archive. "We treat every film as precious," says Parr. "If archivists don't who will?"

Oddball has since returned the film to Clifton in order to carry out its restoration. Clifton had been searching for the film for most of his life: "The last time I saw it was in April/May 1967. I was on my way back to London. When I returned to Sydney eight months later the 16mm color film and the master negatives had been lost by the ABC. At the time I was storing my films at Supreme Sound Studios. We searched high and low but never found it. The neg was damaged when the editors at Supreme Sound removed tape from the reels leaving a residue on the film that was printed into the answer print. So the film was shortened without my permission from 50 minutes to 35 minutes, removing the most damaged sections."

Fortunately, Clifton recently uncovered numerous missing bits of the film that he will be able to insert back into *Easy Come, Easy Go*. These parts were recovered from his feature "rockumentary" *Popcorn* (1969) starring Jimi Hendrix, Otis Redding and Mick Jagger, which opened the San Francisco Film Festival in 1970 and won many awards.

Clifton is still in the process of raising funds for the restoration from several sources and sponsors including the National Archives of Australia as well as members of the Australian mega rock act AC/DC (some of whom are related to members of the Easybeats).

The restoration process will be slow and meticulous but forty years later this "never-really-seen" rock doc and its director were finally reunited.



Harry Vonda of the Easybeats plays guitar

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*silent cinema series*



## Keaton's "Steamboat Bill Jr." Plus "Buster Keaton Rides Again" *Screens at Oddball Films*

### Keaton's "Steamboat Bill Jr.", Plus "Buster Keaton Rides Again"

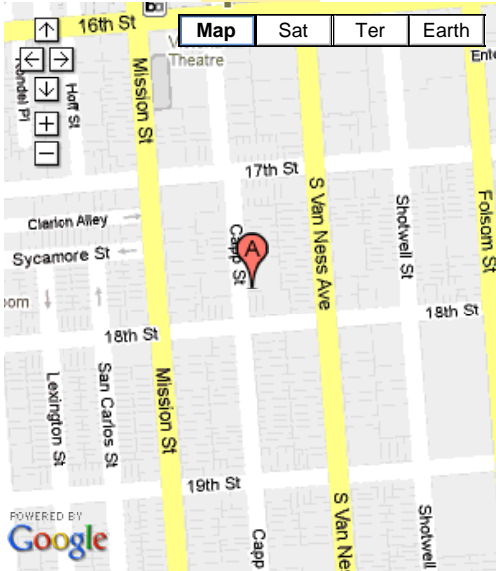


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Event: Oddball Films Presents The Silent Cinema Series featuring the Buster Keaton's legendary 1928 film "Steamboat Bill Jr" and the award-winning documentary produced by the National Film Board of Canada "Buster Keaton Rides Again" (1965). Plus! A rare novelty film from the silent era.

"Steamboat Bill, Jr." features some of Keaton's most inspired gags and dangerous stunts highlighted by remarkable special effects, including the legendary stunt in which the front of a building collapses over him as he passes unharmed through an open window. Keaton's athleticism and inventive visual humor are in top form, as evidenced by an amazing sequence in which he tries to walk across town during a devastating tornado as it sends houses literally crashing down around him. This is one of the most ambitious, awe-inspiring and hilarious slapstick sequences ever created.

Date: Saturday, September 4, 2010 at 8:00PM



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20 minutes ago

Happy Meal Ban Heads to Board of Supervisors Vote, Via SFWeekly  
1 hour ago

Good Morning, Mission!  
3 hours ago

It's 5:30 a.m., 54° and going to 67°. I walked outside this morning.

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Event Calendar

**Civilization on Six Legs: The Complex Societies of Ants and Honeybees**  
Oct 6

**Live Gypsy Jazz with Gaucho**  
Oct 6 at Amnesia



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# "Let's Get Schooled!"

Weird and Wonderful Educational Films  
From the Archives

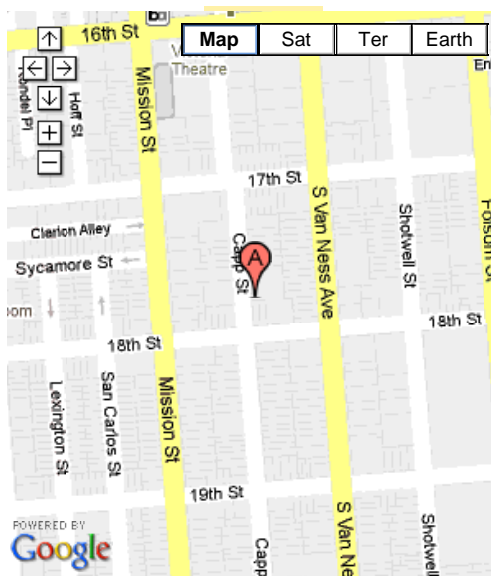
Screens at Oddball Films

## ODDBALL FILMS: Let's Get Schooled



Event: Let's Get Schooled! Weird and Wonderful Educational Films from the Archive., curated by David Selsky. Forget those boring filmstrips you saw in elementary school! Tonight's program draws from Oddball's 50,000+ film archive and features a wide variety of films with learning as a focus that will inspire you, tickle your brain, and provide you with enough kitschy pleasure for at least one weekend.

We'll begin our journey with The Making of a Slideshow, following bicyclist Bruce Bidwell as he puts together a presentation about bikes to improve community life, then Dining Room Safety, where we'll learn not kill or injure anyone in a restaurant followed by Management Theories X and Y, made by the UCLA Business School (clearly not the film school) featuring an uncomfortable teacher discussing assumptions about human nature which lead to different management styles; The Hippie Temptation (Excerpt), the camp classic 1967 CBS TV doc with Harry Reasoner, choking on anger and contempt, as he guides us through the hippie-strewn Haight-Ashbury; the creepy Toothache of the Clown, featuring Mr. Clown going to the dentist to learn how to brush (not for those afraid of clowns!); Four Famous Frauds, a scare film featuring 'PT



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MLNow: VIDEO: Riding the Mission Sewers. <http://ow.ly/2ONWF>

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### Event Calendar

**Mission Beacon Community Meeting**



Oct 5 at Women's Building

**MUSIC: Sum Kinda Trouble Open Mic**

Oct 5 at Amnesia

Fraud' going door to door (on a cheap painted set) trying to separate people from their money; and Kurt Vonnegut Jr: Deadeye Dick – Part 2, a creative documentary about Vonnegut's work including interviews with the author and reenactments of scenes from his novels Also watch vintage commercials and movie trailers which provide their own form of education! Date: Saturday, September 18, 2010 at 8:00 PM.

Oddball Films  
275 Capp St San Francisco  
Limited Seating \$10.00 RSVP Only  
info@oddballfilm.com or  
415-558-8117

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**Start:** September 18, 2010 8:00 pm  
**End:** September 18, 2010 11:00 pm  
**Venue:** Oddball Films  
**Address:** 275 Capp Street, San Francisco, United States, 94110  
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**Civilization on Six Legs: The Complex Societies of Ants and Honeybees**  
Oct 6

**Live Gypsy Jazz with Gaucho**  
Oct 6 at Amnesia

**Draft Mission District Streetscape Plan**  
Oct 7 at Bartlett Street between 21st and 22nd

[All Events](#)

### Popular

1. At the Dolores Park Meeting: Pick Your Poison
2. UPDATE: Prop. 19 Contributions
3. Garfield Park Faces Challenges
4. It's Safe, the Officer Said, and Then the Shooting Started
5. StreetScience: Fruit Fly Season

### Mission Dope!



Hey Kids!: Hey Kids!: "A Time to Keep"  
9.30 – 10.7

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# Where Analog is King Oddball Film + Video

By Aimee Pavy

Photography By Troy Pavia



Do you miss the click and whirr sounds of a film projector? Maybe you've never had a chance to actually hear film going through a projector? With the supremacy of all that is digital, the experience of analog media is on

the verge of being lost. Larger film theaters with their digital projectors provide an experience close to watching a gigantic TV. Fading to obscurity are the days of analog; fading is media like the record album, celluloid film, and videotape... or are they?

In the heart of the Mission District of San Francisco is a stronghold of analog, an archive called Oddball Film + Video.

If you're ready to uncover the mysteries of media past, head to the corner of Capp and 18th Street where you'll find a door with a doorbell so high that it's almost out-of-reach (and just above that, a sign confirming that you're indeed in the right place). After you are buzzed in and walk up to the third floor, you enter a space filled floor-to-ceiling with stacks of film canisters. Inside each can is a reel of celluloid representing a variety of subjects including educational films, commercials, movie trailers, documentaries, newsreels, and home movies. The stacks of cans are simultaneously overwhelming and exhilarating. When you step forward for a closer look, you might see one labeled "Kitchen Segment," but as soon as you focus on that title, your eye catches another title like "The Dangerous Stranger." Your eye might then drift up the stack and see a handwritten label for "Peep Show." So many cans, so little time. Each contains a mystery, what exactly is a "Kitchen Segment" and is "Peep Show" as salacious as it sounds?

Not even the owner and director of the Oddball Films + Video archive, Stephen Parr, knows the entire contents



[framed]





of every can as there are over 50,000 items in his archive. Stephen has a passion for film that started when he was a teenager making Super 8 films. In college, he was exposed to video but, as he says, "I settled on film because I liked the tactile nature of it and you didn't need expensive equipment to play it back." He went on to say, "I studied video art and experimental filmmaking at SUNY Buffalo's Center For Media Study with video and cinema luminaries like Nam June Paik and Paul Sharits, and produced visual environments for galleries, nightclubs, stores and live events." About this time in the 1980s, one of his first clients, director Ridley Scott, saw Stephen's nightclub montages in San Francisco at the DNA Lounge and contacted him for footage to be used

in a commercial. Since that first job, Stephen added to his collection and created a business licensing footage for projects such as commercials, TV shows like *Mythbusters*, and feature films like *Milk* and *Howl*.

Stephen is dedicated to preserving films that he refers to as "pieces of cultural history." Oddball's website states that the exhibition and preservation of these films "helps us define our collective history." Many of his clients are looking for iconic images, like the Golden Gate Bridge or a hippy smoking a joint on Haight Street in the 1960s, although Stephen is drawn to footage that more subtly illuminates things about daily life. He described a home movie in his collection in which a white woman brings an African-American boyfriend to a family event.



“Not even the owner and director of the Oddball Films + Video archive, Stephen Parr, knows the entire contents of every can”

Each time the boyfriend came into frame, the camera panned away. This otherwise undistinguished home movie says a lot about the viewpoint of the person behind the camera; it captures a moment of daily life we might like to forget, but shouldn't. In contrast, other films show aspects of daily life from the past that strike us today as naïve or downright funny, like a costumed showgirl demonstrating the functions of the latest oven appliance or a dance number celebrating the latest models of telephone.

As Stephen started meeting other film collectors, he discovered that they were often secretive and guarded about their collections, making rare and interesting films in those collections almost impossible to view. This spurred him to make his growing collection accessible via public screenings.

About five years ago, Oddball Films + Video opened its door to the public for film programs every Friday and Saturday night. Stephen programs screenings









# 50.000 ruller sære film

Når filmverdenen har brug for underfundige, mystiske, grinagtige filmklip, vender de sig mod Stephen Parr og Oddball Film, der i sit arkiv gemmer 75 års filmhistoriske særheder.

## REPORTAGE

SOLE BUGGE MØLLER, SAN FRANCISCO

Uuh, aaah, hahahaaa!». De små 20 personer, der har fundet frem til den lille improviserede biograf, rykker sig rundt på sæderne, i takt med at de gakkede filmklip, der hvirvler rundt på lærredet, ændrer karakter. Det ene øjeblik er vi til rodeo i 1930'erne med cowboys på stejle heste, det næste ser vi en mand cykle rundt på gesimsen af et højhus, hvor bilerne er små prikker på gaden under, eller støder på en kvinde i brydekamp med en tiger, en damptrømler, der fladmaser et kamera, en spøjst Mickey Mouse-tegnefilm i sort-hvid, hallucinerende mønstre og farver akkompagneret af psykotisk børnesang og en mand, der kaster sig ud fra et fly iført et par vinger og en raket på ryggen, til han med et smask klasker mod jorden. I løbet af fremvisningens to timer går vi fra animation til nyhedsklip, dokumentar, reklame, stumfilm og western – og det her er endda en af de mere normale fremvisninger.

At træde ind i mørket hos Oddball Film i San Francisco er som at træde ind i en tidslomme. Her er High Definition, THX og 3D erstattet af nedslidte biografsæder og brummende filmapparater, hvor billedet ofte hopper og ned og en film indledes med de klassiske nedtællinger på lærredet. 3, bip, 2, bip, 1. Action!

### Skatkammer for filmfolk

Oddball Film er et unikt filmarkiv med ofte glemte og kasserede optagelser, man ikke kan finde mange andre steder.

Manden bag det hele er Stephen Parr, som i løbet af aftenen manøvrerer to filmfremvisere, der formentlig har tusindvis af film på samvittigheden, som han skiftevis lader med nye ruller. Med sin knælange jakke, der er en mellemting mellem en blazer og en morgenkåbe, den grønne skjorte med diagonal lynlås, brillerne og de viltre totter af hår, der er tilbage på hans isse, minder han lidt om en vanvittig videnskabsmand.

De 50.000 filmruller, der i arkivet ligger rullet sammen som hvilende slanger, er, som han, skæve eksistenser. Her har alle de optagelser folk har fundet for kedelige, mærkelige eller rystende fået et nyt hjem og et nyt liv.

Samlingen er et skatkammer for filmfolk verden over, og Stephen Parr lever af at give dokumentarister, reklamefolk og instruktører adgang til disse klip. Da Gus van Sant i 2008 instruerede 'Milk' om 70'ernes homoforkæmper Harvey Milk (spillet af Sean Penn), dykkede Stephen

**FILMTOSSEN.** Stephen Parr har viet sit liv til at bevare filmruller, der kasseres, når nye formater kommer til. I hans arkiver gemmer sig tusinder af ukendte personer, som Anita herunder. Men måske optræder hendes klip en dag i en stor hollywood-film? Foto: Hardy Wilson og Stephen Parr



**“Når de her glemte optagelser bliver sat ind i en sammenhæng, er de en lige så værdifuld del af filmhistorien som alt andet**

Parr ned i filmrullerne og fandt en række arkivbilleder fra 70'ernes San Francisco, der endte med at blive brugt i filmen. Han har også leveret materiale til adskillige Spike Lee-projekter og en lang række dokumentarfilm som 'Gonzo' om Hunter S. Thompson, flere Michael Moore-film, tv-show som 'Oprah og 'Mythbusters' samt en ny dokumentar om Ken Kesey, forfatteren bag 'Gøgereden', og hans flippede syretrip i 70'erne, ligesom musikere som Iggy Pop, Kiss og Sufjan Stevens er dykket ned i samlingen.

Går man på opdagelse på de endeløse hylder, kan man finde højpendede avantgardefilm, bizarre forskningsoptagelser, kuriøse hjemmevideoer, kasserede nyhedsklip, obskure animationsfilm og alt, hvad man ellers aldrig ville kunne tænke sig til. Ofte overgår virkeligheden fantasien. Hvor kan man ellers finde klip af en kvinde, der strikker et gigantisk portræt af en universitetsbygning ud af strømpebukser, eller en skole, hvor en gruppe solbrillebærende børn fremstiller fjernsyn?

### Ridley Scott som første kunde

Stephen Parr havde altid været fascineret af filmmediet, lige siden han fik sit første Super 8-kamera. I sine unge dage skød han optagelser af musikere som The Ramones og John Cage, men da folk i starten af 80'erne begyndte at gå over til videoformatet, svømmede Stephen Parr mod strømmen. Han begyndte at køre rundt til arkiver, biblioteker, private samlere og helt almindelige mennesker for at gaffe deres kasserede filmstrimler.

Stephen Parr klippede visuelle montager sammen af filmstrimlerne og brugte dem som baggrund i diskoteker og natklubber. Det var her, han i 1984 mødte sin første kunde, Ridley Scott, der kom fra dundrende spillefilmssucceser som 'Alien' og 'Blade Runner'. Men han lavede stadig lavede del reklamefilm, og med Stephen Parrs hjælp fik han fingre i et klip af en burleskdanserinde, som han brugte i en alkoholreklame. Rygterne om Parrs særegne filmunivers bredte sig som ringe i vandet, og folk begyndte at kontakte ham for at tappe klip fra arkivet. Oddball Film var født.

I dag udvides samlingen stadig, og folk donerer ofte deres gamle filmstrimler til Stephen Parr.

»For mange folk var optagelserne blevet ubrugelige, fordi der kom andre formater. Men når de her glemte optagelser

bliver sat ind i en sammenhæng, er de en lige så værdifuld del af filmhistorien som alt andet«, siger han.

Han indrømmer dog, at værdien af mange af optagelserne ofte er ren kitsch, men insisterer alligevel, at der er en dybere mening med samlermanien.

»Mange film i dag bliver lavet kun for at tjene penge. Men jeg leder efter ting, der er mindre åbenlyse. Det handler ikke så meget om, hvorvidt filmene er besynderlige, men af og til falder man over noget, der er så poetisk og vigtigt, at hvert billede nærmest er et politisk statement«, siger Stephen Parr.

»De fleste af de film, jeg samler, bliver ikke længere vist nogen steder. Det er en del af vores filmhistorie, der bliver glemt, og meget af det er virkelig underholdende, fordi folk greb tingene an på en helt anden måde, da de begyndte at lege med film. Det var meget eksperimenterende, og der var intet, der var mere gyldigt end andet«, siger han.

### Bryder skabelonerne

Hver uge afholder Stephen Parr fremvisninger, hvor han sammensætter forskellige klip fra arkivet til en større sammenhæng. Som regel er der et overordnet emne for fremvisningen, som belyses fra adskillige vinkler på tværs af genrer og gængs fortælleteknik og gerne med et miks af humor, tragedie og trauma.

»Hvis du går i biografen, viser de dig ikke et kasseret nyhedsklip eller en sær tegnefilm, de viser ikke andet end reklamer, trailers og så en spillefilm. Så jeg prøver at bryde nogle af de skabeloner«, siger Stephen Parr, der elsker, at folk det ene øjeblik griner til deres maver kramper og tudet det næste øjeblik. Det vigtigste er, at filmene rykker noget i folk. For det er her, i minibiografens mørke, at filmene lever.

»Jeg kan godt lide ideen om at vise filmen i et rum foran et live publikum. Det er meget anderledes end at lægge det op på YouTube, for man deler en oplevelse, og det skaber en dialog«, siger han.

Gennem årene har hans film fået et mindre kultfølg, og der er ofte filmfolk, der kigger forbi. Og selv om det ikke umiddelbart virker sådan, gemmer Stephen Parr faktisk de allersæreste film.

»Hvis jeg viste dem, ville jeg tiltrække et meget lille publikum«, siger han, mens han sætter en rulle på med Askepot genfortalt som stumfilm fremført af en gruppe dragqueens.

film@pol.dk

## Oddball på film

Udpluk af de film, Oddball Film har leveret optagelser til:

**When You're Strange (2009)**, dokumentar om rockbandet The Doors.  
**Milk (2008)**, Oscarnomineret film af Gus van Sant med Sean Penn i titelrollen.

**Gonzo (2008)**, dokumentar om Hunter S. Thompson med Johnny Depp som fortæller.

**En ubekvem sandhed (2006)**, Al Gores miljødokumentar.

**Half Nelson (2006)**, Oscarnomineret film med Ryan Gosling i hovedrollen.

**The Weather Underground (2002)**, Oscarnomineret dokumentar af Sam Green.

**A Huey P. Newton Story (2001)**, Spike Lee-dokumentar om De Sorte Pantere.

## Oddball-favoritter

Blandt Stephen Parrs egne yndlingsoptagelser er et klip fra 70'erne, der viser nogle **både, som hiver vrugdele fra et nedstyrtet fly op af havet**. »Der er ingen lyd, og man ved ikke helt, hvad der foregår, men det sker midt om natten, og der er bare noget virkeligt skræmmende over det. Den siger mere ved ikke at sige særlig meget«.

Arkivet gemmer også på en del bizarre forskningsfilm, heriblandt optagelser fra et amerikansk laboratorium fra 1956, hvor forskerne laver **afsindige forsøg med flagermus**, grænsende til dyremishandling. Blandt de mest syrede tæller en fransk film set med en skizofrens øjne. Filmen er surrealistisk med smeltende hoveder og sære billeder af masker, og underligt nok er den fremstillet af **det farmaceutiske firma, der oprindeligt opfandt LSD**.



## Filmruller varer evigt

Engang blev alt skudt på film, redigeret på film, distribueret og vist på film, men i dag ændrer formaterne sig konstant, og så snart f.eks. VHS- eller dvd-teknologien uddør, mister man en masse unikke optagelser.

Selv i digitalalderen ændres formaterne med lynets hast fra mpeg2 til mpeg4 osv. Stephen Parr har **75 år gamle film, der stadig afspilles fint**, mens han har tre år gammelt software, som allerede er forældet. »Om ti år vil jeg vædde med, at du ikke kan finde en dvd-afspiller. Men film kan man altid skanne. Med den rette opbevaring kan en filmrulle holde mindst 300 år«.

[www.oddballfilm.com](http://www.oddballfilm.com)



# THE EVENING CLASS

"CINEMA IS THE EVENING CLASS FOR DISCRIMINATING ADULTS." -- OUSMANE SEMBENE

THURSDAY, MARCH 31, 2011

## THE DISPOSABLE & THE DISCONTINUOUS: *The Evening Class* Interview With Stephen Parr



Stephen Parr is an archivist, imagemaker and writer as well as the director of [Oddball Film + Video](#), a stock footage company based in San Francisco whose main business is licensing unusual stock footage to producers of feature films, documentaries, commercials, broadcast television, music videos, as well as web and new media productions. He is also hands down one of my favorite personalities in the San Francisco cinema scene. Every time I walk away from having a conversation with Stephen, I'm thinking, "*Damn*, I wish I'd recorded that!" So imagine my delight when Stephen accepted my invitation to lunch, recommended Chinese barbecue at Lung Shan on Mission, and agreed to let me record his take on the disposable and the discontinuous while we munched on tea-smoked eel and kung pao corned beef. [Photos of Stephen Parr courtesy of [Hardy Wilson](#).]

\* \* \*

**Michael Guillén: Stephen, you have frequently**

### ABOUT ME



MICHAEL GUILLEN

Member of the San Francisco Film Critics Circle.

[VIEW MY COMPLETE](#)

[PROFILE](#)

### BAY AREA BUDDIES

*Aspiring Sellout* (Joseph "Jon" Lanthier)

*Cinebeats* (Kimberly Lindbergs)

*Film-415* (Michael Hawley)

*FOFF* (Carl Martin)

*Greencine Daily* (Aaron Hillis)

*Hell On Frisco Bay* (Brian Darr)

*Life With Movies and Maxxxxxx* (Jay Blodgett)

*Peaches Christ* (Joshua Grannell)

*SF360* (Susan Gerhard)

*Six Martinis & the Seventh Art* (Shahn)

*Matt Sussman*

*Text of Light* (Max Goldberg)

*YNOT At the Movies* (Tony An)

*You Want A Knuckle Samwick!* (Andy Samwick)

### BLOGROLL

*/Film* (Peter Sciretta)

*1st Thursday* (Darren Hughes)

*Agence eureka*

*Cahiers2Cinéma*

*Cashiers du Cinemart* (Mike White)

*Cinema Is Dope* (Blake Etheridge)

*Cinema Ramble* (Michael Cusdin)



expressed in the past your love for 16mm film, but you've also indicated to me your receptivity to new media. In fact, Oddball Film + Video is hosting a seminar and workshop on using inexpensive cameras to promote social action as part of the 4th annual Disposable Film Festival (DFF). Can you speak to your embrace of both film and new media?

Stephen Parr: It all has to do with how you perceive the world and how you perceive images and your reality. I shot a lot of Super8 when I was a kid. Then when I started going to school, I started doing more work with video because it was immediate and I really liked the immediacy of it. So I come from a background of video art and new media where people were actually even building and making their own equipment, like their own video synthesizers.

But really I'm more interested in content than format. I'm interested in learning how to do nonlinear programming that hits a lot of people on a lot of levels. That's what my real interest is. The technology is just the means to an end. I embrace any useful technology.

**Guillén: So you're not a technical purist?**

Parr: No. I like film very much because of its tactile quality and I love the way it's projected and I love the concept of people sitting in a room sharing an experience. That's something that's really important. Also, I like film because it is the longest-lasting medium invented. There isn't any other visual medium invented that lasts as long as film. People can talk about whatever medium they want, but

*Coffee, Coffee & More Coffee* (Peter Nellhaus)  
*DinaView* (Dina Iordanova)  
*Drifting* (David Lowery)  
*Eternal Sunshine of the Logical Mind* (Bob Turnbull)  
*Film Journey* (Doug Cummings)  
*Film Studies For Free* (Catherine Grant)  
*Girish* (Girish Shambu)  
*Greenbrian Picture Shows* (John McElwee)  
*Illusion Travels By Streetcar* (Tom Sutpen)  
*Invisible Cinema* (Jennifer McMillan)  
*Landscape Suicide* (Matthew Flanagan)  
*Lessons From the School of Inattention* (Francis "Oggs" Cruz)  
*Lilok Pelikula* (Richard Bolisay)  
*Listening Ear, The* (Weeping Sam)  
*Melbourne Film Blog* (Paul Martin)  
*One Way Street* (Alan K. Rode)  
*Piling Piling Pelikula* (Dodo Dayao)  
*Richard Gibson*  
*Rundown, The* (James Rocchi)  
*Scribbles and Ramblings* (Sachin G.)  
*Self-Styled Siren* (Campaspe)  
*Sergio Leone & The Infield Fly Rule* (Dennis Cozzalio)  
*Some Came Running* (Glenn Kenny)  
*Strictly Film School* (Acquarello)  
*Toby Miller*

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#### TEAM EFFORTS

*Bright Lights Film Journal*  
*Cinema Strikes Back*  
*Cinematical*  
*Daily Plastic*  
*Fandor*  
*Ferdy On Films*  
*House Next Door, The*



there's nothing that's been around 100 years like film. At Oddball, we have reels that are 60-70 years old and we play them all the time. But any medium that allows people more control over their art is useful. With digital media you can make an image for one penny or nothing. You can record over and over.

**Guillén: When you say you're learning to create nonlinear programming, what do you mean by that?**

Parr: Most people like to think of a film as a way to tell a story. In the early days of cinema a lot of people told stories, a lot of people re-enacted myths, and a lot of people created abstract images. But a linear way of looking at things is only one way of looking at things and I suspect things are a lot more nonlinear than people think.

**Guillén: So a nonlinear film is not as concerned with narrative continuity? Which approaches the subject of viewing films discontinuously.**

Parr: What do you mean by "discontinuous"? Do you mean watching more than one thing at once?

**Guillén: That's one way I think of it, yes. Though I'm also harkening back to how "discontinuous viewing" was a term used to legitimize criticism of channel surfing, back when television was accused of diminishing attention spans. It's now being dusted off and used again to criticize the viewing habits of internet cinephiles accustomed to watching *YouTube* and *Facebook* content.**

Parr: I have mixed feelings on this. There's a difference between having a short attention span and being focused on a variety of stimuli. Most people that I see who use a lot of new media appear as though they *do* have a shortened attention span. Let me try to explain why I think that. Just because a cell phone is available, why is it when someone's out that they need to check their phone on a minute-by-minute basis? Or just because a camera is available,

*If Charlie Parker Were A  
Gunslinger...*

*KQED*

*MUBI*

*Twitch*

*VCinema*

*WELL, The*

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BLOGS ON THE NOD (BUT STILL  
WORTH READING)

*Critical Culture* (Pacze Moj)

*Daily@IFC* (David Hudson)

*Errata* (Rob Davis)

*Film of the Year* (Thom Ryan)

*Framing Device* (J. Robert Parks)

*Globality* Steve Lawson)

*Long Pauses* (Darren Hughes)

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BOOK REVIEWS

**Charles McGraw: Biography Of  
A Film Noir Tough Guy**

**Cinemachismo (*SF360*)**

**The Movie Lovers' Club**

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ESSAYS

**Pedro Almodóvar: Almodóvar's  
Fluid Identities (*Greencine*)**

**A Blogger's Best Five (*SF360*)**

**Screen Scene (*SF360*)**

**A Strandful At Frameline 31  
(*SF360*)**

**Write On (*SF360*)**

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WEB SITE MENTIONS

**Charles McGraw: Biography Of  
A Film Noir Tough Guy**

**The Free Will (Benten Films  
DVD Release)**

**The Rape of Europa**

**The Slanted Screen**

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why would you want to take pictures everywhere you go? It makes me curious about what the media has convinced us we should do. If you can do something, why *should* you do it?

If someone tells me they're going to meet me at 10:00, I don't want to be interrupted from what I'm doing five times within the hour about when they're going to *arrive*; I just want to see them at 10:00, y'know? I don't want to spend my time talking about what I'm going to do. I just want to *do* it.

**Guillén:** This is reminding me of a conversation I recently had with a new intern where he was upset with me that I don't carry my cell phone. "How am I supposed to let you know if I can't make it on time?" he asked. I told him to just be at the agreed-upon place at the agreed-upon hour and no issue. "But what if something comes *up*?" he persisted. Which touched upon a pet peeve of mine: that spontaneity is often self-serving. My motto: make a plan and stick to it. You say you're going to meet me someplace somewhere then meet me there at the appointed time. If you don't arrive, I'll figure something came up and I'll find out about it later. It surprised me how much this seemed to *agitate* him.

Parr: Cell phones only benefit those who are changing plans on their cell phones. For instance, the phone was ringing at my Mom's house and she didn't answer it and I said, "Mom, your phone's ringing" and she said, "Yeah, I know." I said, "Well, aren't you going to get it?" She said, "No." I said, "Why?" She said, "Because I don't want to." And then she said, "Y'know, I didn't get the phone for other people; I got it for *myself*." And then there's those people who call you and you're talking and then they say, "Hey, can I put you on hold?" I have one friend who says, "No! Call me later."

**Guillén:** All this addresses the addictive allure of mobile devices and their impact on social behavior.

#### MOVIES ON TV

**HBO**

**Independent Film Channel**

**Link TV**

**Sci Fi Channel**

**Turner Classic Movies**

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#### INDICES

***All About Evil Index***

***Latino, Latin American & Spanish/Portuguese Cinemas***

***Noir City***

***Rouge Index***

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#### ONLINE MAGAZINES

***Bomb***

***Bright Lights Film Journal***

***Cahiers du cinéma***

***Cineaste***

***Cinema Scope***

***Cinemascope International***

***Creative Screenwriting***

***Entertainment Today***

***Film Comment***

***Film International***

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***Filmmaker***

***Film Monthly***

***Film-Philosophy***

***Film Quarterly***

***Film Threat***

***Hollywood Reporter***

***Images***

***indieWIRE***

***Intensities: The Journal of Cult Media***

***Jumpcut***

***Kamera***

***Kinema***

***Metaphilm***

***Midnight Eye***



Parr: There's no doubt about it.

Guillén: We don't even need to talk about how this has impacted audience behavior in movie houses. But I do want to tease out this quality of the addictive allure of new media, both portable and social. My question is: what is the addiction really *about*? I do think people want to tell stories. I do think they want to talk about their lives and share information. I do think they want to communicate with others but they haven't learned how to do it in any other more meaningful direct way, and—because they haven't—I suspect it feeds a frustration and dissatisfaction that reveals itself in compulsive habits obsessed with hand-held devices. That's why I'm especially pleased by the free panels DFF is offering participants this year, two at Oddball alone, which are trying to propose creative alternatives to mobile devices. I'm particularly intrigued by the workshop on how to use mobile devices to further social causes.

The other day on *Facebook* I read a comment by documentarian Heddy Honigmann that stuck with me. She said that the only important filmmakers working today are the thousands and thousands of *YouTube* providers.

Parr: *YouTube* is a *de facto* archive for the world. We know that. Let me give you an example of what I'm hoping to get at with the upcoming DFF workshops. I just did a show in Bangalore, this place called *Jaaga*, which is a three-story building made with palette-rack shelving. It's an open-air place where they hold workshops on how to work with their laptops and create electronic devices, very youth-oriented, very immediate, high concept low tech, how to make low tech stuff that *works*. Actually, one of the main guys who runs *Jaaga* is from San Francisco. He just went over to India and started creating these spaces where people could work and create.

One of the things I would like to touch on is: people can handle more than one medium at a time. They

***Moviemaker***

***Miradas de Cine [Spanish]***

***movieScope***

***Moving Pictures***

***Nerve***

***New Yorker, The***

***Not Coming To A Theater Near You***

***Offscreen***

***Other Voices***

***Paste***

***Rouge***

***Scope***

***Screening the Past***

***Script***

***Senses of Cinema***

***Sight & Sound***

***Stop Smiling***

***Synoptique***

***Undercurrent***

***Variety***

***Vertigo***

***Written By***

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THE CASTRO THEATRE'S 85TH  
BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION

***Tavo Amador***

***Brian Darr***

***Michael Guillen (History)***

***Adam Hartzell***

***Michael Hawley***

***Michael Hawley (Vintage  
Calendars)***

***Jonathan L. Knapp***

***Frako Loden***

***Jenni Olson***

***Edward Millington Stout, III  
(SF360)***

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INTERVIEWS

***Megan Abbot***

***Lotfi Abdelli***

***Sean Abley***

can handle poetry and music. They can handle film and live music. They can handle a lot of different media at a time; but, are they *focused*? The whole point is about being focused. When they're walking down the street, why are people not listening to the world? To paraphrase John Cage: "Every sound is music." But instead, people walk down the street completely plugged in to digital media where the signal is actually being compressed so that you're not really getting high fidelity sound. Then on top of that they're either on their phone or watching consumer-oriented media that plays back from their phone. People have become alarmingly mediated. In my experience, such people don't know how to interact socially.

**Guillén:** That's reminding me of my friend Sergio de la Mora, an associate professor at UC Davis, who recently complained to me that walking across campus is no longer fun because nobody says hi to each other anymore; they're all too busy with their private phone conversations.

Parr: Also, there's some really strong work being provided online; but, a lot of what people record is narcissistic; it's all about *them*. It's not about other people. It's not about people coming closer to other people. Most social media at its core, at its base, is a substitute for human interaction. Many artists will tell you that words aren't enough. Many people will tell you that image on a film isn't enough. My point is that there are so many levels of intimacy. We've gone from being in person, being on the telephone, to being on email, to being texted, to doing the *Twitter* thing. When you look at people who are truly creative on *Twitter*—someone like David Lynch, let's say—you'll find he's following something like 30 people while 12,000 people are following him. He's not following 500 people. He doesn't have time. How do you create art and socially interact at the same time?

**Guillén:** They say no entourage is good for an artist.

**Jeff Adachi / *The Slanted Screen***

**Jeff Adachi / *You Don't Know***

**Jack (*The Jack Soo Story*)**

**Lisandro Alonso / *Liverpool***

**Lisandro Alonso / *NWFF***

**Tavo Amador**

**Brecht Andersch**

**Wes Anderson, Jason**

**Schwartzman & Roman**

**Coppola**

**Milena Andonova**

**Dominic Angerame**

**John Arellano**

**Michael Arndt (*SF360*)**

**Darren Aronofsky (for *The Fountain*)**

**Darren Aronofsky (for *The Wrestler*)**

**Guillermo Arriaga**

**Jacques Audiard, Thomas**

**Bidegain & Tahar Rahim**

**Jamie Babbit (*Greencine*)**

**Don Bachardy**

**Jennifer Baichwal & Edward  
Burtynsky**

**Alison Bailes**

**Andrew Bailey**

**Steve Barretto**

**Richard Barrios**

**Juan Antonio Bayona & Sergio  
Sánchez (*Greencine*)**

**Robert Beavers, Pt. 1**

**Robert Beavers, Pt. 2**

**Mark Becker, Pt. 1**

**Mark Becker, Pt. 2**

**Adrian Belic, Pt. 1**

**Adrian Belic, Pt. 2**

**Jed Rosenthal Bell**

**James Benning**

**Amy Berg**

**Aurora Bergere**

**Jeffrey Blitz & Reece Thompson  
(*SF360*)**

**Anna Boden & Ryan Fleck**

**Carlos Bolado**





Parr: Another example: somebody will remix something that's completely meaningless. I've said this before and I'll say it again: the meaningless and the trivial coexist with the meaningful and the vital. So a guy on *YouTube* will make a radio out of cheese and it will work and he'll get 500,000,000 hits.

**Guillén: [Laughs] I want to see that radio!! Send me the link!**

Parr: But then some guy in Argentina will set up his camera and do something beautiful and poetic and he'll get 25 people to look at what he does.

**Guillén: I relate. [Laughs.]**

Parr: So what does that mean? Well, it means that—to a large extent—people are quite distracted by the technology around them. They're flailing. I don't think people have an understanding of how you truly utilize the technology that's there. We're really at a stage of infancy for most technology.

For instance, there's no real etiquette for cell phone use. It used to be that if you wanted to make a call in a restaurant, you'd use the public telephone. And where would they put the phone? Back there by the bathrooms. You know why? Because they didn't want people to be disturbed if they wanted to carry on a private conversation. We've lost that age of privacy and now everyone wants to share themselves with everyone else; but, if you think about it, there's certain things that *should* be private. There's no real

**Richard Bolisay**  
**Uwe Boll**  
**Ernest Borgnine**  
**Scott Boswell**  
**Caroline Bottaro**  
**Danny Boyle**  
**Alice Braga**  
**Catherine Breillat (*Greencine*)**  
**Kerem Bürsin**  
**Butcher Brothers**  
**Eric Byler**  
**Juan José Campanella**  
**Bruce Campbell & Joshua Grannell**  
**John Canemaker**  
**John Carney, Glen Hansard & Marketa Irglova (*SF360*)**  
**Michael Cerenzie**  
**Park Chan-wook**  
**Vidhu Vinod Chopra**  
**Lee Isaac Chung & Samuel Anderson**  
**Hye Seung Chung**  
**Larry Clark**  
**Bonni Cohen & Richard Berge**  
**Jeffrey Cohlman**  
**Webster Colcord & Corey Rosen (*SF360*)**  
**Peter Conheim**  
**Francis Ford Coppola**  
**Pedro Costa (*Greencine*)**  
**Susan Weeks Coulter**  
**David Cronenberg & Viggo Mortensen (*Greencine*)**  
**Phil Cousineau**  
**Francis "Oggs" Cruz**  
**Alan Cumming**  
**Elisha Cuthbert**  
**Olivier Dahan**  
**Viola Davis**  
**Dodo Dayao**  
**Thomas Dekker**  
**Guillermo Del Toro**  
**Arnaud Desplechin**  
**Kirby Dick**

ground rules anymore. I've been in India in the middle of a *puja*, a sacred ritual, where people get on their phone. I've seen people in restaurants talking on their phones while the waiter is trying to get their order. I've seen guys where people are about to get on an elevator and they ward them off saying, "Could you take the next one down? This is a private call." So they're taking their space and making it your space and they're taking your space and making it their space.

All these issues revolve around public and private space and the fact that a lot of people think that—if more people see their work—the work will be better. For instance, when I program and screen films I don't worry about the size of the audience. To paraphrase Jonas Mekas: the better the film, the smaller the audience. If you're going to make a generalization, that's probably not so bad. Sometimes I'll have a program and someone will say, "There should be more people here...."

**Guillén:** But it is what it is.

Parr: It is what it is!

**Guillén:** You're reminding me of *CinemaScope* editor Mark Peranson when he said the most interesting film is the one that no one else has seen. So the cinephilic challenge is to find a film that few people have seen and write about it: *that's* interesting!

You're also reminding me of something Jonathan Rosenbaum wrote: "In short, we live in a transitional period where enormous paradigmatic shifts should be engendering new concepts, new terms, and new kinds of analysis, evaluation, and measurement, not to mention new kinds of political and social formations, as well as new forms of etiquette. But in most cases they aren't doing any of those things." ("Film Writing on the Web: Some Personal Reflections", included in his collection *Goodbye Cinema, Hello Cinephilia*, but originally published in the March 2007 issue of

**Chris Divecchio**  
**Jack Donner**  
**Florian Henckel Von Donnersmarck**  
**Samuel Douek**  
**Bruno Dumont (MUBI)**  
**Mark & Jay Duplass**  
**A.J. Eaton**  
**Atom Egoyan**  
**Matthias Emcke & Til Schweiger**  
**Heinz Emigholz, Pt. 1**  
**Heinz Emigholz, Pt. 2**  
**Jamaa Fanaka**  
**Valerie Faris & Jonathan Dayton**  
**Peter X. Feng**  
**Jesse Hawthorne Ficks**  
**Nancy Fishman & Joshua Moore**  
**Ari Folman**  
**Etyan Fox**  
**Javier Fuentes-León**  
**Chris Fujiwara**  
**Patrick Galloway**  
**Colin Geddes**  
**Bahman Ghobadi**  
**Tony Gilroy (Greencine)**  
**Amos Gitai**  
**Richard Glatzer & Wash Westmoreland**  
**Danny Glover (Greencine)**  
**Amos Goldbaum**  
**Michel Gondry**  
**R.W. Goodwin**  
**Joshua Grannell / All About Evil**  
**Joshua Grannell (aka Peaches Christ), Midnight Mass 2007 Pt. 1**  
**Joshua Grannell (aka Peaches Christ), Midnight Mass 2007 Pt. 2**  
**Joshua Grannell (aka Peaches Christ), Midnight Mass 2009**  
**Timothy Greenfield-Sanders & Elvis Mitchell**  
**David Gregory**  
**Dylan Griffith, Collin Armstrong**



## ***Film Quarterly 60:3.)***

Parr: There's no money in developing an aesthetic. That's the bottom line. There's no interest from someone who makes a product to develop an aesthetic around the product on how to use it if it doesn't benefit the bottom line. Take *Facebook* as an example. Let's say I go in and open up a store—we'll use that metaphor—and I let people come in and we sell things to each other. What you do is get all their information and then you sell things to them while they're selling things to other people. You have no inventory. You have no product. The product is other people selling things to other people.

Television brought the viewer to the advertiser; it delivered an advertiser to the viewer. That's what television *is*. It's supported by advertising. They're giving you a product. But what product do you get with *Facebook*? Other people. To me, it's a brilliant concept: you're selling other people to other people. Then you're taking their information and putting it into a box. "Oh, you like dogs? Well, you can be with the 'I like dogs' people. You like film? Great!" I mean, who doesn't like film? Who doesn't like dogs? How do you match peoples' interests? It's a cynical and sad way. What they say in Asia is that boredom is the sign of aristocracy. If you have a lot of money, you're not going to be on *Facebook* all day.

**Guillén: No, it's just for us poor people who have nothing else to do.**

Parr: It gives you an artificial feeling of control.

**Guillén: To get back to our two main words—disposability and discontinuous—let's take a look at what's disposable. We were talking about linearity and nonlinearity. Speaking in the domain of history, linearity has an accumulative quality. The continuous and the historical record involve a process of accumulation. That's the *weight* of history. To throw off that weight is the redeeming value of disposability. It lessens the load of what**

**& Samantha Simon**

**Daniel Gruener**

**José Luis Guerin**

**Patricio Guzmán (*MUBI*)**

**Lance Hammer (*SF360*)**

**Gadi Harel**

**Adam Hartzell**

**Molly Haskell**

**Michel Hazanavicius**

**Chris Hegedus & Nick Doob**

**Benjamin Heisenberg**

**Jack Hill**

**Brook Hinton**

**Rainer Hoffmann**

**Zac Holtzman (*Dengue Fever*)**

**Heddy Honigmann**

**Michael House, Pt. 1 (*SF360*)**

**Michael House, Pt. 2**

**Marc Huestis (*SF360*)**

**Diana Lee Inosanto**

**Annice Jacoby**

**Ivan Jagirdar & Anuj Vaidya**

**Richard Jenkins**

**Doug Jones**

**Mike Jones**

**Lee Kang-sheng (*Greencine*)**

**Peter & E.L. Katz**

**Charlie Kaufman**

**William Kaufman (*SF360*)**

**Kumakiri Kazuyoshi**

**Matthew Kennedy, Pt. 1**

**Matthew Kennedy, Pt. 2**

**Matthew Kennedy re Marie Dressler**

**Peter Ketnath**

**Jeff Key**

**Özer Kiziltan & Onder Cakar**

**Eran Kolorin (*movieScope*)**

**Hirokazu Kore-eda**

**Chris Kraus**

**Peter Krause**

**Marco Kreuzpaintner & Daniel Brühl**

**Kiyoshi Kurosawa**

has come before in order to accumulate anew. It comments on what can be jettisoned.

One of the specific reasons I wanted to talk to you is because of your involvement with found footage and your nonlinear programming that consistently rescues and recontextualizes footage arguably intended to be disposable. You use commercials, educational films, even home movies, to construct your programs. Can you speak to your creative reappropriation of the disposable?

Parr: Well, no one knows what's disposable and what isn't. I base my whole art on things that other people have thrown away and don't think have any value. Most of what people think is valuable, isn't. Is gold really valuable? My gut sense is that most of the gold we see is being used for *decorative* purposes.

Our culture filters very little. A lot comes at people. I'll show some old campy drug film and people in the audience will say it's really funny and I'll tell them that the only reason they think it's funny is because it's 30 years old. You might as well laugh at yourself right now. It will probably be a lot funnier now than it will be in 30 years. Some people will say, "Oh, that was a really great film!" but it's not. It never was and it never will be. We just think it is because, in time, we look at what we have now. There's a certain linearity to time that—when you look back at something at the context it was in—it looks ludicrous. To me, it looks dumb when someone keeps looking at their cell phone. It's like a horse with blinders on. If you're spending more time looking at your phone than you are looking at the world around you, then you're kind of saying that the world around you is not really that valuable. It's just a place where you move through to get what you want.

In Asian culture if they have a picture of a fish in an aquarium, the native sensibility is that the fish belongs at the bottom of the sea. Western philosophy thinks that's wrong. They think the fish belongs *with*

**Pablo Larraín**

**Elliot Lavine**

**Chris Lavis & Maciek  
Szczerbowski**

**Ang Lee & Tang Wei**

**Grace Lee**

**Herschell Gordon Lewis  
(Greencine)**

**Laura Linney**

**Miguel Littin**

**Ernesto Livon-Grosman**

**Jennifer Loeber, Aaron Hillis &  
Brian Cassidy**

**Matt Losada, Elijah Wolfson &  
Hector Jimenez**

**David Lowery**

**Gytis Luksas**

**Michael Lumpkin**

**Maria Maggenti (Greencine)**

**Neil Marshall**

**Carl Martin**

**Tom McCarthy**

**Deepa Mehta**

**David Michôd**

**Tsai Ming-Liang**

**Elvis Mitchell**

**John Cameron Mitchell**

**Daisuke Miyao**

**Dito Montiel & Jake Pushinsky**

**Amir Muhammad**

**Saskia Mulder**

**Walter Murch (Greencine)**

**Oscar Ruiz Navia, Rodrigo Vélez  
& Arnobio Salazar Rivas**

**Chon Noriega**

**Antonio Nuić**

**Dennis Nyback (SF360)**

**Michel Ocelot**

**Meghan O'Hara**

**Steven Okazaki**

**Jenni Olson**

**Stephen Olsson**

**Luis Ortega**

**Robert Osborne**



*other fish*. Western culture doesn't really see things as a whole. Our culture is driven by needs. It's really a "me" culture in a lot of ways. Whatever can get me what I want. Imagine that you could have a phone that had every application on it that you could ever want.

**Guillén:** Why would I want to imagine that? I find that *horrifying*. The other day I was shopping in Safeway and noticed a magazine called *Apps*. That was its full content; nothing but applications. And I'm thinking, "Film magazines are going out of print while a magazine called *Apps* is flying off the shelves? Really?"

Parr: But that's what I'm saying: the whole concept of applications is geared towards consumption. In general, they say the iPad is a consuming device. It's made to consume. It's not made to produce anything. It's not like a laptop. Maybe you're creating and sharing pictures, but you're really consuming more than you're creating. That's something to think about. It's not so much how you're consuming but what you're consuming, how much you're consuming, and why?

**Guillén:** Let's return to your comment that disposability is your art. Can you expand on how you're working with these disposable items to create your art?

Parr: Everything has a life span according to our culture. Myself, I don't really believe in "genre-fying" everything, as if everything is a genre. Literally every week there's a different film festival in San Francisco: animation, film noir, independent, horror, sex. In one sense that's wonderful but I don't think those things necessarily work within the cultural framework we have right now. For example, I just did a program in Bangalore where people responded just as well if not better than they responded here in the United States. It's all about visual iconography, style.

**Robert Osborne ("31 Days of Oscar" / 2007)**

**Robert Osborne ("31 Days of Oscar" / 2009)**

**Robert Osborne ("Summer Under the Stars")**

**Robert Osborne & Charles Tabesh**

**Chris Paine**

**Steve Pandola**

**Rithy Panh**

**Vincent Paronnaud**

**Elizabeth Peña**

**Cassandra Peterson**

**K.C. Price**

**James Quandt, Pt. 1**

**James Quandt, Pt. 2**

**Paul Rachman & Steven Blush**

**Seth Randal**

**Emily Rios & Jesse Garcia**

**Emily Rios & Jesse Garcia**

**Alex Rivera (*SF360*)**

**Alan K. Rode**

**João Pedro Rodrigues & Alexander David**

**Eli Roth, Pt. 1**

**Eli Roth, Pt. 2**

**Stefan Ruzowitzky (*Greencine*)**

**Sirak M. Sabahat**

**Walter Salles**

**Stephen Salmons, Pt. 1**

**Stephen Salmons, Pt. 2**

**Diana Sanchez**

**Im Sang-soo & Lee Jung-jae**

**Richard Schenkman**

**Richard Schickel**

**Eric Schlosser**

**Brooke Sebold, Bonita Sills, Claire & Mark Farley**

**Noah Segan / *All About Evil***

**Noah Segan / *Deadgirl & Someone's Knocking At the Door***

**Steve Seid re Gabriel Figueroa**

**Steve Seid re David Goodis**

Disposability is part of that awareness that developed in the '60s with environmental culture. At that time there was a lot of talk about planned obsolescence. People like Rachel Carson talked about the creation of objects that were being made just to be disposed. Nowadays especially people make products and no one expects them to last. If you buy a cell phone, you don't expect it to last for more than two years, which is not really a good way to look at things. So when I talk about disposability, I mean it metaphorically. As a metaphor, disposability can encompass a lot of different ideas. It can encompass the fact: what were these people thinking when they made all these commercials? Were they thinking that anyone would ever look back at them? Probably not. A lot of times people would make home movies but who did they think was really going to watch them? Their audience was very limited.

A lot of times people make big-budget films—something like **Avatar**—whose aim is to last for 10,000 years. And yet James Cameron is using ideas that are totally timeworn ideas, beside the fact that it's a horrible script. **Avatar** has immediately dated itself in a very strange way because Cameron repeated all the same things that everybody else has been trying to do for 30-40 years, which is 3-D. He used state-of-the-art effects but he used the same story. So the strange thing is that—even though something is purporting to be new—it may last a week or it may last 100 years.

I'm interested in the viability of a lot of things besides portable mediums. For instance, if you've made an art installation using a floppy disk, how do you reinstall a system like that?

**Guillén:** You're basically talking about the imprecision of memory and its potential obsolescence. Case in point: I had a major hard drive crash this past summer and I lost every piece of writing I'd written since I was 12 years old because there was no way to get to it. The drives were outdated so there was no way to

**Albert Serra & Mark Peranson**  
**Steven Shainberg**  
**Yoav Shamir**  
**Joel Shepard**  
**Chen Shi-Zheng**  
**Steven Soderbergh**  
**Fernando Solanas**  
**Carlos Sorin**  
**Konrad Steiner, Pt. 1**  
**Konrad Steiner, Pt. 2**  
**Mink Stole / All About Evil**  
**Mink Stole / Out At the Wedding**  
**Edward Millington Stout, III**  
**(SF360)**  
**Mark Sumner**  
**Bill Talen & Savitri D.**  
**Yen Tan & Alessandro Calza**  
**Quentin Tarantino**  
**Béla Tarr (Greencine)**  
**Kimberly Theidon**  
**Jacques Thelemaque & Diane**  
**Gaidry**  
**David Thomson on Marlon**  
**Brando**  
**David Thomson on Nicole**  
**Kidman**  
**David Thomson on Passionate**  
**Film Criticism**  
**David Thomson on A Thousand**  
**Decisions In the Dark**  
**David Thomson on Peter**  
**Morgan & The Deal**  
**Marisa Tomei**  
**Pablo Trapero**  
**John Turner**  
**Tom Tykwer**  
**Sean Uyehara (SF360)**  
**Kate Lawrie Van de Ven**  
**Francisco Vargas**  
**Francis Veber**  
**Diego Vega**  
**Federico Veiroj (MUBI)**  
**Christian Volckman**  
**Andrucha Waddington**



transfer the data to a new computer, short of paying big bucks to recover the hard drive, which wasn't guaranteed. And the irony was that I had faithfully been transporting this data from computer to computer over the years and, wham, suddenly it was gone.

Parr: There's only two kinds of people that work with computers: people who have lost data and people who are going to lose data. It touches everybody. The thing about disposable mediums or any medium that has this planned obsolescence built into it is that—when you buy it—you have to think, "What do I want this to do? And how long do I want it to do that?" Right now in our culture there isn't anybody who isn't an archivist. If you have a cell phone with a camera on it, you're an archivist. Because you're going to spend the rest of your life migrating that data. It used to be that you'd take a picture, print it, put it in a box and then sit on it for 50 years. Now you take a picture and you have to move it from one phone to the next and—when you stop doing that—you lose the picture. So now you're dealing with a much more fragile medium.

It's strange because people say, "Everything's in **The Cloud**" but who lives in the clouds? I'm being a little rhetorical here, but **The Cloud** is not a place where people who are focused go. I mean, I might feel a little bit better if someone said, "It's down in Hell."

A lot of new media is predicated on the fact that the distribution system is more important than the content creation system. For instance, I have a warehouse full of film but it's only useful to my clients if it's digitized. That's why an alternate arm of Oddball is to take the opportunity to screen films from the archives, to show people the fact that the material is there to be seen and shared by them in the way it was created; but, I'm not opposed to other mediums using that footage at the same time. I've done events where I've incorporated film, video, live performers, music and I'm fine with all of it. Generally, most digital recording—with the exception of high-end stuff

**John Waters**

**Apichatpong "Joe"**

**Weerasethakul**

**Apichatpong "Joe"**

**Weerasethakul / *For Uncle***

**Boonmee Who Can Recall His**

**Past Lives**

**Forest Whitaker**

**Michael Winterbottom (*SF360*)**

**Fawn Yacker & Lauren Sterling**

**Chi-hui Yang**

**Ruby Yang (*SF360*)**

**Lev Yilmaz**

**David Zeiger**

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#### Q & A S

**Jeff Adachi, Jason Scott Lee,**

**Chris Tashima, Daniel Dae**

**Kim, Darrell Hamamoto / *The***

***Slanted Screen***

**Lisandro Alonso / *Fantasma @***

**NWFF**

**Lisandro Alonso / *La Libertad @***

**NWFF**

**Lisandro Alonso / *Liverpool @***

**NWFF**

**Lisandro Alonso / *Los Muertos***

**@ NWFF**

**Tavo Amador on Adrian / *The***

***Women***

**Tavo Amador on Edith Head /**

***All About Eve***

**Cruz Angeles & Maria Topete /**

***Don't Let Me Drown***

**Daoud Aoulad-Syad / *Waiting***

***For Pasolini***

**Gregg Araki, Roddy Bogawa, Jon**

**Moritsugu, Marcus Hu /**

***SFIAAFF "Down & Dirty"***

***Panel Discussion, Pt. 1***

**Gregg Araki, Roddy Bogawa, Jon**

**Moritsugu, Marcus Hu /**

***SFIAAFF "Down & Dirty"***

***Panel Discussion, Pt. 2***

**Guillermo Arriaga / *The Three***

***Burials of Melquiades***

—is somewhat inferior to analog recording. Film is almost always superior to digital media. That's why I like it.

My situation, the way I run my business, is that I used to be able to buy a film, transfer it to a videotape, make a copy, and that copy could sit on the shelf for 20 years. Fine. The film itself is going to be there and last 100-200 years. But nowadays, you have to digitize a film, then you have to make two copies, then you have to make a viewing copy and back that up too, and then every 2-5 years whatever "they" decide is the latest medium—maybe Steve Jobs dies and so *Quicktime* dies—you have to transfer it all. So you're always going to be transferring data and moving data. You have to build that into making your work so that anybody now who's making work should also be thinking about how to archive it.

We're at a point where people think they have control over the medium but the medium has much more control. Look at who's controlling the landscape: *Facebook*, Apple, Google, Microsoft. Do you really feel that those people are going to make clear, aesthetic decisions about what's best for the way that you want to create your work? For instance, if you shoot 5000 pictures and upload them into iPhoto, it will take you forever to get them out of iPhoto because they want you to live in *their* world. That's the whole thing about being an artist—making your sickness be everybody else's sickness; making your vision something that other people go see—and when you're in a confined space like that, then you have to play by *those* rules. On *Facebook* you know where the guy's picture is, you know what he does, you know where his wall is; but, in the early days of the internet, you could get on line and not know what a web page was going to look like. It could be upside down. It could be all black with white lettering. It could be anything. The only people who do that now are high concept artists and branding companies. Everybody else just wants to get their stuff *out there*. That's one of the problems. People are more

***Estrada***

**Olivier Assayas / *Boarding Gate***

**Nic Balthazar / *Ben X***

**Robert Beavers & P. Adams**

**Sitney / *Winged Distance* /  
*Sightless Measure***

**John Beebe on Cinematic  
Expressions of the Anima**

**John Beebe on Cinematic  
Expressions of the Anima /  
*Heart of the World***

**John Beebe on Cinematic  
Expressions of the Anima /  
*L'Atalante***

**Aida Begić / *Snow***

**Adrian Belic / *Beyond the Call***

**Amy Berg / *Deliver Us From Evil***

**Marco Bellocchio / *Good  
Morning, Night***

**Mike Black, Carole Black  
Summers, Scott O'Brien,  
Bernardo Espi, Matthew  
Kennedy & Michael Guillén /  
*Queer Icon: The Cult of Bette  
Davis***

**Linda Blair / *The Exorcist***

**Peter Bogdanovich / *The Lady  
From Shanghai***

**Peter Bogdanovich & Cybill  
Shepherd / *The Last Picture  
Show***

**Alice Braga / *Lower City***

**Peter & Benjamin Bratt / *La  
Mission***

**Catherine Breillat / *The Last  
Mistress***

**Kevin Brownlow / *The Strong  
Man***

**Eric Byler & Shawn Wong /  
*AMERICANese***

**John Canemaker on Winsor  
McCay**

**Harry Carey, Jr. & Joseph  
McBride / *Bucking Broadway***

**Park Chan-wook / *Thirst***

**Melissa Chittick**

**Diablo Cody / *Jennifer's Body***



interested in having people see the work than they are in having it last longer or taking the time to do it in a way that's really inventive.

**Guillén:** You've made a good argument against disposability. Is there anything you can say in favor of it?



Parr: Well, the word disposable—at least in terms of the Disposable Film Festival—is a really good catchphrase and it works well. It's meant to be in jest. It's playful and I like it. I tend to use words like "portable." I co-curated the Savannah Portable Media Festival. We liked the idea of disposable as something that's made as a one-off but it's actually being used to create art. You can create art with really cheap things; that is, theoretically, if it's actually art and not totally garbage. But even if it's garbage, perhaps that's good too because the portable media is doing its job: it's cheap and it's quick. I think the idea of portability, the idea of something that's low cost, the idea of accessibility, and the idea that something is so common—that's one of the reasons that I started collecting films: they're very common—the whole concept of disposability, the whole concept of portability, all those things, are very useful.

I was in India a few years ago and I had a cheap camera but I got great photos. When I shoot, I try to shoot with something really small because I'm allowed to get into places where a lot of people aren't allowed to go with big intimidating pieces of equipment. And I like things that have a low learning

**Don Coscarelli & Angus Scrimm**  
*/ Incident On & Off A Mountain Road*

**Phil Cousineau / Wordcatcher**  
**Emanuele Crialese / Golden Door**

**Josh Crook / La Soga**

**Rolf de Heer / Ten Canoes**

**Guillermo Del Toro / Pan's Labyrinth**

**Arnaud Desplechin / A Christmas Tale**

**Xavier Dolan, Anne Dorval, Patricia Tulasne & François Arnaud / I Killed My Mother**

**Lee Chang Dong / Secret Sunshine**

**Nathaniel Dorsky**

**Illeana Douglas & Casey LaLonde / A Woman's Face**

**Stefan Drössler / Lola Montès**

**Alonso Duralde & Jenni Olson / Have Yourself A Movie Little Christmas**

**James Ellroy / Noir City 6: Dalton Trumbo**

**Jesse Hawthorne Ficks / Big Trouble In Little China**

**Stephen Frears / The Queen**

**Richard Gale / The Horribly Slow Murderer With the Inefficient Weapon**

**Patrick Galloway on Asia Shock / Codys**

**Alex Gibney / Gonzo**

**Barry Gifford / Dark Passage**

**Ken Goldberg / The Tribe**

**Jake Gyllenhaal, Jerry Bruckheimer, Mike Newell & Jordan Mechner / Prince of Persia: The Sands of Time**

**Amor Hakkar / The Yellow House**

**Jackie Earle Haley, Katie Cassidy, Kyle Gallner, Rooney Mara, & Thomas Dekker / A Nightmare On Elm Street**

curve. I don't think it's a benefit that I know how to take a film, transfer it to video, digitize it, put it to two hard drives, make a *Quicktime*, log it, put it in Metadata, and FTP it to my client. I don't think that's a very useful thing to learn other than the fact that that's how I make my living, okay? I think it would be much more useful to take a film, put it on a projector, and have it come out a digital clip. That's way useful because that gets it to people really quick. When I look at the creative process, the thing that gets me from A to Z the quickest wins. I want to spend my time thinking about something creative. I don't want to think about why this doesn't render properly. That's for some tech guy who designed the software to figure out.

Certain kinds of social media are overhyped, even though they serve a useful purpose. But portable media—something you use to record something?—it's always much more valuable. It has a different value. And some portable media advances social activism. For example, there's a group in New York called *Witness*. They give portable media to people in third world countries to document human rights abuses. There's a guy from Singapore who I met at the *Orphans Film Symposium* in New York a couple of years ago and his work—he documented a lot of protests in Singapore, which is a pretty right wing country—has been confiscated. He doesn't have it anymore. It only exists on *YouTube*. The thing to remember is that people did not start a revolution because of *Twitter*, no matter how much their branding experts would want you to believe. *Facebook* didn't start a cultural revolution. *People* started it by talking to each other. People need to credit technology only insofar as what they *do* with it.

Cross-published on *Twitch*.

POSTED BY MAYA AT 3/31/2011 06:57:00 PM



LABELS: DFF, ODDBALL FILM + VIDEO, STEPHEN PARR

0 COMMENTS:

**Ray Harryhausen, Phil Tippett, Craig Baron, Arnold Kunert / *The 7th Voyage of Sinbad***  
**Dennis Harvey, Jonathan Curiel, Mary Pols & Gerald Peary / *A Critical Moment***  
**Jack Hill / *Spider Baby & Pit Stop***  
**Dan Hodges / *The Unfaithful***  
**Hong Sang-soo / *The Virgin Stripped Bare By Her Bachelors***  
**Anjelica & Danny Huston / *The Treasure of the Sierra Madre***  
**Marc Huestis & Eddie Muller / *Mildred Pierce***  
**Alejandro González Iñárritu / *Babel***  
**Bong Joon-Ho / *The Host***  
**Jeffrey Katzenberg / *Monsters vs. Aliens***  
**Matthew Kennedy / *Blonde Crazy***  
**Rory Kennedy & Mark Danner / *Ghosts of Abu Ghraib***  
**So Yong Kim & Jiseon Kim / *In Between Days***  
**Jason Kohn / *Manda Bala***  
**Hirokazu Kore-eda / *Hana***  
**Mick LaSalle / *The Student Prince In Old Heidelberg***  
**Justin Lin / *Finishing the Game***  
**Jonathan Lisecki / *Woman In Burka***  
**Claudia Llosa / *The Milk of Sorrow***  
**Phillip Lopate on American Film Criticism / Codys**  
**Phillip Lopate on American Film Criticism / PFA**  
**Phillip Lopate / *Wife! Be Like A Rose***  
**David Lynch / *Inland Empire***  
**Guy Maddin / *The Unknown***  
**Adriana Maggs & Shawn Doyle / *Grown Up Movie Star***  
**Lucrecia Martel / *La Ciénaga***





Center for Media Study at SUNY Buffalo in the late 70s. I was also an artist in residence at the [Experimental Television Center](#) in Binghamton, NY. I made my way out to San Francisco and started creating visual backgrounds for nightclubs. Ridley Scott was shooting in a club I created ambient imagery for and licensed some clips. I realized if I started my own archive I could have all the source material I wanted to create my own work. I chose film because I thought it would end up being the medium with the most longevity-and it still is-though not many people shoot or project it anymore.

MN: To get a sense of scale, what is the size of the space and approximate amount of films?

SP: We’re on the top floor of a 3 story warehouse-6000 sq ft-approximately 50,000 films and 10,000 more in a storage unit sitting on the San Francisco Bay.

MN: What kind of films do you mostly tend to collect?

SP: Eclectic, offbeat films, footage that no one else would find any interest in. Films that fill in the cracks of culture- amateur and home movies, b-roll, news and film outtakes, cast offs, strange science and cultish curios. In actuality anything interesting to me-ethnographic, bizarre medical films, propaganda, historical and experimental works. We also have a comprehensive collection of every film genre from commercials to educational films to military to archival erotica.

MN: As a professional archivist who has supplied countless filmmakers and artists with obscure materials over the years, when did you start to see a need for digitizing all of this obscure film?

SP: About 10 years ago I saw the so-called writing on the wall. With the Internet and the advances of speed and data storage, film for all practical purposes was becoming non distributable. To distribute footage you must have fast access and deliver it instantaneously.



TRENDING

**Usain Bolt Wins Olympic 100-Meter Dash For Third Time In A Row**



**Ryan Lochte Robbed At Gunpoint In Rio With 3 Other U.S. Swimmers**



**Marion Christopher Barry, Son Of Former D.C. Mayor Marion Barry, Dead At 36**



**Tom Hiddleston Addresses ‘High Profile’ Summer With Taylor Swift In Most Ambiguous Way**



**New Hampshire Looking Increasingly Out Of Reach For Donald Trump**



TRENDING

**Simone Biles Continues Her World Domination, Wins Third Gold Medal**



**Usain Bolt Wins Olympic 100-Meter Dash For Third Time In A Row**



**Ryan Lochte Robbed At Gunpoint In Rio With 3 Other U.S. Swimmers**



**Marion Christopher Barry, Son Of Former D.C. Mayor Marion Barry, Dead At 36**



**Tom Hiddleston Addresses ‘High Profile’**





MN: How did you start the digitizing process?

SP: We researched what other archivists and archives were starting to do and decided to digitize footage to hard drives. Hard drives were one of the only real storage mediums back then. LTO (tape drives) were much more expensive and slower than they are now. There was a transition period since most archives and production companies were still using tape. We still have a lot of tape-in all formats-thousands of cassettes. Now most moving images are born digital. Fortunately we still have the original films which means anything can be scanned in High Definition when needed.

MN: How many of the approximately 50,000 film oddities are digitized?

SP: A small percentage. We digitize selectively. We have approximately 30 terabytes plus over 20,000 Quicktime clips for preview. Digitizing is only one aspect. Everything needs to be stored, backed up and logged. It’s a tremendous project.

MN: Assuming we continue to experience Moore’s Law and the exponential doubling of circuits/ hard drive space every 18 months or thereabouts, what does that mean for the future of preserving films?

SP: I’d like to think it would make it more cost effective but there will always be a tremendous backlog in digitizing due to labor and newly emerging technologies that replace existing ones. High Definition digitizing for example-first it was 2k scans, now footage is being scanned at 4k, improving quality but effectively eating up drive space and savings.

MN: What interesting treasure has come in to the archive this recently?

SP: We just discovered a rare home movie from [The Love Pageant Rally](#) shot in the Golden Gate Panhandle. The rally was a billed as “a celebration of transcendental consciousness” and took place on October 6, 1966, the day LSD was made illegal. While less known than events that followed in the 1960s, this gathering marked a seminal moment in the counterculture revolution of the 1960s.

Visit [Oddball Films](#).

All photos by [Anthony Kurtz](#)

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## Arts & Entertainment

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### Best Weekly Film Screening That's Actually on Film

Oddball Film + Video

San Franciscans love putting on their own DIY movie shows, referred to by the smart set as "microcinema." It's easily done thanks to the both the availability of digital projectors and the fact that seemingly everything ever made is available digitally. But what if you're jonesing for rare and unusual fare on actual, honest-to-goodness film, run through an actual projector, and viewed with other people? That's where Oddball Film + Video comes in. Operating primarily as a film archive — they notably supplied footage for Gus Van Sant's *Milk* and for David Fincher's *Zodiac* — Oddball also hold film screenings on Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays. Depending on the night's theme, a given presentation typically includes short films, trailers, commercials, and other kinds of celluloid ephemera from their ever-growing collection of tens of thousands of 16mm and 35mm films. Many of the shows tend to be material that has never been digitized or otherwise seen outside of Oddball's walls in decades. To get to the screening room, you walk through the actual archives, stacks and stacks of carefully labeled film canisters. You may spy such intriguing titles as "Crocodile Thrills," "Marx for Beginners," or "Children and Infants in Car Crashes." And if the screening room itself feels like a chapel, that's only because that's exactly what it is: a chapel of film.

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### Best Collection of Offbeat Footage

Oddball Film + Video

There's something awe-inspiring about the stacks of a great library. Tall, silent, rows of knowledge, history, and

imaginary worlds, available to touch. Oddball is like that, except it's nestled in the Mission, the stacks are full of film, and every weekend you can watch some of it. Don't come expecting conventional movies, though: Oddball specializes in eclectic stock footage, especially of the odd and historically interesting. Its shows might juxtapose bizarre avant-garde cartoons with a 15-minute commercial for an early 1960s car, with a mental hygiene movie from the 1950s, and chase it down with a 1980s news report; somehow it works amazingly around a common theme. The brainchild of director Stephen Parr, Oddball provides its footage to companies and filmmakers across the globe. We're just lucky enough to be here for the shows.

275 Capp St., [oddballfilm.com](http://oddballfilm.com)

Oddball Films  
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1999-2006



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Arlington, TX's Prairie Pictures (817-276-9500) augmented its StormStock library with new footage of supercell thunderstorms and significant tornadoes captured during this year's spring/summer storm season. President/cine-  
matographer and storm chaser Martin Lisius captured storms such as this tornadic supercell (pictured), "flying saucer" supercells and the Southern Plain tornado outbreak. The 35mm footage was transferred to D-5 tape on Dallas-based Video Post & Transfer's Spirit DataCine.

"Faces" collections of Africa, Asia and Central America. Other titles signify their contents, including "Great Cities," "Animals of Africa" and "World Religion."

Both collections are aimed at a wide range of users, including advertising agencies, post production houses and in-house corporate training producers, as well as cable TV and broadcast users. "The big benefit of what we're providing is that it's royalty free. Once a customer has purchased the stock footage, it's theirs to use over and over again. And that ties in with affordability. There's also the quality aspect. It's broadcast-quality, full-screen footage."

Dowell points out that the stock footage house's Web site is used frequently by customers and potential customers. The Video Voyager browser CD, available free of charge from Dynamic Graphics, provides users the ability to search for clips using QuickTime Sorenson compression. Using a key word search, the user can preview each clip, which will play for the full duration. "Type in 'Zebra' and you can see zebras running across your screen. People can see exactly what they're going to get." ■

the source for  
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# Oddball Films Awards



**USIATC**  
**US INSTITUTE for ADVANCEMENT**  
**OF TRADE and COMMERCE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

**Oddball Film+Video receives 2014 California Excellence Award**

September 2nd 2014 - Oddball Film+Video has been selected for the 2014 California Excellence Award amongst all its peers and competitors by the US Institute for Advancement of Trade & Commerce (USIATC).

Each year the USIATC conducts business surveys and industry research to identify executives at certain companies that have achieved demonstrable success in their local business environment and industry category. They are recognized as having enhanced the commitment and contribution of companies through service to their customers and community. Companies of this caliber enhance the consumer driven stature that California is renowned for.

Oddball Film+Video has consistently demonstrated a high regard for upholding business ethics and company values. This recognition by USIATC marks a significant achievement as an emerging leader within various competitors and is setting benchmarks that the industry should follow.

As part of the industry research and business surveys, various sources of information were gathered and analyzed to choose the selected executives within the companies. This research is part of an exhaustive process that encapsulates a yearlong immersion in the business climate of California.



## **About USIATC**

The USIATC is a leading authority on researching, evaluating and recognizing companies across a wide spectrum of industries that meet its stringent standards of excellence. It has spearheaded the idea of independent enterprise and entrepreneurial growth allowing businesses of all sizes to be recognized locally and encouraged globally.

Particular emphasis is given to meeting and exceeding industry benchmarks for customer service, product quality and ethical practices. Industry leading standards and practices have been developed and implementation of the same has been pioneered by the dedicated efforts of the business community and commerce leadership.

More information on USIATC can be found at [www.USIATC.org](http://www.USIATC.org)



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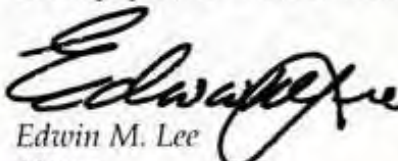
**SAN FRANCISCO MEDIA ARCHIVE**

**OCTOBER 20, 2012**

*WHEREAS*, on behalf of the City and County of San Francisco, I am pleased to recognize and honor the San Francisco Media Archive for its dedication towards the acquisition and preservation of culturally significant film and related media. I commend you for your commitment to sponsoring "Home Movie Day" to showcase the shared cultural history of the San Francisco community. Thank you for this significant contribution to the vitality of San Francisco, and best of luck in all your future endeavors!



*THEREFORE*, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the City and County of San Francisco to be affixed.

  
Edwin M. Lee  
Mayor



# Letters of Recommendation

# KQED

Richard Kurylo  
Legacy Business Program Manager  
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place  
City Hall, Room 110  
San Francisco, CA 94102

August 8th, 2016

Dear Mr. Kurylo:

I am Robert Chehoski, Digital Archive Manager for KQED. I'm writing this letter to support Stephen Parr and Oddball Films' application for the Legacy Business Registration. Previous to my coming to KQED, I was the Project Director and lead researcher at Oddball Films for 13 years. During that time I had the pleasure of working with Stephen on many film preservation and restoration projects. Because of the incredibly supportive environment that Stephen provided for employees and interns to draw on and develop their talents, my initial role of researcher quickly expanded to include management, sales, and training. In addition, I developed and honed particular skills in spotting the unusual, fact checking the historical, and identifying cultural references. Those skills are all highly valuable to my current position at KQED from archiving and identifying historic films for The Corporation for Public Broadcasting's "American Archive Project" to implementing workflows to make this content available to the public for research and licensing. Stephen Parr, as director of Oddball Films works in just that way with everyone from clients to interns to employees, enthusiastically supporting, educating and assisting others.

Stephen's archive is unique in its collections and the facility possesses not only a supportive environment, but also a truly unique blend of digital and analog training for those pursuing a career in archival research, i.e. his staff is fully trained to work with real film, projectors, video, and tape decks as well as how to use digital data. This is a large part of how Oddball Films often outpaces companies like Getty; they are searching material that is not findable in other digital databases.

In my time at KQED, I have sent many producers to Oddball in their search for rare footage. Stephen and his team are known not just for their research skills that help filmmakers find footage that cannot be tracked down through a searchable database, but also for their well thought out suggestions for additional images. They also are eager to share technical recommendations with filmmakers, artists, and other nonprofit organizations in their search for archival materials.

In short, Oddball provides valuable services to the film community of San Francisco and the world at large. They have my highest regard.

Sincerely,



**Robert Chehoski**  
Manager Digital Archive  
415.553.2852  
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San Francisco, CA 94110-1426  
rchehoski@kqed.org



Jennifer Petrucelli  
206 The Uplands  
Berkeley, CA 94705  
(415) 596-4970

Richard Kurylo  
Legacy Business Program Manager  
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place  
City Hall, Room 110  
San Francisco, CA 94102

August 5, 2016

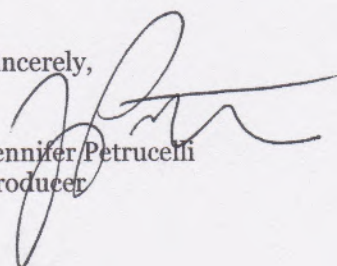
Dear Mr. Kurylo:

I am a documentary producer who has focused on archival work for much of my career, producing, writing and conducting research for varied projects. For the past three years, I have worked as the Archival Producer on a feature length documentary about labor activist Dolores Huerta. When I first began on this production over a year ago, I approached Oddball Films for material. Stephen Parr and his team have been enormously helpful to this project. He and his staff hold a wealth of information about archival film – within their collection and beyond.

Oddball Films is unsurpassed in their capacity to integrate their own in-depth knowledge about the Bay Area with research in their unique collections that represent particular cultural and historical references. They were able to quickly and comprehensively fill preview requests for footage of Martin Luther King, Chicano culture, and 1960s civil rights protests; footage crucial to this film. As a bonus they were also able to produce specific dates and locations for footage I requested, important for a documentary that focuses on a chronology of historical events. In addition to offering me previews of the specifics I requested, they also often offered alternative shots that gave me another perspective.

I will surely turn to Oddball Films again on the next project that requires archival material. Oddball Films' archive is a tremendous and irreplaceable resource to the documentary filmmaking community in the Bay Area. I wholeheartedly support their application to the Legacy Business Registry.

Sincerely,



Jennifer Petrucelli  
Producer



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Richard Kurylo  
Legacy Business Program Manager  
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place  
City Hall, Room 110  
San Francisco, CA 94102

Tuesday, August 9, 2016

Dear Mr. Kurylo:

I am writing to express support for Stephen Parr and Oddball Films' application to the Legacy Business Registry. I am the current resident film archivist at SF State J Paul Leonard Library for Bay Area Television Archives and Special Collections. Stephen Parr and I first met when he selected me to archive his *Industry on Parade* collection of films in 2007. We have been colleagues since then, often participating on Association of Moving Image Archivists conference panels.

Stephen told me he chose me to archive the large and complex *Industry on Parade* film collection as I had attended the University of East Anglia archiving program, one of the only programs in the world that in addition to educating students on archiving, also taught a comprehensive understanding of film. I was thrilled to be a part of cataloguing this important collection, now one of the largest of its kind in the country. While at Oddball Films, I took note of Oddball Films' intern training program that gives students college credit and an opportunity to get hands-on experience with archiving films, a skill now almost impossible to acquire inside a classroom. University of East Anglia in my native U.K. has dropped the film aspect of their program, and to my knowledge outside of the Selznick school in New York and UCLA's Moving Image Archive Studies degree, Stephen Parr's program is the only other training program in the United States that in addition to offering training in digital archiving, also offers comprehensive training in the use of film, video, and analog equipment.

Although *Industry on Parade* holds a special place in my memory, I should also note that Oddball Films maintains many rare and private collections of significant historical value to San Francisco, including home movies and a unique Bay Area News Outtakes collection. This footage is of great importance to the Bay Area film community. Further, the Bay Area collection is centralized. Oftentimes, filmmakers need to travel to many archives all around the world to investigate their subject. Or films and their licensing become absorbed into huge corporations and become much less accessible as an integrated collection to the community that produced the footage. Oddball Films makes sure that Bay Area films are catalogued, preserved, and regularly shown within our community.

Lastly, I want to recognize Stephen as very supportive of the local film community. He gives advice to young filmmakers and helps them navigate the world of stock footage. He also collaborates generously with other archives both here and in the rest of the world. Stephen Parr and Oddball Films are a San Francisco film landmark and are truly irreplaceable to the film community here.

Sincerely,

Alex Cherian  
Archivist



*Filing Date:* September 6, 2016  
*Case No.:* 2016-011465LBR  
*Business Name:* Oddball Films  
*Business Address:* 275 Capp Street  
*Zoning:* UMU (Urban Mixed Use)/  
40-X Height and Bulk District; 58-X Height and Bulk District  
*Block/Lot:* 3575/101  
*Applicant:* Stephen Parr, Director and Owner  
275 Capp Street  
San Francisco, CA 94110  
*Nominated By:* Supervisor David Campos, District 9  
*Staff Contact:* Stephanie Cisneros - (415) 575-9186  
stephanie.cisneros@sfgov.org  
*Reviewed By:* Tim Frye – (415) 575-6822  
tim.frye@sfgov.org

## BUSINESS DESCRIPTION

Oddball Films is a stock footage licensing company in the Mission District that has served as an archival and teaching facility focusing on film collection and film preservation. Stephen Parr, the owner, has been a collector of rare and unusual historical films since 1984 and officially registered the business in 1994 after gaining a following of film industry clients seeking unique and rare footage to use. Oddball Films has worked with many renowned, innovative, and pioneer filmmakers and film professionals often seeking footage to use for films based on telling the stories and histories of underrepresented groups. Located on Capp Street between 16<sup>th</sup> Street and 17<sup>th</sup> Street, Oddball Films is housed within a three-story utilitarian style building that contains multiple commercial tenants. The business has grown in its library and archive collection and has become a “service hub” for award-winning filmmakers in San Francisco. Oddball Films also offers a film and media intern training program that teaches students about archiving and film preservation and, for the past ten years, has offered public screenings, seminars, classes, and benefits.

## STAFF ANALYSIS

### *Review Criteria*

1. *When was business founded?*

The business was officially registered in 1994 although it has been in operation since 1984.

2. *Does the business qualify for listing on the Legacy Business Registry? If so, how?*

Yes, Oddball Films qualifies for listing on the Legacy Business Registry because it meets all of the eligibility Criteria:

- i. Though Oddball Films has been registered since 1994 (22 years), it faces a significant risk of displacement with a lease set to expire in January 2017.
- ii. Oddball Films has contributed to the Mission District and greater San Francisco history and identity by actively preserving an eclectic array of historical footage of

San Francisco. The business recognizes the importance of preserving these films not only as a way to understand film making as it has evolved throughout history but also as a way to understand the history of San Francisco and to offer their archives as a resource for filmmakers. Oddball Films also sees the importance of passing on their knowledge by offering an internship that introduces students and aspiring film professionals in the Bay Area to the art of archiving and film preservation.

- iii. Oddball Films is committed to maintaining the traditions that define its art of film accumulation and preservation.

3. *Is the business associated with a culturally significant art/craft/cuisine/tradition?*

Yes. The business is associated with the craft of film preservation.

4. *Is the business or its building associated with significant events, persons, and/or architecture?*

No. The 1910 property has been previously evaluated by the Planning Department as part of the Inner Mission North Historic Resource Survey. The property was determined to not be a historic resource and is classified as a "Category C Property."

5. *Is the property associated with the business listed on a local, state, or federal historic resource registry?*

No.

6. *Is the business mentioned in a local historic context statement?*

No.

7. *Has the business been cited in published literature, newspapers, journals, etc.?*

Yes. Screen Magazine, 11/30/1998, "Truly an Oddball: Finding freaky footage," by Carl Kozlowski; Screen Magazine, 10/16-23/2000, "Oddball gets even: Eclectic film footage collector turns art into business," by Jane Burek; SF Chronicle, 8/19/2003, "Wait! Planning to toss that old home movie of Granny's birthday? It may be a dust collector to you, but it's a historical treasure to the San Francisco Media Archive," by Peter Hartlaub; "Stock Footage Re-Constructs an American Experience," by Iain Stasukevich; AMIA Newsletter, Spring 2010, "Oddball Reunites Director Peter Clifton with Lost Easybeats Film," by Ellie Duddridge; Mission Local, 10/5/2010, "Keaton's 'Steamboat Bill Jr.' Plus 'Buster Keaton Rides Again,'" Mission Local, 10/5/2010, "Oddball Films: Let's Get Schooled;" Moholy Ground Magazine, "Where Analog is King: Oddball Film + Video," by Aimee Pavy; The Evening Class Blog, 3/31/2011, "The Disposable & The Discontinuous: The evening Class Interview with Stephen Parr," by Michael Guillen; SF Weekly, "Best of San Francisco: Arts & Entertainment."

***Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business***

**Location(s) associated with the business:**

- 275 Capp Street

**Recommended by Applicant**

- Extensive film library stacked on shelves (houses upwards of 50,000 films)
- Tradition of teaching and practicing film archiving and film preservation



- Vintage freight elevator
- Wooden stairs leading up to archive
- Collection of ephemera that includes vintage signs, antique film projectors, movie cameras, and other film-related antiques, among other eclectic items; including the "Reasons" portion of the iconic "17 Reasons Why!" sign that once sat on top of Thrift Town on Mission & 17<sup>th</sup> Street
- Walls in the restrooms with pop art images by San Francisco stencil artist Scott Williams
- A number of murals created by community muralists as well as local artist Stephen Bauer, located on the side of the building that houses Oddball Films



# SAN FRANCISCO PLANNING DEPARTMENT

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## Historic Preservation Commission Resolution No. 796 HEARING DATE OCTOBER 5, 2016

1650 Mission St.  
Suite 400  
San Francisco,  
CA 94103-2479

Reception:  
**415.558.6378**

Fax:  
**415.558.6409**

Planning  
Information:  
**415.558.6377**

*Case No.:* 2016-011465LBR  
*Business Name:* Oddball Films  
*Business Address:* 275 Capp Street  
*Zoning:* UMU (Urban Mixed Use)/  
40-X Height and Bulk District; 58-X Height and Bulk District  
*Block/Lot:* 3575/101  
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*Staff Contact:* Stephanie Cisneros - (415) 575-9186  
stephanie.cisneros@sfgov.org  
*Reviewed By:* Tim Frye – (415) 575-6822  
tim.frye@sfgov.org

**ADOPTING FINDINGS RECOMMENDING TO THE SMALL BUSINESS COMMISSION APPROVAL OF THE LEGACY BUSINESS REGISTRY NOMINATION FOR ODDBALL FILMS, CURRENTLY LOCATED AT 275 CAPP STREET (BLOCK/LOT 3575/101).**

**WHEREAS**, in accordance with Administrative Code Section 2A.242, the Office of Small Business maintains a registry of Legacy Businesses in San Francisco (the "Registry") to recognize that longstanding, community-serving businesses can be valuable cultural assets of the City and to be a tool for providing educational and promotional assistance to Legacy Businesses to encourage their continued viability and success; and

**WHEREAS**, the subject business has operated in San Francisco for 20 or more years, with no break in San Francisco operations exceeding two years; and

**WHEREAS**, the subject business has contributed to the Mission District neighborhood's history and identity; and

**WHEREAS**, the subject business is at significant risk of displacement; and

**WHEREAS**, the subject business is committed to maintaining the physical features and traditions that define the business; and



WHEREAS, at a duly noticed public hearing held on October 5, 2016, the Historic Preservation Commission reviewed documents, correspondence and heard oral testimony on the Legacy Business Registry nomination.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Historic Preservation Commission hereby recommends that Oddball Films qualifies for the Legacy Business Registry under Administrative Code Section 2A.242(b)(2) as it has operated in the same location for 20 or more years and has continued to contribute to the community.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Historic Preservation Commission hereby recommends safeguarding of the below listed physical features and traditions for Oddball Films

*Location (if applicable)*

- 275 Capp Street

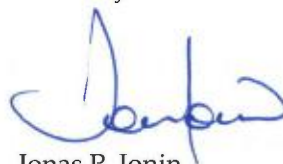
*Physical Features or Traditions that Define the Business*

- Extensive film library stacked on shelves (houses upwards of 50,000 films)
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- Vintage freight elevator
- Wooden stairs leading up to archive
- Collection of ephemera that includes vintage signs, antique film projectors, movie cameras, and other film-related antiques, among other eclectic items; including the "Reasons" portion of the iconic "17 Reasons Why!" sign that once sat on top of Thrift Town on Mission & 17<sup>th</sup> Street
- Walls in the restrooms with pop art images by San Francisco stencil artist Scott Williams
- A number of murals created by community muralists as well as local artist Stephen Bauer, located on the side of the building that houses Oddball Films

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Historic Preservation Commission's findings and recommendations are made solely for the purpose of evaluating the subject business's eligibility for the Legacy Business Registry, and the Historic Preservation Commission makes no finding that the subject property or any of its features constitutes a historical resource pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(a).

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Historic Preservation Commission hereby directs its Commission Secretary to transmit this Resolution and other pertinent materials in the case file 2016-011465LBR to the Office of Small Business.

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was ADOPTED by the Historic Preservation Commission on October 5, 2016.



Jonas P. Ionin  
Commission Secretary

AYES: Hyland, Johnck, Johns, Pearlman, Matsuda, Wolfram

**Resolution No. 796**  
**October 5, 2016**

**CASE NO. 2016-011465LBR**  
**275 Capp Street**

NOES:           None

ABSENT:       None

ADOPTED:     October 5, 2016