

# CONSERVACIÓN DE PELÍCULAS Y VÍDEOS PARA ARTISTAS Y COLECCIONES CASERAS

SEMINARIO

BILL BRAND

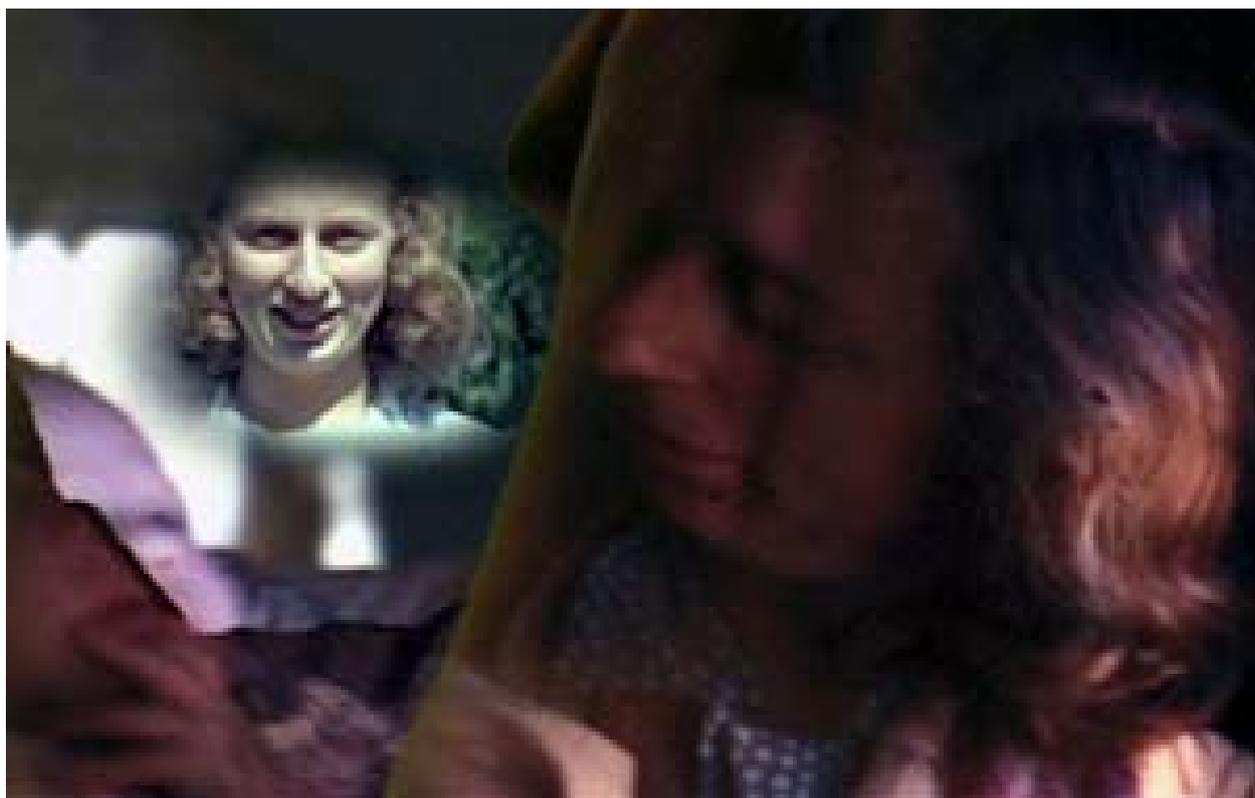
9-11 octubre 2012 / 18-21h.  
Esp. 0 CENDEAC



En el contexto del proyecto Memorias celuloideas, organizado entre Cendeac y Medusa Mediación, los próximos 9, 10 y 11 de octubre, el reconocido profesor/director de cine norteamericano Bill Brand [Nueva York, 1949] impartirá un seminario en el Cendeac. Este seminario tendrá un carácter teórico-práctico y estará orientado tanto al análisis de su propia producción cinematográfica, como a la conservación y archivo de material fílmico, una labor a la que ha dedicado gran atención a lo largo de toda su trayectoria.

**BIBLIOTECA**  
**Guías de lectura**  
**Seminario Bill Brand**

En el contexto del proyecto **Memorias celuloideas**, organizado entre **Cendeac** y **Medusa Mediación**, los próximos días 9, 10 y 11 de octubre, el reconocido profesor/director de cine norteamericano Bill Brand (Nueva York, 1949) impartirá un seminario en el Cendeac. Este seminario tendrá un carácter teórico-práctico y estará orientado tanto al análisis de su propia producción cinematográfica, como a la conservación y archivo de material fílmico, una labor a la que ha dedicado gran atención a lo largo de toda su trayectoria.



### ESTRUCTURA DEL SEMINARIO

**Martes, 9 de octubre / 18.30-21.00h** Proyección, análisis y debate en torno a las películas realizadas por Bill Brand desde los años setenta hasta la actualidad. En esta primera jornada, el profesor Brand proyectará sus películas y las analizará en base a los intereses puntuales que le han acompañado en cada momento de su trayectoria.

**Miércoles, 10 de octubre / 18.00-21.00h** En esta segunda sesión se realizará una aproximación al ámbito de la conservación fílmica y sus diferentes procesos. Del mismo modo, Bill Brand describirá algunas de sus experiencias concretas en la tarea de conservar películas caseras y películas de artistas en diferentes países del mundo. Explicará, paso a paso, cómo conservar y archivar películas y vídeos cuando se cuenta con poco tiempo, unos recursos limitados y escasos medios. Esta sesión será especialmente atractiva para artistas, estudiantes y profesionales que estén interesados en el ámbito de la conservación y archivo cinematográfico, así como para aquellos que se dediquen al mantenimiento de colecciones de cine y vídeo.

**Jueves, 11 de octubre / 18.00-21.00h** Se invitará a los participantes a presentar sus propios proyectos y/o colecciones personales. Se trabajará de manera práctica sobre el proceso de conservación y archivo de películas. También se debatirá acerca de las ideas, experiencias e intereses que conducen a la utilización de archivos fílmicos, películas caseras y archivos personales en la realización de obras de arte en cine, vídeo, *performance* e instalación.



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## 1. Bill Brand

### 1.1 Bio/Currículum



**Bill Brand**

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bbrand@pipeline.com  
<http://www.bboptics.com>

Como propietario y operador de BB Optics desde 1976, Bill Brand se ha especializado en la impresión óptica y en la conservación de películas artísticas y de pequeño formato (8mm, Super 8mm, 16mm, etc.). Sus propias películas, vídeos e instalaciones se han expuesto en numerosos museos de los Estados Unidos y el resto del mundo, así como en festivales y microcines.

Su *Masstransiscope*, realizado en 1980, un mural animado instalado en el metro de Nueva York, se encuentra en la colección permanente del MTA Arts for Transit. Bill Brand vive en Nueva York y es catedrático de Cine y Fotografía en el Hampshire College de Amherst (Massachusetts), así como profesor adjunto en el área de Conservación fílmica en el programa Archivo y Conservación de la imagen-movimiento de la Universidad de Nueva York. En 2006 fue nombrado miembro honorífico en el Anthology Film Archive, donde se le dedicó una retrospectiva de un mes de duración para celebrar el [30 aniversario de BB Optics](#).

Enlaces de interés:

<http://www.bboptics.com/>

<http://masstransiscope.wordpress.com/>

Se pueden ver fragmentos de sus películas y vídeos en los siguientes enlaces:

<http://www.youtube.com/user/TheFilmmakersCoop>

<http://www.ubuweb.com/film/brand.html>

Long biographical narrative:

When Bill Brand's films first came into public view in the early 1970's, they were known for their formal and conceptual stringency and were associated with Minimal Art and Structural Film. Later Brand became increasingly interested in issues of representation, and his films went from being visually reductive to massively complex, taking on elements of social content and personal expression. Yet, throughout, he explored a widening

field of systems -- the material base of the cinematic medium; the semiotic system of representation; the social system of production and distribution; the social, biological and psychological system of the body as subject; and most recently the estural expression of both the camera and the performing subject.

His documentary, HOME LESS HOME (1990), helped redefine the terms of discussion around homelessness in the U.S, by shifting the debate from questions of charity to ones of social justice. His later video projects examine issues surrounding high technology medicine through the experience of his own siblings who were surviving a genetic kidney disease with transplantation and dialysis.

For over four decades Bill Brand has been an artist, educator, activist and film preservationist. After receiving a BA in art from Antioch College where he studied with Paul Sharits, he completed an MFA in film at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago studying with Stan Brakhage and the composers Richard Teitelbaum and Frederick Rzewski. In 1973 he founded Chicago Filmmakers, the independent film workshop and showcase.

After moving to New York City in 1974, he joined the faculty of Sarah Lawrence College where he served until 1985. Since 1991 he has taught at Hampshire College and is currently Professor of Film and Photography and was awarded the MacArthur Chair for the years 1994-97. Since 2005 he has also taught film preservation at the New York University, Tisch School of Art, graduate Moving Image Archiving and Preservation program. Until 1991 he served on the Board of Directors of the Collective for Living Cinema and is still an Artistic Director of Parabola Arts Foundation a multi-disciplinary arts organization that he co-founded in 1981. He is currently treasurer on the Board of Trustees of the Flaherty Seminar and serves on the advisory board for the Orphan Film Symposium.

Since 1976 Bill Brand has operated BB Optics, an optical printing service specializing in 8mm blow-ups and archival preservation, particularly of films by artists. Articles about his film preservation work appeared in 2002 in "The Moving Image", the journal of the Association of Moving Image Archivists, in 2003 in the journal "Film History," and in 2005 in the journal "Museum Studies." In 2006 he was named an Anthology Film Archives film preservation honoree. Anthology and NYU cooperated to mount a month-long series of exhibitions and publish Results You Can't Refuse: Celebrating 30 Years of BB Optics a festschrift for his film preservation and artwork on the occasion of BB Optics' 30th anniversary.

Bill Brand's films and videos were first shown at Millennium Workshop and Anthology Film Archives in New York City in 1973 have since been screened internationally in museums, independent film showcases, colleges and universities, and on television. They have been featured at major film festivals including the Berlin Film Festival, New Directors/ New Films Festival, Tribeca Film Festival and Rotterdam Film Festival. The work is discussed in histories of cinema including the books They Must Be Represented, [1996] by Paula Rabinowitz; Documentary, A History of the Non-Fiction Film, [1992] by Erik Barnouw; Allegories of Cinema, [1990] by David James and in a chapter by Robin Blaetz titled "Avant-Garde Cinema of the Seventies" in Lost Illusions, American Cinema in the Shadow of Watergate and Vietnam 1970-1979 by David Cook. Janet Maslin, Paul Arthur, J. Hoberman, B. Ruby Rich, and Noel Carroll, among others, have also written about Brand's work in news and journal articles.

In 1981 he completed a permanent public art project, MASSTRANSISCOPE, a mural installed in the subway tunnel of New York City that is animated by the movement of passing trains. MASSTRANSISCOPE was awarded a certificate of merit by the New York City Municipal Art Society in 1982. In disrepair for over 20 years, ASSTRANSISCOPE was restored in 2008 and brought into the permanent collection of the MTA Arts for Transit program. The piece was named among the top 40 public art works in America for 2009 by the Public Art Network. On January 1, 2009 the New York Times published a feature article about MASSTRANSISCOPE by Randy Kennedy. In 2012 MASSTRANSISCOPE and Bill Brand were featured in the program Treasures of New York: Art Underground produced by WNET and programmed on WLIW21 and WNET THIRTEEN.

Films and Videos for screening:

- ANGULAR MOMENTUM (1973) 16mm, sound, 20 minutes
- CHUCK'S WILLI'S WIDOW (1982) 16mm, sound, 12 minutes
- SUITE (1996-2003) video, sound, 28 minutes

- SKINSIDE OUT (2002) 16mm, 10 minutes, by Bill Brand and Katy Martin
- SICOMORO (2011) color, sound, HD, 5 minutes, text by Carolina Noblega
- SUSIE'S GHOST (2011) sound, 16mm , 7 minutes, in collaboration with Ruthie Marantz

Total Program: 82 minutes.

Film and Video descriptions:

ANGULAR MOMENTUM (1973) is classic "structural film," and is the second part of ACTS OF LIGHT, a trilogy of films. Together they develop a study of pure color based on the notion that film is essentially change rather than motion.

CHUCK'S WILL'S WIDOW (1982) is a eulogy for my father and mother whose ashes are spread in the Adirondack mountain woods in upstate New York where the film is shot. Visualized through a field of swirling shapes, the fragmented landscapes weave an emotional fabric containing inexplicable personifications and associations.

SUITE (1996-2003) consists of five related pieces that together address personal and family history, in part, dealing with the implications of being the only sibling of five NOT to have inherited Polycystic Kidney Disease, an incurable disorder. In these works, the body is a site both of beauty and abjection.

SKINSIDE OUT (2002 co-directed by Katy Martin) features paint on skin, carried out in an expressionist mode on both of the filmmakers' bodies. The emphasis is on the pleasure of looking -- at the edge of repulsion -- and the implications of making public an essentially private gesture. The film posits painting as a gendered, bodily act, whose location shifts continually within a context that's always changing. Images filmed in the studio are juxtaposed with footage of a construction barge along the Hudson River. By examining both in relation to surface, the work paradoxically looks for what lies within, while questioning who and where we take ourselves to be.

SICOMORO (2011) is a meditation on travel and home revealed through ornate doors and other architectural details from Ciudad Vieja in Montevideo, Uruguay and a letter to a friend.

SUSIE'S GHOST (2011) is about the mystery of the marks we make and leave behind. The "Susie" in the title refers to my older sister who had died shortly before we shot the film but the "ghost" refers more generally to feelings of lingering loss. Both my photography and the performance of collaborator Ruthie Marantz express a tentative presence and a diffuse sense of disappearance. Is she looking for something or someone? Is she really there? Is she really gone? We shot with aging 16mm film in my downtown Manhattan neighborhood, just before construction mania obliterated the last traces of the manufacturing district I'd moved to 35 years earlier. That too has passed.

### Teaching Experience:

1991-Present Hampshire College, Professor of Film and Photography  
 2005-Present New York University, Cinema Studies, Moving Image Archiving and Preservation, guest faculty  
 1987 School of Visual Arts, New York City, Summer Session  
 1986 San Francisco Art Institute, Summer Session  
 1985-87 Hunter College, CUNY, New York City, Adjunct Assistant Professor  
 1980-90 Collective for Living Cinema, Optical Printing Workshops  
 1975-85 Sarah Lawrence College, Bronxville, NY, Faculty in Filmmaking

1976	S.U.N.Y. at Buffalo, Summer Session, Center for Media Study
1974	S.U.N.Y. at Binghamton, Instructor, Advanced Filmmaking Workshop
1973	The School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Instructor, Summer Session

## Exhibitions:

- 2006 *In Black and White and Living Color*, Tribeca Film Festival, New York  
*Art as a Form of Conversation*, Dashanzi Arts Festival, 798 Galleries, Beijing, China  
*Results You Can't Refuse: Celebrating 30 Years of BB Optics*, a 4-week retrospective, Anthology Film Archives, New York  
*12+ Retrospective*, Shanghai Duolun Museum of Modern Art, Shanghai, China
- 2005 *Colour After Klein: Films*, Barbican Art Gallery, London
- 2004 *12+*, Shanghai Doulun Art Museum, China, solo exhibition of films and videos sponsored by Art World Magazine (Yishushijie)  
 Princeton University, *Gloria! The Legacy of Hollis Frampton* conference, moderated panel on "The Algorithmic Aesthetic: Frampton as Digital Pioneer"  
 Association of Moving Image Archivists annual conference, Minneapolis, exhibition and panelist for *Fixing the Moment: Preserving Expanded Cinema*. Talk titled "Artist as Archivist: A Preservation Pickle"  
*Through our Eyes*, Art in General, exhibition and panel discussion, organized by Jo Wood-Brown, NY  
 Chicago Filmmakers 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Show, Chicago Filmmakers, Chicago  
 Chicago Filmmakers 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Show, Anthology Film Archive, NY  
*Save Our Films* benefit for Anthology Film Archive, live music by Animal Collective  
*Open Zone Friends & Co-Conspirators Program*, Ocularis at Golapagos Art and Performance Space, Brooklyn, NY  
 Athens Film Festival, Athens, Ohio
- 2003 Tribeca Film Festival  
 Chicago Filmmakers  
 San Francisco Cinematheque  
 California Institute of the Arts  
 Ocularis at Golapagos Art and Performance Space, "Scratch, Sniff, Pet: Open Zone Friends & Co-Conspirators Program," Brooklyn, NY  
 Massachusetts College of Art Film Society, Boston  
 "Selected Film and Video 1973-2003" Hampshire College, Amherst, MA
- 2002 Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, "Cine y casi cine," Madrid, Spain  
 Donnell Media Center, New York Public Library, "Meet the Maker" series  
 Brooklyn Academy of Music, in "The Nearest Far Away Place" as part of the "Next Wave Festival"
- 2001 Museum of the Moving Image, Astoria, NY  
 Cinema Ritrovato, Bologna, Italy
- 2000 Bennington College, VT, (reconstruction of 1971 film installation *Pong Ping Pong* plus other work)  
 Cooper Union, NYC  
 Dallas Video Festival, TX
- 1999 "American Century," Whitney Museum of American Art, NYC  
 "Fundació Antoni Tápeis, "Calculated Cinema, Barcelona, Spain  
 Barbican Centre, Lux Cinema, Underground America, "Ways of Seeing", London 1998]  
 Marlboro College, VT
- 1998 Lux Cinema, London, "Underground America" curated by Mark Webber
- 1997 Harvard University Carpenter Center for the Visual Arts
- 1993 Pleasant Street Cinema - 1 week run, Northampton, MA  
 Pacific Film Archive, Berkeley
- 1992 Rotterdam International Film Festival, Holland
- 1991 Berlin Film Festival - Forum of New Films, Germany  
 New Directors/New Films, Museum of Modern Art, NY  
 New-York Historical Society, "Race and Class in N.Y.C.", NYC

- Munich Documentary Festival, Germany  
Pacific Film Archive, Berkeley, CA  
JFK Center for the Performing Arts, Washington, D.C.
- 1991 (cont) AFI-LA Film Festival, LA  
American Film and Video Festival, Philadelphia, PA  
Edinburgh Film Festival, Scotland  
Montreal World Film Festival, Canada
- Port Washington Library, NYUpstate Films, Rhinebeck, NY  
George Eastman House, Rochester, NY  
Wexner Art Center, Columbus, OH  
Crandell Library, Glens Falls, NY  
PS122, New York, NY  
Massachusetts College of Art Film Society, Boston, MA
- 1990 Independent Feature Project Market, NY  
Rutgers University, Visiting Artist, NJ
- 1989 Collective for Living Cinema, NY  
Pyramid Art Center, Rochester, NY  
Media Mix, Rutgers University, NJ  
Whitney Museum of American Art, "Image World", NYC
- 1988 American Museum of the Moving Image, "Independent America:New Film, 1978-1988", Astoria, NY
- 1987 Crandall Library, Glens Falls, NY  
Collective for Living Cinema, NYC
- 1986 Filmforum, Los Angeles  
Munson-Williams-Proctor Institute, "Frames of Mind", Utica, NY  
Three River Arts Festival, Pittsburgh, PA  
Pacific Film Archive, Berkeley, CA  
Montclair State College, NJ  
Long Island University, NY
- 1985 Donnell Library, NYC  
Bromfield Gallery, Boston  
University of Kentucky, Lexington  
West Virginia Institute of Technology, Montgomery  
Visual Studies Workshop, Rochester, NY  
Kent State University, Filmworks, Kent, Ohio  
P.S.1, NYC  
Black Maria Film Festival, NJ  
Ann Arbor Film Festival, Michigan  
Bromfield Gallery, "Independent Film Series", Boston, MA
- 1984 Collective for Living Cinema, NYC  
University of Hartford, CT  
Edinburgh Festival, Scotland  
Collective for Living Cinema, "Super-8 Films Against U.S.  
Intervention in Central America", NYC: Organizer.
- 1983 The Boston Film/Video Foundation, MA  
University of Rhode Island, Kingston, RI  
Berks Filmmakers', Reading, PA  
The Cinematheque, San Francisco, CA  
Pacific Film Archives, Berkeley, CA  
Pasadena Filmforum, Pasadena, CA  
Otis Art Institute, Los Angeles, CA  
Collective for Living Cinema, "Art in Nicaragua", NYC  
The Kitchen, "Filmworks '83", NYC  
The Exploratorium, "Light Currents" by Eye Music, S.F., CA  
Bleeker Street Cinema, "Film Pulse", NYC  
The Cinematheque, San Francisco, CA  
University of California, Los Angeles, CA
- 1981 Collective for Living Cinema, Idiolects Benefit, NYC

- 1980 State University of New York at Plattsburgh, NY  
International Center of Photography, NYC  
Artists Space, NYC  
Pittsburgh Filmmakers, Pittsburgh, PA
- 1979 London Film-makers' Co-operative, London, England  
Colgate College, Hamilton, NY  
Media Study/ Buffalo, NY  
California Institute of the Arts, Los Angeles, CA  
Oasis Films at Los Angeles Institute of Contemporary Arts, CA  
The Cinematheque, San Francisco, CA  
Millennium Personal Cinema, NYC  
Chicago Filmmakers, Chicago, IL  
Hayward Gallery, "Film as Film, Formal Experiment in Film, 1910-1975", London, England  
Third International Avant-garde Film Festival, "Film London", London, England  
The Kitchen, "Filmworks '79", NYC  
Canyon Cinematheque, San Francisco, CA  
Pittsburgh Filmmakers, Pittsburgh, PA
- 1978 Museum of Modern Art, NYC  
Collective for Living Cinema, NYC
- 1977 Colgate College, Hamilton, NY  
Millennium Personal Cinema, NYC  
Berks Filmmakers', Reading, PA  
Canyon Cinema, San Francisco, CA  
Pacific Film Archives, Berkeley, CA  
Filmgroup at N.A.M.E. Gallery, Chicago, IL  
Anthology Film Archives, NYC  
Artists Space, NYC  
Municipal Building Arcade, "Arcade", outdoor sound and film show, curated by Charlie Ahearn, NYC  
Chicago Filmmakers, Chicago, IL  
Theater Vanguard, Los Angeles, CA
- 1976 Antioch College, Yellow Springs, Ohio  
Invitational: "MOVED", John Weber Gallery, NYC
- 1975 Wimbledon College of Art, Wimbledon, England  
Derby College of Art and Technology, Derby, England  
Reading University, Reading, England  
Maidstone College of Art, Maidstone, England  
London Film-makers' Co-operative, London, England  
Slade School of Art, London, England  
Collectif Jeune Cinema, Paris, France  
Arsonal Cinema, Berlin, Germany  
Kommunales Kino, Frankfurt, West Germany  
Oesterreichisches Filmmuseum, Vienna, Austria  
Whitney Museum of American Art, NYC  
Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, NY  
Anthology Film Archives, NYC  
Museum of Art, Carnegie Institute, Pittsburgh, PA  
Festival International du Jeune Cinema, Toulon, France
- 1974 State University of New York at Buffalo, NY  
Millennium Personal Cinema, NYC  
State University of New York at Binghamton, NY  
Fifth International Experimental Film Competition at Knokke-Heist, Belgium  
American Film Festival, "Film as Art", NYC
- 1973 Millennium Personal Cinema, NYC  
Festival of Independent Avant-garde Film, London, England  
Filmgroup at N.A.M.E. Gallery, Chicago, IL  
Anthology Film Archives, NYC

Filmmakers Cinematheque, organized by Jonas Mekas at the Elgin Theater, NYC  
1972 Western College, Ohio  
1971 Antioch College, Yellow Springs, Ohio

### Television Showings of *Home Less Home*

1991-95 WNET, New York, "Independent Focus"  
ZDF, Germany  
Denmarks Radio, Denmark  
RTE, Ireland  
SBS, Australia  
CDN, Canada  
NHK, Japan  
Super Channel, England

### Films in the Collection of:

Archives du Film Experimental D'Avignon, France  
Carnegie Institute, Museum of Art, Pittsbrugh, PA  
Royal Film Archives of Belgium, Brussels, Belgium  
New York Public Library, NYC  
Educatinal Film Library Association, NYC  
Rochester Public Library, Rochester, NY  
The Toledo Lucas County Public Library, Toledo, Ohio  
West Virginia Library Commission, Charleston, WV  
University of Puerto Rico, Rio Piedras, PR  
The School of the Art Instutute of Chicago Film Center, Chicago, IL  
Antioch College, Yellow Springs, Ohio  
Hampshire College/ Five-College Film Collection, Amherst, MA

### Film Bibliography:

Andrew Lampert, Results You Can't Refuse: Celebrating 30 Years of BB Optics, Anthology Film Archives, New York, 2006  
Courtney Woo, "Experimental Film Retrospective: Western filmmakers nudge Shanghai's nascent experimental film scene to life." City Weekend, Shanghai, China, January 19, 2006, p. E24.  
Zhu Haijian, Interview with Bill Brand, Art World Magazine, December, 2004  
Schnepf, Suzanne R., "On Time: Approaches to the Conservation of Film, Videoape, and Digital Media", Conservation at the Art Institute of Chicago, Museum Studies Vol. 31, No. 2, 2005  
Brian Frye, "The Accidental Preservationist: an Interview with Bill Brand", Film History, Vol. 15- 2, 2003  
Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum and the Daniel Langlois Foundation, "Permanence Through Change: The Variable media Approach", 2003  
Robin Pogrebin, "TriBeCa Festival Celebrates Film And Resilience" New York Times, May 7, 2002  
Jon Gartenberg, "The Fragile Emulsion", Fall 2002  
Archive du Film Expèrimental D'Avignon, L'image en moubement, 25 ans d'activitè pour la défense du cinéma come art visuel, 2002  
Fred Camper, "Senses Working Overtime, Remembering Stan Brakhage", Chicago Reader, April 18, 2003  
David A. Cook, Lost Illusions, American Cinema in the Shadow of Watergate and Vietnam 1970-1979, University of California Press, 2000  
Paula Rabinowitz, They Must Be Represented, Univeristy of Illinois Press, 1996  
Jessica Clarke, "Hampshire People", Union-News, July 26, 1993  
Bruce Watson, Daily Hampshire Gazette, April 15, 1993  
Erik Barnouw, Documentary, A History of the Non-Fiction Film, Oxford Univ. Press, 1992  
Janet Maslin, "Problems of Homelessness: The Individual Stories", The New York Times, March 22, 1991  
Steven Holden, The New York Times, March 15, 1991  
Stev., Variety, April 1, 1991

Armond White, "Homelessness - A Movie Metaphor For Our Times", The City Sun, May 1-7, 1991  
 Paul Arthur, Cineaste, Voll XIII, No 3, Fall, 1991  
 Diana Lobdell, "Bill Brand Interview", Experimental Film Coalition Journal, Summer, 1991  
 Jeff Clark, Library Journal, April 1, 1991  
Berliner Morgenpost, Berlin, Feb. 2, 1991  
 Simone Mahrenholz, Der Tagesspiegel/Feuilleton, Feb. 19, 1991  
 Hans Braunseis, Der Morgen, Feb. 22, 1991  
 Karen Margolis, "Out in the Cold", Journal, Feb. 16, 1991  
 Peter Korte, "Aus aller Welt", Frankfurter Rundschau, Feb. 20, 1991  
 J. Hoberman, Premiere, March, 1991  
 Elizabeth Forbes, Times-Union, Rochester, NY, Oct. 19, 1989  
 J. Hoberman, Voice, June 19, 1984  
 J. Hoberman, Voice, April 3, 1983  
Plattsburgh Press-Republican, Mar 10, 1980  
 Ian Christie, "Film Independents", Timeout, July 13-19, 1979, London  
 B. Ruby Rich, "What You See Is What You Get", Reader, March 16, 1979, Chicago  
 Jonathan Buchsbaum, "Composing for Film: The Work of Bill Brand", Millennium Film Journal, No. 3, Winter/ Spring, 1979  
 Noel Carroll, "Avant-garde Film and Film Theory", Millennium Film Journal, No. 4/5, Fall/Summer, 1979  
 "A Room with a View, - N.Y., N.Y." The New York Times, Jan. 12, 1978  
 Noel Carroll, Soho Weekly News, Dec 14-20, 1978  
 Malcolm Legrice, Abstract Film and Beyond, M.I.T. Press, 1977  
 Darryl Chin, "Outdoor Parameters", Soho Weekly News, May 19-25, 1977  
 Linda Gross, L.A. Times, Apr 12, 1977  
 "Conversation with Gunver Nelson", Canyon Cinemanews, #76-4, 1976  
 The American Federation of Arts, New American Film-makers, 1976  
 Peter Wollen, "The Two Avant-gardes", Studio International, Nov/Dec, 1976 (reprinted in Edinburgh '76 Magazine, Number 1, 1976)  
 Marjorie Keller, Women & Film, Vol. 2:7, 1975  
 Ian Christie, "Time and Motion Studies: Structural Cinema and the Work of Bill Brand", Studio International, June, 1974  
 David James, Art & Cinema, Vol. 1, No. 3, 1973/74  
 Jonas Mekas, "Movie Journal", The Village Voice, Oct. 18, 1973  
 Jonas Mekas, "Movie Journal", The Village Voice, June 7, 1973  
 Jonas Mekas, "Movie Journal", The Village Voice, Jan. 4, 1973

### Writings:

"Programming Experimental Films for Children" chapter in Programming Films for Children, 1992, Hindsmith Press  
 "Avant-garde Film and the Ideology of the Counter Culture", Idelects #12, Fall, 1982

### Awards:

2006	Anthology Film Archives Film Preservation Honoree
1994-97	Hampshire College, MacArthur Chair
1991	Blue Ribbon for <u>Home Less Home</u> , American Film and Video Festival
1985	Ann Arbor Film Festival
1983	Three River Arts Festival, Pittsburgh, PA
1981	Certificate of Merit, The Municipal Art Society of New York for <u>Masstransiscope</u>

### Organizations:

1997	NEA/Open Society Artlink, Visual Arts Panalist
1996	Mass. College of Art, Peer Review Panel for Media and Performing Arts Dept.
1992	New England Film Festival, Jurist
1989-91	Jerome Foundation NYC Film/Video Panelist

- 1988,1989 National Endowment for the Arts/ Jerome Foundation Midwest  
Regional Film/Video Panelist  
1985-91 Collective For Living Cinema, Board of Directors, Treasurer  
1985-88 New York State Council on the Arts, Film Panelist  
1983 Call Against U.S. Intervention in Central America, film and  
steering committees  
Ventana, Artists for Nicaraguan Culture, founding member  
1982-present Parabola Arts Foundation, Inc. founding member and artist director  
1973 Chicago Filmmakers, Chicago, IL, founder (Filmgroup at N.A.M.E. Gallery)

### Grants:

- 2005 Hampshire College Faculty Development Grant  
Josef and Anni Albers Foundation for restoration of *Masstransiscope*  
2004 Hampshire College Faculty Development Grant  
2003 Hampshire College Faculty Development Grant  
2002 Hampshire College Faculty Development Grant  
2001 Hampshire College Faculty Development Grant  
1999 Leo Modell Faculty Development Grant, Hampshire College  
1998 NEH Faculty Development Grant, Hampshire College  
1997 NEH Faculty Development Grant, Hampshire College  
1995 Massachusetts Cultural Council, Film Production  
1993 Hewlett-Mellon Faculty Development Grant, Hampshire College  
1992 Hewlett-Mellon Faculty Development Grant, Hampshire College  
1990 National Endowment for the Arts, film production  
New York Foundation for the Arts, fellowship in film  
1989 New York State Council on the Arts, Production Assistance Grant  
New York Council for the Humanities  
Art Matters Inc.  
North Star Fund  
1987 New York State Council on the Arts, Production Assistance Grant  
1985 New York Foundation for the Arts, fellowship in film  
1984 Jerome Foundation  
1982 American Film Institute, Independent Filmmaker Program  
1978-79 National Endowment for the Arts, Art in Public Places/ Planning Grant for Artists  
New York State Council on the Arts, Production Assistance Grant  
Creative Artists Public Services (CAPS), film section

### Other professional activities:

- 1976-present BB Optics, an optical printing and film preservation service specializing in archival materials and blow-ups from super-8 and 8mm. Recent projects include:  
Fales Library at New York University - preservation of Super 8 films by David Wojnarowicz funded by a grant from New York State Council on the Arts  
Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum – preservation of footage of Frank Lloyd Wright and construction of the museum, funded by a grant from the National Film Preservation Fund  
Jewish Museum – The Goldbergs  
Robert Huot – Red Stockings, Blue Movie, Black and White Film, 3<sup>rd</sup> 1-Year Movie, Sound Movie, From Loops, Leader.  
National Archives Nixon Library - preservation of super-8 films shot by President Nixon's top aids in late 1960's early 1970's.  
New York Public Library - preservation of avant-garde films of Larry Gottheim, Storm DeHirsch, Ken Jacobs and Bill Brand  
Museum of Modern Art – preservation of “Weegies New York” from a print in the Hampshire College/ Five College collection.  
Estate Project for Artists with AIDS and the Fales Library at New York University - preservation of films by David Wojnarowicz, and Jack Waters, with Gartenberg Media Enterprises  
The Art Institute of Chicago, preservation of “Art Make-up 1,2,3,4” by Bruce Nauman

Whitney Museum of American Art, preservation of "Shutter Interface" by Paul Sharits for "Into the Light" curated by Chrissie Isle

Chicago Filmmakers, "Grandfather Trilogy" by Allen Ross, supported by the National Film Preservation Fund.

Jewish Film Archive at Brandeis University, "Bernstein 1947 Exodus", supported by the National Film Preservation Fund.

Southern Media Archive, University of Southern Mississippi, preservation of Raisin' Cotton, an 8mm film shot around 1941 by Emma Knowlton Lytle on Perthshire, her family's plantation, supported by Women in Film Preservation Fund.

Berkeley Art Museum, films by Theresa Hak Kyung Cha

ZKM | Zentrum für Kunst und Medientechnologie Karlsruhe, Germany, preparation for Fall 2005

exhibition of the works of Hollis Frampton, Paul Sharits, Tony Conrad, and Woody and Steina Vasulka, working title, "Mindsets" artists working at the Center for Media Studies at the State University of New York in the 1970's.

1987-90 Childrens' Film programmer at the Collective for Living Cinema.

### Public Art Work:

1980 *Masstransiscope*, a 300' long permanent installation in the New York City subway which looks like an animated movie when seen from passing trains. It consists of 228 hand-painted panels in an illuminated enclosure. Sponsored by Creative Time, Inc, in cooperation with The Metropolitan Transportation Authority and the New York City Transit Authority. Supported by grants from: National Endowment for the Arts, New York State Council on the Arts, American Stock Exchange, Chase Manhattan Bank, NA, Con Edison, Merrill Lynch Pierce Fenner & Smith, Inc., and Exxon Corporation. With in-kind contributions from: 3M Foundation, Westinghouse Electric Corporation, E.E. Tech, Lighting Unlimited, Inc., and Paul Marantz

### Exhibitions about *Masstransiscope*:

- 1985 "Sites and Solutions", Gallery 400, University of Illinois at Chicago
- 1984 "Sites and Solutions", Freedman Gallery, Albright College, Reading, PA
- 1983 Sarah Lawrence College Gallery, Bronxville, NY
- 1982 PS1 (Institute for Art and Urban Resources), Long Island City, NY
- 1981 Media Study/ Buffalo, NY
- 1980 "Urban Encounter", Institute of Contemporary Art, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA

### Television about *Masstransiscope*:

- WNYC, "Brooklyn Magazine", NYC, April 9, 1982
- Fuji Telecasting Co., "Science and Art", Itsuo Sakane, Tokyo, March 6, 1982
- WPIX, "Action News", Frank Casey, NYC, Sept. 19 & 21, 1980
- NBC, National Network News, "John Chancellor Show", Sept. 18, 1980
- NBC, "Channel 4 News", NYC, Sept. 17, 1980

### Bibliography for *Masstransiscope*:

- Print: Lyndsey Layton. "A Tunnel With a View -- and a Profit, Metro Looks at New Technology for Ads to Boost Revenue" Washington Post, Sunday, August 31, 2003; Page A1
- Brett Martin, "Essential New York", Time Out New York, Nov. 6-13, 1997
- F.Y.I. "Suspended Animation", The New York Times, Nov. 17, 1996
- Debeh Gilbert, "Not Just Another Underground Film", The Independent, March 1991
- "Station Animation", The New Yorker, July 24, 1989
- "To Do", New York Woman, Sept./Oct. 1986,
- Yoriko Fujita Powell, "New York Hot Shot", Photo Japon, Sept. 1985
- Harold Haydon, "Public Art Takes Novel Approach To Involvement", Chicago Sun-Times, Jan. 17, 1985
- Lillian Thomas, Reader, Chicago, IL, Jan. 25, 1985

Stacy Paleologos Harris, Insights/ On Sites Perspectives on Art in Public Places, Partners for Livable Places, Washington, D.C., 1984

Nancy Rosen, "Public Art: City Amblings", Ten Years of Public Art, 1972-1982, Public Art Fund, Inc, NY 1982

Itsua Sakane, Asahi Shinbun, Tokyo, March 9, 1982

Georgette Gouveia, Review Press-Reporter, Bronxville, NY Dec. 31, 1981

George Howell, The Buffalo News, Buffalo, NY, Nov. 21, 1981

Richard Huntington, Buffalo Courier-Express, Buffalo, NY, Nov. 15, 1981

Deborah C. Phillips, "New Faces in Alternative Spaces", Artnews, Nov. 1981

Kelley Seymore, Seawanhaka, Long Island University, Brooklyn, NY, May 22, 1981

Mix:32, Feb. 1981

John Russell, "Art People", The New York Times, Jan. 16, 1981

Urban Encounters, exhibiton catalogue, Institute of Contemporary Art, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA, 1980

Artnews, "The Vasari Diary", Dec. 1980

The Lamp, Fall 1980

Amy Taubin, The Soho News, NYC, Nov. 19, 1980

Afterimage, Rochester, NY, Nov. 1980

Dale Robinson, Tyrone Daily Herald, Tyrone, PA, Oct. 30, 1980

Kalman Gould, Washington Square News, NYC, Oct. 20, 1980

Ott Riedberg, SLC Tribune, Bronxville, NY, Sept. 29, 1980

Grace Glueck, "Art People", The New York Times, Sept. 26, 1980

Merle Ginsberg, "This Week", The Soho News, NYC, Sept. 17-23, 1980

Carrie Rickey, "Centerfold", The Village Voice, NYC, Sept. 17-23, 1980

"Art Breakers", The Soho News, NYC, Sept. 17-23, 1980

Glenn Fowler, The New York Times, Sept. 17, 1980

Bob Kappstatter, Daily News, Brooklyn Section, NYC, Sept. 16, 1980

North Brooklyn News, NYC, Sept. 11, 1980

Susan Paul, The Phoenix, Brooklyn, NY, Sept. 1, 1980

The Brooklyn Paper, Brooklyn, NY, Aug. 6-19, 1980

Carrie Rickey, "Closely Watched Train Stations", Village Voice, NYC, July 30-Aug. 5, 1980

Peter Lemos, Skylines, July, 1980

### 1.2 Filmografía

Partes y fragmentos de sus películas y vídeos se pueden ver en los siguientes enlaces:

<http://www.youtube.com/user/TheFilmmakersCoop>

<http://www.ubuweb.com/film/brand.html>

- 2011 *Susie's Ghost* [Ver](#)
- 2005 *Swan's Island*, color, sound, 16mm, 5 minutes, co- directed with Katy Martin [Ver](#)
- 2003 *Suite*, color, sound DV video, 29 minutes incluye
  - My Father's Leg*, color, silent, DV video, 3 minutes [Ver](#)
  - Interior Outpost*, color, sound, DV video, 10 minutes [Ver](#)
  - Moxibution*, color, sound, DV video, 8 1/2 minutes [Ver](#)
  - Double Nephrectomy*, color, sound, DV video, 4 minutes [Ver](#)
  - Gazelle*, color, sound, DV video, 3 1/2 minutes [Ver](#)
- 2002 *Skinside Out*, color, sound, 16mm, 10 minutes, co- directed with Katy Martin [Ver](#)
- 2000 *I'm a Pilot Like You*, color, sound DV video, 40 minutes co- directed with Ruth Hardinger
- 2000 *Dialysis, Living With Choices*, color, sound, DV video, 15 minutes, made with students at Hampshire College.
- 1996 *Housing Discrimination Project*, color, sound, video, 8 minutes, made with students at Hampshire College.
- 1995 *Human Resources Unlimited*, color, sound, video, 6 minutes, made with students at Hampshire College.
- 1990 *Home Less Home*, color, sound, 75 minutes [Ver](#)
- 1984 *Coalfields*, color, sound, 39 minutes [Ver](#)
- 1983 *Tracy's Family Folk Festival*, color, sound, 10 minutes
- 1982 *Chuck's Will's Widow*, color, silent, 13 minutes [Ver](#)
- 1979 *Split Decision*, color, sound, 15 minutes [Ver](#)
- 1978 *Works In The Field*, color, silent, 40 minutes [Ver](#)

- 1977**     *T.F.W. March For Human Rights*, color, sound, 7 minutes
- 1976**     *The Trail To Koskimo, His First Hunt*, color, sound, 35 minutes [Ver](#)
- 1974-75**   *Cartoons*, color and b/w, sound and silent, 40 minutes total. Includes:
- An Angry Dog*, 1974, color, silent, 5 1/2 minutes  
*It Dawn Down*, 1974, color, silent, 5 1/2 minutes  
*The Central Finger*, 1974, color, silent, 5 1/2 minutes  
*Before The Fact*, 1974, color, sound, 6 minutes, made with Saul Levine and Students at S.U.N.Y. at Binghamton  
*The Autobiography Of Benjamin Franklin*, 1975, color, silent, 4 minutes  
*New York State Primaries*, 1975, color, sound, 5 1/2 minutes  
*Still At Work*, 1975, color, sound, 4 minutes
- 1973**     *Demolition Of A Wall*, b/w, sound, 30 minutes [Ver](#)
- 1973**     *Touch Tone Phone Film*, b/w, sound, 8 minutes
- 1972-74**   *Acts Of Light*, color, sound, 55 minutes total. Includes:
- Circles Of Confusion*, 1974, color, sound, 15 minutes [Ver](#)  
*Angular Momentum*, 1973, color, sound, 20 minutes [Ver](#)  
*Rate Of Change*, 1972, color, sound, 18 minutes [Ver](#)
- 1972**     *Moment*, b/w, sound, 25 minutes [Ver](#)
- 1972**     *Zip Tone Cat Tune*, color, silent, 8 minutes [Ver](#)
- 1971**     *Pong Ping Pong*, film and sound environment, b/w, sound, 25 minutes
- 1971**     *Always Open/ Never Closed*, color, silent, 13 minutes
- 1970**     *Tree*, b/w, sound, 8 minutes [Ver](#)
- 1969**     *Organic Afghan*, color, sound, 4 minutes

**Filmography/Videography:**

- 2005 *Swan's Island*, color, sound, 16mm, 5 minutes, co- directed with Katy Martin
- 2003 *Suite*, color, sound DV video, 29 minutes includes:  
*My Father's Leg*, color, silent, DV video, 3 minutes  
*Interior Outpost*, color, sound, DV video, 10 minutes  
*Moxibution*, color, sound, DV video, 8 1/2 minutes  
*Double Nephrectomy*, color, sound, DV video, 4 minutes  
*Gazelle*, color, sound, DV video, 3 1/2 minutes
- 2002 *Skinside Out*, color, sound, 16mm, 10 minutes, co- directed with Katy Martin
- 2000 *I'm a Pilot Like You*, color, sound DV video, 40 minutes co- directed with Ruth Hardinger  
*Dialysis, Living With Choices*, color, sound, DV video, 15 minutes, made with students at Hampshire College.
- 1996 *Housing Discrimination Project*, color, sound, video, 8 minutes, made with students at Hampshire College.
- 1995 *Human Resources Unlimited*, color, sound, video, 6 minutes, made with students at Hampshire College.
- 1990 *Home Less Home*, color, sound, 75 minutes
- 1984 *Coalfields*, color, sound, 39 minutes
- 1983 *Tracy's Family Folk Festival*, color, sound, 10 minutes
- 1982 *Chuck's Will's Widow*, color, silent, 13 minutes
- 1979 *Split Decision*, color, sound, 15 minutes
- 1978 *Works In The Field*, color, silent, 40 minutes
- 1977 *T.F.W. March For Human Rights*, color, sound, 7 minutes
- 1976 *The Trail To Koskimo, His First Hunt*, color, sound, 35 minutes
- 1974-75 *Cartoons*, color and b/w, sound and silent, 40 minutes total. Includes:  
*An Angry Dog*, 1974, color, silent, 5 1/2 minutes  
*It Dawn Down*, 1974, color, silent, 5 1/2 minutes  
*The Central Finger*, 1974, color, silent, 5 1/2 minutes  
*Before The Fact*, 1974, color, sound, 6 minutes, made with Saul Levine and Students at S.U.N.Y. at Binghamton  
*The Autobiography Of Benjamin Franklin*, 1975, color, silent, 4 minutes  
*New York State Primaries*, 1975, color, sound, 5 1/2 minutes  
*Still At Work*, 1975, color, sound, 4 minutes
- 1973 *Demolition Of A Wall*, b/w, sound, 30 minutes  
*Touch Tone Phone Film*, b/w, sound, 8 minutes
- 1972-74 *Acts Of Light*, color, sound, 55 minutes total. Includes:  
*Circles Of Confusion*, 1974, color, sound, 15 minutes  
*Angular Momentum*, 1973, color, sound, 20 minutes  
*Rate Of Change*, 1972, color, sound, 18 minutes
- 1972 *Moment*, b/w, sound, 25 minutes  
*Zip Tone Cat Tune*, color, silent, 8 minutes
- 1971 *Pong Ping Pong*, film and sound environment, b/w, sound, 25 minutes  
*Always Open/ Never Closed*, color, silent, 13 minutes
- 1970 *Tree*, b/w, sound, 8 minutes
- 1969 *Organic Afghan*, color, sound, 4 minutes

### 1.3 Prensa

Artículo disponible en: <http://cinemawithoutborders.com/news-issues/2605-bill-brand.html>

## LA Filmforum Presents: filmmaker Bill Brand, May 15

By [Robin Menken](#) 05/10/2011 17:58:00



Master filmmaker Bill Brand comes to Los Angeles to present work by others during the Orphan Film Symposium West, which Filmforum co-presents on May 13 & 14, and he comes to us on the 15th with his own extraordinary films. All the films explore landscape and the body to express a broad variety of themes including industrial production, medicine, travel and family history. Quiet explorations of exterior spaces that unveil more than is apparent. Brand has been making films for four decades now, and was previously hosted at Filmforum back in the 1980s! Every film except "Coalfields" is a Los Angeles premiere!

For over four decades Bill Brand has been an artist, educator, activist and film preservationist. His experimental and documentary films, videos and installations have exhibited extensively in the US and abroad in museums, microcinemas, and on television since the early 1970's. They have been featured at major film festivals including the Berlin Film Festival and New Directors/ New Films Festival and are written about in cinema history books and in articles by Erik Barnouw, David James, Janet Maslin, Paul Arthur, J. Hoberman, B. Ruby Rich, and Noel Carroll, among others. His famous 1980 public artwork, Masstranscope, a mural in a NYC subway tunnel that is animated by the movement of passing trains, is in the permanent collection of the MTA Arts for Transit program. In 1973 he founded Chicago Filmmakers, the showcase and workshop and served on the Board of Directors of the Collective for Living Cinema in New York City. He is currently a trustee of the Flaherty Seminar and an advisor to the Orphan Film Symposium. Since 1976 he has operated BB Optics, an optical printing service specializing in archival preservation of small gauge films and films by artists. In 2006 he was named an Anthology Film Archives film preservation honoree and given a month long retrospective to celebrate BB Optics' 30th anniversary. He is currently Professor of Film and Photography at Hampshire College and since 2005 has also taught film preservation in the graduate Moving Image Archiving and Preservation program at New York University.



"Susie's Ghost" (2011, 7 min, 16mm or HD Quicktime) in collaboration with Ruthie Marantz

Los Angeles Premiere! When filming, I was mourning the loss of my older sister and my photography and the performance of collaborator Ruthie Marantz express a diffuse sense of loss. Is she looking for something or someone? Is she really there? Is she really gone? The film was shot in downtown Manhattan before the housing bubble burst. Construction mania had not yet obliterated the last traces of the manufacturing district I'd moved to 35 years earlier. That too has passed.

"Suite" (1996-2003, 30 minutes, DVCAM or SD Quicktime)

Los Angeles Premiere!

This is a suite of five short videos that address personal and family history, in part, dealing with the implications of being the only sibling of five not to have inherited Polycystic Kidney Disease, an incurable disorder. In these works, the body is a site both of beauty and abjection.

"Swan's Island" (2005, 5 min, 16mm)

Co-directed by Katy Martin

Los Angeles Premiere!

This film explores gesture in painting, and how that relates to the hand held camera. Katy Martin paints on her own body, and Bill Brand captures the painted figure and its trace. In its choreography, "Swan's Island" is a duet. The person filming and the person filmed are moving as one, and yet they are separate, each an island. Seeing and being seen are inextricably bound with emotions of love and loss, longing, and a sense of place.

"Sicómoro" (2011, 5 min, HD Quicktime)

Text by Carolina Noblega

Los Angeles Premiere!

A meditation on travel and home revealed through ornate doors and other architectural details from Ciudad Vieja in Montevideo, Uruguay and a letter to a friend.



"Coalfields" (1984, 39 min., 16mm)

Poetry by Kimiko Hahn, Music by Earl Howard

This film unites political and social content with a radically idiosyncratic avant-garde film language. Primarily a landscape, the film is shot in the mining hollows and river valleys of West Virginia. It centers on the story of Fred Carter, coal miner and black lung activist. Although the film grows out of a concrete situation, it is not simply a social documentary. Instead it is a personal and visual essay that addresses political and personal forces as landscape. The pictures are broken up by abstract shapes that, through optical printing, collage several simultaneous viewpoints into complex patterns of color, shape and motion. The images work with the highly charged poetry of Kimiko Hahn and the music of Earl Howard to develop themes of coal mining, industrial and artistic production, love, separation, struggle, sadness and hope.

Los Angeles Filmforum is the city's longest-running organization screening experimental and avant-garde film and video art, documentaries, and experimental animation. 2011 is our 36th year. [www.lafilmforum.org](http://www.lafilmforum.org)

This screening series is supported, in part, by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors through the Los Angeles County Arts Commission; the Department of Cultural Affairs, City of Los Angeles; and the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts. Additional support generously provided by American Cinematheque.

January 1, 2009

Artículo disponible en: [http://www.nytimes.com/2009/01/01/arts/design/01zoet.html?\\_r=1](http://www.nytimes.com/2009/01/01/arts/design/01zoet.html?_r=1)

## **Attention Passengers! To Your Right, This Trip Is About to Become Trippy** By [RANDY KENNEDY](#)

The New York City subway is full of more or less secret works of art, salvos of illicit shape and color that you can appreciate only if your Lexington Avenue train slows near an abandoned platform or you make a life-threatening spelunk into the tunnels and stumble across scraps of manic autobiographical wall writings painted by a semi-mythical graffiti artist known as Revs.

But for many years, toward the end of a Brooklyn tunnel that leads onto the Manhattan Bridge, an unusual piece of urban art — part painting, part movie, part conceptual experiment — has been kept a secret only through neglect, layers of graffiti tags and fluorescent lights that were broken or turned off.

The work was the idea of the artist and filmmaker Bill Brand, who along with the public art organization Creative Time asked the [Metropolitan Transportation Authority](#) in the late 1970s, even as the system was beginning to crumble, to let him transform the tracks themselves into art.

He wanted to create a mass-transit version of a zoetrope, the earliest motion picture device, by constructing a long slitted light box alongside a subway track with a series of paintings inside so that, when a train passed, riders experienced the illusion that the painting was moving.

“I think it was such a preposterous idea that no one bothered to say no,” Mr. Brand said Wednesday of the work, which he christened with the back-to-the-future Latinate title “Masstransiscope.” “So they just kept having the next meeting — and then we built it.”

Though millions of riders saw it, by the mid-1980s, despite Mr. Brand’s own efforts to keep the artwork maintained, it had fallen into awful shape and for almost two decades — except for a brief resurrection around 1990 — was either dark or was seen only as a strange, illuminated mess of spray-paint outside the subway window.

But in the last several months, with help from a grant and the transportation authority’s Arts for Transit program, Masstransiscope is once again playing to carloads of audiences on Manhattan-bound Q and B trains as they leave the DeKalb Avenue station and head toward the bridge. Over the summer Mr. Brand, with transit workers, volunteers and professional sign cleaners in Long Island City, retrieved all 228 hand-painted panels from inside the light box and began the laborious process of de-gunking them.

By early November, with no formal ceremony or even a news release from transit officials, the lights were flipped back on, and Mr. Brand’s bright, trippy, mostly abstract forms have begun to move and morph (if the train from which you see them is not crawling “due to traffic up ahead,” as conductors like to say).

“It’s a beloved piece,” said Sandra Bloodworth, the director of the Arts for Transit program, which has installed hundreds of permanent works of art throughout the subway since 1985 by artists as prominent

as [Roy Lichtenstein](#), Elizabeth Murray and Al Held. “Bill’s work happened before Arts for Transit even came about. And that’s why it really is a part of New York history. It was a little glimpse of what could come, if you will.”

Mr. Brand, who is also a film archivist, said he began to think about a subway zoetrope while riding trains as a student at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. After moving to New York in the mid-1970s he began to experiment with ways to create one.

“I was so naïve,” he said. He initially conceived of a much more ambitious project, using blowup photographs to create a virtual film strip behind the light-box walls. He wanted to change the images regularly, making a movie, in essence, that subway riders would see only in little segments of 20 seconds or so, like a crazily attenuated version of the serials that once ran in theaters.

He came to understand that the images behind the walls needed to be bright and hyperactive to resonate in such a short time, so he began to think of the work as a moving painting. But his basic ideas — of reversing the motion-picture paradigm by having the images stay still while the viewers were in motion; of creating what he thought of as a movie that viewers would see a few seconds a day but repetitively over many years, a “decades-long movie” — remained the same.

“One of the main motives for making Masstransiscope was to find out for myself — as someone who makes obscure films that not many people watch — if it would be different to have a mass audience,” said Mr. Brand, who for several years in the early 1980s used to take an M.T.A. key that “someone slipped me” and descend into the abandoned Myrtle Avenue subway station where the light box sits to clean and repair the piece himself.

“And what I discovered is that it really isn’t all that different,” he said.

Except, perhaps, that he cultivated unlikely fans like Lou Corradi, a subway conductor who saw the piece several times a day for years in the early 1980s and loved it so much that he tracked down its creator. “So many passengers used to question me about your project, and I had no information to give them, sorta like when they asked about service delays! (wink),” Mr. Corradi wrote in an e-mail message to Mr. Brand in 2007, after spotting the darkened hulk of the project on a subway trip.

In a moderately crowded car on the Q line on Wednesday morning, most of Mr. Brand’s potential audience, truth be told, did not notice the rebirth of Masstransiscope. A Russian woman was slowly addressing postcards with pictures of the Manhattan skyline, while a man near her rifled through a Target bag filled with crumpled utility bills, and a woman next to him was thumb-typing a text message so that she could send it as soon as the train emerged onto the bridge.

But Mr. Brand said he loved the idea that maybe only a few riders per train, or even one, daydreaming out into the tunnel darkness, caught sight of the piece.

“Even though it’s a very public work of art, it ends up being very personal,” he said. “It’s like it’s everybody’s little secret.”

He added: “When my ego is low, I do like to find teenagers on the train and make them look at it.”

MFJ Issue No. 3 (Winter/Spring 1979)

Buchsbaum, Jonathan, "Composing for Film: The Work of Bill Brand," pp. 55-61  
Film/Theatre/Compositional Matrix

## Composing for Film: The Work of Bill Brand

JONATHAN BUCHSBAUM

System has played an increasingly significant role in the work of independent filmmakers of the past decade. Primary appreciation of these films has often shifted from the felt qualities of the works to intellectual activity. The system may be relatively simple, but fertile once installed in a film. Properties of the medium emerge as central concerns: light patterns (Jacobs), registration (Sharits), editing (Frampton), synchronization (Kubelka). Many of these procedures place demands on memory in order to identify the system. That challenge gives way to assessing the elegance of the system and the experiential dividends. Bill Brand uses simple systems of permutations to examine the constituents of perception in film, at the level of the sequence, the shot, and the frame.<sup>1</sup>

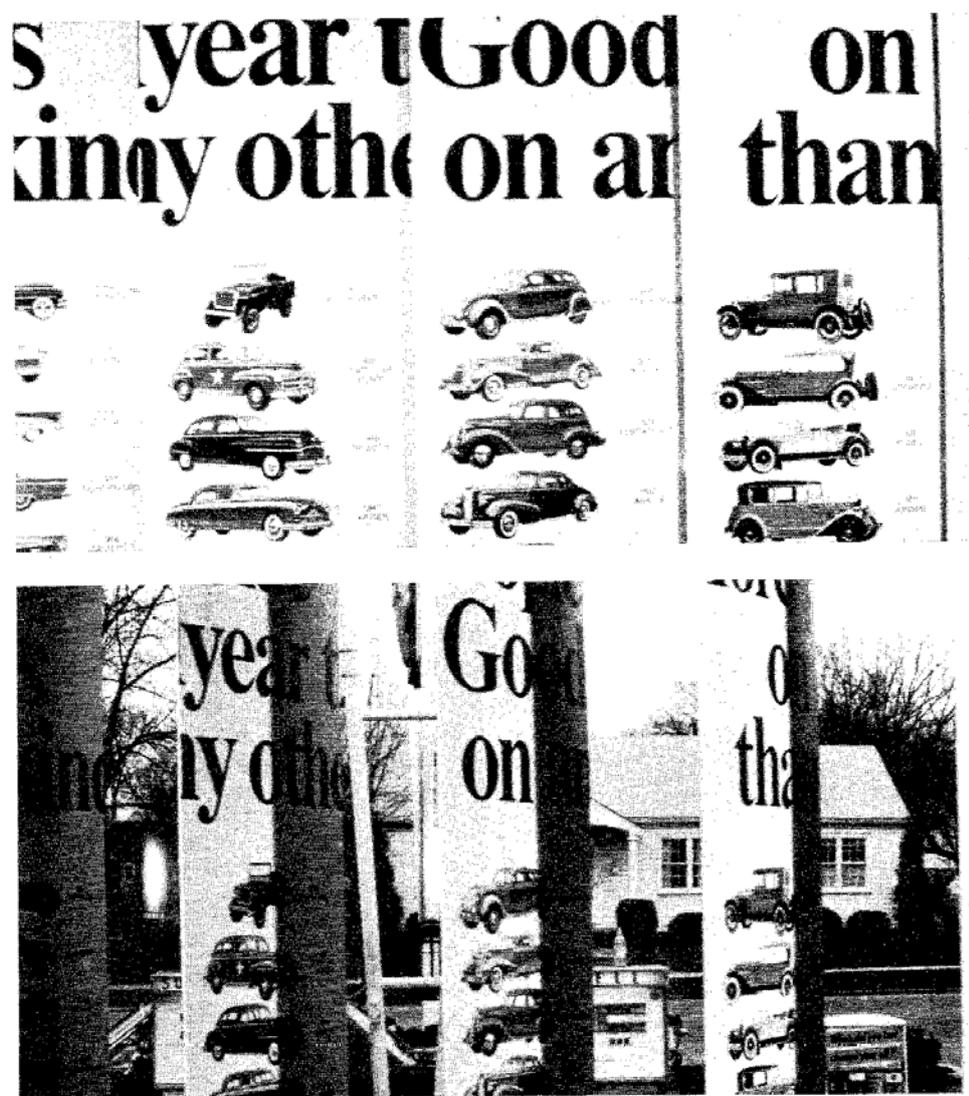
*Moment* opens with five vertical panels of a tire ad illustrating four different types of tires. The only lettering is the number 1915, on the rightmost panel. However, the panels have been rearranged from their proper left to right order, such that the most modern tire appears on the left, and the parts of the tires that extend beyond the edge of any one slat, do not abut their companion panels in the original ad. The fourth panel belongs in the first position, and panels two and three are in reverse order. In the absence of linguistic clues, one must reconstruct the proper order by drawing on familiarity with norms of iconic representation, in this case, the rule of respecting the spatial integrity of objects. In other words, Brand begins with a permutation of a horizontal series.

This first image, then, announces his interest in reading, and more specifically, in reading an image. The permutation requires reconstruction to make sense of the panels, reminding one that this is the cognitive activity of reversibility.

The very first image provides a blueprint for the entire film. The panels rotate 180° about an invisible vertical rod bisecting each panel. Between the two end points of rotation when the ad fills the screen, we see a gas station with cars coming in and out, and beyond the gas station, cars passing in both directions on a street, with houses on the far side of the street in the background. As the panels complete their rotation, the reverse sides of the original panels form another tire ad, vertical arrays of cars from the early years of the century to the present, with part of a Goodyear caption scrambled at the top. The reverse side, then, complements the original ad, but now each of the panels resembles a film

strip, and our understanding of their improper order depends on some familiarity with automobile styles, a familiarity gained most easily through watching old films. Finally, the sounds from the other side of the ad are heard only while the panels are moving, implying that the panels are soundproof, which of course is not true.

While the arrangement of the panels is clearly a permutation, the temporal movement of the panels, because of rotation, follows no necessary pattern. Rotational movement renders time reversal meaningless, for no physical law, such as gravity, or cultural norm (reading from right to left) rules such axial movement. But the movement of the cars, gas station attendant, and the pedestrians provides the referent for anchoring the initial temporal co-



Bill Brand, Moment (1972)

*Composing for Film*

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ordinates of before and after. First there are no cars in the gas station. Then one is seen, and two others arrive later, with the first car still there. While these events are shown in chronological order, Brand has picked out six fragments of the continuous time. (The five panels carve up the gas station scene six ways). Thus, we do not observe the first car full in. The second fragment begins with the first car already parked at a gas pump. Taking this opening passage as the theme, Brand then reverses the order of the fragments, and projects them in reverse order seven times. After the first reversal, he applies a similar principle to each fragment. He divides each segment into a number of equal frame units, and reverses their order, starting with the last frames of that segment. With each successive reversal, the equal frame units shrink, from 661 frames eventually down to 24, 5, 2, and 1. The last reversal then is reverse motion. He performs similar operations on the sound track, and changes the synchronization as well, so that the full image of the ad no longer blocks the sound.

Watching the film becomes something of a puzzle: what is the system of transformations? Because the phenomena behind the ad do not follow any dramatic or narrative organization, only temporal progression supplies the mnemonic paradigm to solve the puzzle. And we only see those events during the rotation of the panels anyway. So we must concentrate on remembering the initial fragments of the events we do see, and then try to recall their order to compare them with subsequent reorderings. As the segmentation gets smaller, we can see the cars moving backwards in stutter motions, as do the panels. The cars are not shown in reverse motion, but when we see them in 5 frame units, with the order of the units reversed, the net result is backward. Once we recognize pattern, the next logical change yields a certain satisfaction when it occurs. The last section reaches the limit of the single frame as the unit of segmentation, and does flow smoothly now in reverse motion. But we have passed through a number of intermediate steps prior to this ending, so that we perceive reverse motion in a new way. It is not simply running the film backwards. It is the logical culmination of increasing segmentation and permutation. With the earlier cycles, each equal frame unit was projected head to tail. The reverse motion also projects each equal frame unit head to tail, except that in this case the individual frame is the unit of segmentation.

Reverse motion, then, in this film, still adheres structurally to the initial linear progression of chronological time. This lesson in reordering reflects Brand's preoccupation with linear series, for the ad displays a linguistic series normally coded left to right and the gas station scene presents a strictly temporal series. The iconic image introduces a non-linear yet well ordered series, broken down into discrete panels. The use of panels refers to the rigidity of the linear passage of the film strip through the projector. Furthermore, the 1915 date evokes several types of associations related to the film. The first rules of filmmaking were being developed then. And the assembly line, coupling the principles of segmentation and the linearity of the conveyor belt, was perfected in Ford's automobile plant at Highland-Park, which the Goodyear ad could allude to, given Brand's interest in processing—of information now, not manufactured goods.

The sound track, however, presents a more confusing situation. While the breakdown of synchronization asserts the independence of sound and image,

our ability to identify permutations is complicated by the difficulty of reversing sound. Brand actually does reverse the sound, according to his notes, but the viewer cannot possibly know what the sound of a car pulling into the station sounds like in reverse. Sound, unlike visual movement, does not exhibit the property of reciprocity, unless the sound is composed of discrete units drawn from a well known relational system, such as a scale. For some reason, Brand has applied a different permutation system to the sound track, and the result is a loss in perceptible structure on the sound track.

Perhaps he recognized this problem, for in a film made the following year, *Demolition of a Wall* (1973), he simplifies both the sound and the image. He took six frames from the 1890's Lumiere film showing men razing a wall, and four-step printed it so that each frame would remain on the screen long enough for conscious processing. The sound track consists of six notes from a musical scale. This reduction of elements allows the spectator to register the different permutations, because the initial segmentation is constant, four frames, and the sounds are discrete.

If *Moment* lacked some rationale for choosing among possible permutations, that is, whether to use four or five frame units and so forth, *Demolition of a Wall* resolved that issue by including every possible permutation of six image and sound elements, or 720 permutations ( $6!$ , or  $6 \cdot 5 \cdot 4 \cdot 3 \cdot 2 \cdot 1 = 720$ ). Brand relies on such procedures to reduce the number of options facing him as a filmmaker. Why does he choose six items for *Demolition*? Well, six items yields a 30 minute film. Five items would contract the time to 5 minutes, and seven items would distend it to  $3\frac{1}{2}$  hours. Given the chosen procedure, six items is the only practical number.

However, Brand cannot escape all choices. He must arrive at some synchronization system. The film opens with a sequence in which the images begin exactly at the sound of the fourth note. This pattern remains constant for some time, enabling the viewer to accustom himself to the different images and sounds, and to identify the permutations. Actually, even keeping the synchronization constant, it is still difficult to keep abreast of *both* image and sound changes. Presumably, Brand challenges the viewer to notice each of the 720 changes as they occur at roughly one second intervals each run through. But the speed of each run through, the sheer number of them, plus the addition of sound, results in informational overload, particularly when there is no *particular* motivation to meet the challenge beyond inducing the generating mechanism. Unlike *Tom, Tom, The Piper's Son*, in which the shifting light patterns hold one's interest, or *Zorn's Lemma*, in which the complexity of the system requires consistent attention, *Demolition* eventually exhausts one's interest as Brand passes that boundary between human and machine information. A machine would no doubt be equally engrossed by the end as the beginning.

The synchronization varies in a straightforward push-pull manner. That is, the retarded image creeps up on the sound, passes it, and then recedes again. This strategy does require attentiveness to test the hypothesis against the experience, and introduces a type of dramatic tension in the work of a rise and fall corresponding to the approach and retreat of the image track.

Brand's latest film, *Works in the Field* (1978), marks a creative release from the defense of permutation. The new structural principle centers on the frame

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as the minimal unit of information in film. Brand investigates the parameters of coding a photographic image. Barthes called the photograph a paradox of a 'message without a code,' because of the imperceptibility of the units of the photograph (light sensitive chemical grains) and the consequent resistance to commutation testing: changing the shade of several grains may not be perceptible, let alone cause a corresponding change in 'meaning.' According to Barthes, previous iconic representations did obey some palpable rules of coding. Others contest even this claim, but the uniqueness of the photograph still obtains.

For *Works in the Field*, Brand constructed assorted loop mattes in grid patterns that he superimposed over footage that he shot. Each loop varied the size of the rectangular bits (note: in information theory, a bit is a unit of information; the information strength of a bit varies inversely with the probability of occurrence), the range of percentages of image elimination, and in printing, the speed of the cycle. One condition common to each loop was that no successive grid frames should have any image elimination bits overlapping. Initially, Brand tried to build the system of mattes manually with circular bits, which he used to make *The Trail to Koskimo, His First Hunt* (1976). But he found this too unwieldy and spent the next two years working with computers to generate the grids. Once equipped with the mattes, he performed some empirical testing to winnow the most effective grids. For example, he found that a one to five percent variation in image elimination was not particularly noticeable. So although he used computers as a practical time-saving tool, in no way did they generate the film, and he exercised some artistic choice in selecting among the possibilities. For the final print, he bi-packed grids over his footage and then A and B rolled them over one another, so that the final print has four layers. In the grid sections of the film, we see two 'coded' images at one time. *Works in the Field* extends the idea of coding one image in *Koskimo* to present two series on the screen simultaneously.

Completing a sketch of the structure of the film, grid sections alternate with found footage of a finished documentary on a small Asian community. Brand found this material in a garbage can.

Watching the image elimination sections forces the viewer to complete two types of gestalt: the flash of two images seen in pieces, and the different pieces seen over time. One is led to speculate on the conditions of perception under these conditions. Experiencing the film confirms one's intuition about criteria for such perceptual recognition. One would expect the human face to be the one most familiar figure to most people. Movement differentiates objects or people, articulating some depth in the representation and facilitating figure/ground delineation. Color abets object discrimination. Horizon lines are also powerful coding cues in interpreting perspective. Brand uses landscapes and seascapes for images. Although the colors and objects in the landscapes, the trees, shrubs, leaves, terrain, skyline etc., carry more varied perceptual information than the seascapes, one's unfamiliarity with new landscapes will inhibit perception more severely than the simple image of a single sailboat on water with light bouncing off the undulations, because the 'schema' of seascape inventories is more stable than a landscape schema. In other words, the grid system necessitates conscious activation of these perceptual mechanisms, and prompts apperceptive reflection on weighting these cues.

That Brand is consciously engaged in a metacritical discourse is clear as well from the semantics of the first three image elimination systems. First we see images of photographic equipment from a photography magazine (*Popular Photography*). The geometric shapes of the lenses and cameras are regular enough to identify with little visual information, for the viewer can reconstruct the shapes easily. Applying a gestalt is easiest when the fragments show the simplest well-formedness.

The third segment explicitly situates the film in contemporary theories of representation by filming *Artforum* covers from the early 70's. Thus, in addition to a Muybridge cover, we see various covers drawn from the films of Snow, Eisenstein, and Jacobs. This sequence functions as a cipher for the film. By extension, one's ability to recognize the covers implies exposure to the ideas associated with them, and those ideas have played a role in the germination of the film.

All of the above filmmakers are concerned with language in one form or another. Brand's use of a grid reflects his interest in the questions of discrete units in visual language, thresholds of perception, and the role of memory. The grid pattern, described above, may elicit speculation on perceptual cues, but the isolation of pertinent cues continues to be a controversial issue among psychologists. For example, intuition might suggest that edges, corners, shade changes carry more information to a communicant than other features. Yet perception of the pattern may be more important in understanding the image than the weighted, selected pieces of information.

In addition, the breakdown of images (aural as well as visual) may be crucial for image transmission, as in television, but film differs in two significant and related ways: the frame is not composed of discrete units and is not built up linearly. While Brand refers to information theory, film depends on figural perception, not on the linear organization of information bits. Coding of linear messages in information theory involves computation of probabilities of occurrence in successive place holders. Given that film does not depend on linear syntactic rules at the level of the frame, the succession of frames, or the ordering of shots, the value of information theory to film theory seems limited to the problematic issue of perception of single images.

Temporal progression, of course, is important in film. Brand's earlier films have been seen to explore the results of temporal permutations. The documentary footage in *Works in the Field* contrasts with these temporal disjunctions by following a chronological progression. Formally, the editing is strictly continuous. When the children leave for school in the morning, the film cuts from a medium shot on the porch to a long shot of the house and the front yard as they step from the house and begin their walk to school. Narrative clarity and economy govern the shot changes as a virtual primer on invisible editing. The organization of the narrative rigorously conforms to the rule of classical temporal unity. It begins with the family rising in the morning, and ends with retiring for the evening. All action occurs in the span of one day. We observe then, the daily cycle of an Asian family in its natural state, and the formal treatment similarly assumes the guise of the natural, as if dictated by the raw material of life itself. Many of the shots emphasize the depth of the space. For instance, there is a cut from the children looking over a bridge to the children

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resuming their walk to school, now seen with the bridge in the foreground, the side railing acting as the near points of two perspective lines that the dirt road crossing the bridge stretches into the deep background as the children walk toward that vanishing point.

In Barthes's discussion of the photograph, he asserted that the absence of digital coding contributed to the photograph's unique claim to being natural, and this mechanism dipped the contents of the message in the 'lustral bath of innocence.' Effectively, Barthes was exposing, in semiological terms, Bazin's conception of photographic reality as 'asymptotic to reality.' Brand's film engages this issue by emphasizing the inextricability of form and content in the documentary. The image elimination sequences imply the existence of coding even in the most innocent form of filmic representation.

The structure of *Works in the Field* often relates the documentary sequences to the image elimination sequences. After the *Artforum* covers, we see the children in school learning to read. After dinner, the father reads the newspaper while the radio plays. As if extrapolating mass communication systems from the documentary as they historically developed, beginning with newspapers and then followed by radio, Brand ends the film with an image elimination system of Eyewitness news, recapitulating the film's central concerns with coding, perceiving, and transmission of information.

*Works in the Field*, then, illustrates some of the principles of perceiving representational images in film and borrows from other theories to experiment with the coding of film. The documentary footage juxtaposed to the coded material raises the question of ideological correlates with any coding procedure, or in film, its apparent absence.

## Note

1. Commenting on an early film, *Moment* (1972), Brand isolated a principle that underlies all his films:

In information theory, . . . a basic unit of information is defined as that entity perceived in the moment, the moment being defined by the shortest duration at which no distinction can be made between units of information and the sound becomes a tone, i.e., 15 c.p.s.

All reproducing media, in order to present an illusion of continuous time/space, rely on a basic unit of information—shorter than the moment.

*Moment* is a demonstration-exploration of the line between human information and machine information; a dynamic revelation of film's basic unit, the frame.

### 1.4 Documentos audiovisuales

#### Bill Brand - Art Underground | SundayArts



[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8JD\\_KOExYaY&feature=related](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8JD_KOExYaY&feature=related)

Deep, down in a dark abandoned Brooklyn subway station lies a Masstransiscope. No, it is not some mythological monster from the deep... it is a creative work of art. The artist, Bill Brand, speaks about his creation in this SundayArts "Art Underground" special.

#### Masstransiscope Debut



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d-2oxMB8U-E&feature=relmfu>

Bill Brands Masstransiscope was installed in the abandoned Myrtle Avenue subway station in Brooklyn, New York in September 1980. It has been seen by millions of commuters for over twenty-five years. The 228 hand-painted panels are viewed through a series of vertical slits set into a specially constructed housing. The piece works on the principle of the Zoetrope, a 19th century optical toy

## **2. SEMINARIO**

Parte del seminario está basado en el capítulo "[A SELF-PRESERVATION GUIDE FOR FILM/VIDEO-MAKERS](#)" de la publicación titulada [RESULTS YOU CAN'T REFUSE](#) que fue editada en 2006 por el Anthology Film Archives, con motivo de la celebración del 30 aniversario de BB Optics.

**Página 31 de la guía de lectura**

### **2.1 Bibliografía recomendada**

Saving Cinema by Caroline Frick

From Grain to Pixel by Giovanna Fossati

<http://books.google.es/books?id=f0XRBAajCkMC&printsec=frontcover&hl=es#v=twopage&q&f=false>

Nitrate Won't Wait: A History of Film Preservation in the United States by Anthony Slide

[http://books.google.es/books?id=HZlq5-\\_hu5cC&printsec=frontcover&hl=es#v=onepage&q&f=false](http://books.google.es/books?id=HZlq5-_hu5cC&printsec=frontcover&hl=es#v=onepage&q&f=false)

RESULTS YOU CAN'T REFUSE: <http://www.nyu.edu/tisch/preservation/research/bboptics/bboptics.pdf>

A SELF-PRESERVATION GUIDE FOR FILM/VIDEO-MAKERS:  
[http://www.bboptics.com/bboptics/Self\\_Preservation\\_Guide.pdf](http://www.bboptics.com/bboptics/Self_Preservation_Guide.pdf)

## **A Self-Preservation Guide for Film / Video-Makers** by **Bill Brand with Toni Treadway**<sup>1</sup>

Most artists and filmmakers are better at making art than keeping track of the art they make—especially films and videos. Even if we know we should take better care of our work, we are stopped in our tracks by what we think is too enormous, too time-consuming and too costly an effort. We feel we must make a choice between producing new works and preserving old ones. But doing only a little, or a little at a time, can go a long way toward preserving our work and can actually help set the conditions for completing new projects. With only a little effort we can make it a lot easier for others to preserve our work in the future.

We may not want to think about it, but left unattended, our work is likely to become irreparably damaged or decayed, lost or ignored. We all need to pay attention and take action, whether our work currently has no public recognition or even if it's been exhibited widely and is represented by a gallery, distributor or agent.

With this in mind, here is a simple guide written for artists with the goal of encouraging us to take whatever steps we can to preserve our work. Excellent and detailed guides are available on the Internet<sup>2</sup> and we encourage you to consult them in conjunction with this guide for a more thorough understanding of the subject. However, while most of these guides are written for archives and libraries, this one is written especially for artists and filmmakers.

It is certainly best to have your work professionally archived. But there is much you can do on your own, without relying on the limited resources and vision of major institutions. Moving image preservation is a new and constantly evolving field and advice, even from the top experts, is constantly subject to revision. But once you understand some of the basic principles, applying common sense will give the best results.

This guide is divided into 5 sections:

- **Locate, List and Remove From Harm**
- **Inspect, Label and Improve Containers**
- **Annotate and Place**
- **Distribute and Imagine**
- **A Case Study**

It is better to do something than nothing. If you can only do one thing, start with the easiest or the most urgent task. Do some of this for only some of your work, some of this for all your work, or if you can, all of this for all of your work. But do what you can even if only a little bit at a time.<sup>3</sup> Take care of the most urgent needs first.<sup>4</sup>

**Start with these immediate tasks:**

### **Locate, List and Remove From Harm**

1. Locate your films. Do you know where they are? Make a list of the general locations where originals, prints and other materials and documents can be found (e.g., bedroom closet on Chestnut Street, ex-husband's garage in Rochester, Film Lab in Minneapolis, Art Storage in Fort Lee, NJ, Museum of Modern Art).

2. Move originals, prints and other materials to a relatively cool and dry location from especially unsafe places such as basements, garages, attics, under sinks, on window sills, near radiators or heaters. For magnetic materials—such as video tapes, audio tapes, magnetic tracks and computer disks—move them away from magnetic fields such as those produced by heavy-duty electrical cables, stereo speakers, electrical equipment and transformers.
3. Retrieve originals or printing masters from laboratories. When labs go out of business or change ownership they often throw out or lose the films in their vaults.
4. If your work is stored at a commercial storage facility, check on it regularly to make sure the facility is still in business or is maintaining the standards you expected when you placed your work there.
5. Make a list of your films, installations and video works, if you don't already have one. Look through old program notes, resúmenes, exhibition calendars and reviews in order to remember what projects you've done.
6. Identify someone who will care about your work should you leave it behind when you move or die. Let that person know where your films are kept and give that person a copy of your list of works.
7. Find a friend, intern or archivist graduate student to help you with these tasks.<sup>5</sup> It may give you a headache to even think about doing this work, but others actually relish the opportunity to dive into and make order out of dusty boxes.

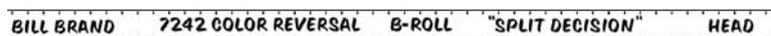
**If you can do more, here are the next steps to take:**

### **Inspect, Label and Improve Containers**

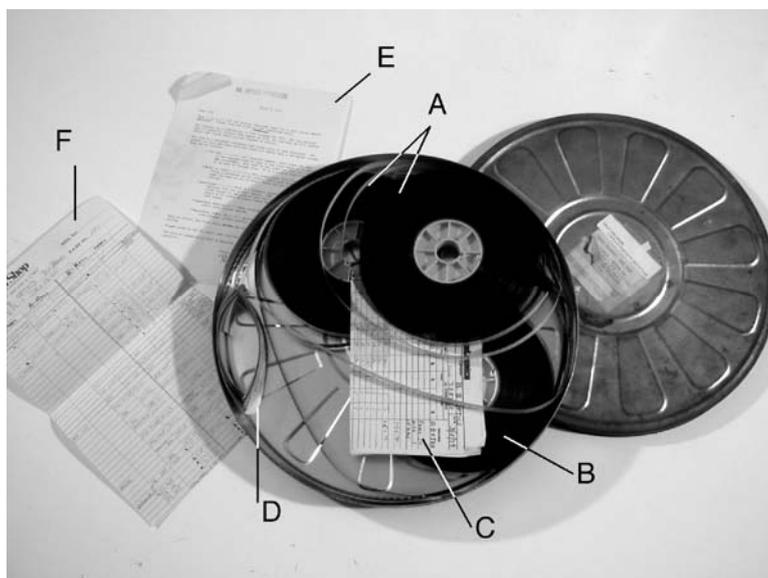
8. Open the boxes, cans or drawers and inspect the materials. Identify each item and confirm that the labeling on the can or box conforms to what's inside. Include obvious information like title, artist name, date, gauge (e.g., 16mm film), reversal or negative, original or print, a-wind or b-wind.

**8.1.** If the identifying label is on tape or gummed paper, copy the information directly onto the container with a permanent marker. Gummed labels and tapes dry up and fall off. We've seen boxes of films with nothing but a pile of detached labels on the bottom.

**8.2.** Identify the reel by labeling the head leader. A permanent marker, such as a Sharpie, is good but even better is an indelible ink pen, such as a Staedtler. (See below).



A SELF-PRESERVATION GUIDE FOR FILM/VIDEO-MAKERS



Lab can with 16mm original reels and papers. Plastic bags removed.

A: A&B rolls, B: Optical negative track, C: Film timer's cue sheet, D: Printer light control punch tape, E: Notes to timer from filmmaker, F: Chart of fades and dissolves for timer

- 8.3. If there is no identifying label and you can't figure out what the item is by looking at it, then label it "unknown" with a note about where you found it and the current date (e.g., "unknown-1/17/06 found in box with 'My Big Movie' outtakes").
9. Replace the containers that are dented or rusted. (See 12 for further discussion about containers.)
10. Remove the plastic or paper laboratory bags around your films. Harm can come to film sealed in a container, including a plastic bag. It does protect it from dust, but it also prevents the escape of acetic acid and this can accelerate acetate deterioration, sometimes called "vinegar syndrome" (see following page). Some archivists think you should also remove from the container any paper items such as notes to the lab, timer and printer notes or paper timing tapes since these are most likely acidic. But since it is also very important to keep the paper records associated with the film because they contain vital clues for future duplication, printing or archiving, we are recommending that you DON'T remove the paper trail. Keep them with the film.
11. Separate magnetic tracks from picture materials because these are especially susceptible to "vinegar syndrome" and may accelerate the acetate deterioration of the other reels in the container.
12. Replace ordinary cardboard boxes or sealed containers with vented cans or acid free boxes. Be sure to transfer any labeling information from the old containers to the new ones.

### Acetate Decomposition: Vinegar Syndrome

Acetate base film is subject to the so-called vinegar syndrome. The term 'vinegar syndrome' is taken from the distinct odor that is given off by deteriorating acetate film. Vinegar syndrome results from a chemical reaction that takes place at the molecular level that can cause serious and irreparable damage to film. When combined with moisture, heat, and acids, the plastic support in the film begins to release acetic acid. The process is an autocatalytic one, meaning that once the degradation begins it starts to 'feed upon itself' and the deterioration process begins to snowball. When film reaches its autocatalytic point the acetic acid released by the film grows exponentially, and with it the potential problems for the film. Climate is an important determining factor in the deterioration because humidity affects the amount of water absorbed by the film and heat supplies energy for the chemical reactions. Even more important is the "micro-environment," a term used to describe the conditions inside the film can. Vinegar syndrome appears to be contagious, so any film suffering from it should be stored apart from "healthy" reels.

The vinegar smell is the most obvious indicator of decaying acetate film, but it is by no means the only one. The condition of the film can be evaluated by using acid detector strips (e.g., IPI's A-D Strips); this approach provides an objective way to determine the state of preservation of the materials and their needs to be further stabilized. White powder on the edges of the film may indicate plasticizers loss. Because of the molecular breakdown of the plastic base, in advanced stages of deterioration the film becomes brittle and shrunken. Films with shrinkage of more than 1% could be damaged by projector mechanisms, so should not be projected. There are techniques for re-dimensioning film (restoring it to a less-shrunken state), but these are temporary measures that can permanently damage the film and should only be done in a lab situation as a last-ditch method to enable a new negative or print to be made.

#### Acetate Decomposition—Advanced Stages of Decay

The typical pattern for acetate decay is:

1. Vinegar odor
2. Shrinkage
3. Cupping: the film retains a curve. It will not lie flat, but instead appears wavy.
4. Crazing: the emulsion cracks and the image appears as a crazy mosaic.
5. Appearance of white powder on edges (from binder deterioration, this is the plasticizer separating from the film).
6. Film becomes square on reel.
7. Film is no longer flexible and the emulsion flakes off from the base. From Film Forever: The Home Film Preservation Guide

### A SELF-PRESERVATION GUIDE FOR FILM/VIDEO-MAKERS



Cleaning film: run the film between the folded cloth with professional film cleaner, holding it firmly with your fingers. Wind slowly through the film so the film cleaner has evaporated before it is wound onto the take-up reel.

### **CLEANING**

#### **(Only after a full inspection)**

If the film is dirty or moldy, it can be cleaned gently by hand using a lint-free cotton cloth and professional motion picture film cleaner. Don't use this method if there is perforation damage. Put the film cleaner on the cloth and run the film between the folded cloth, holding it firmly with your fingers. Wind slowly through the film so the film cleaner has evaporated before it is wound onto the take-up reel. It is important not to use water or any other fluid on film, as they

could remove the emulsion. Use the film cleaner cautiously: wear clean rubber (not latex) gloves (dishwasher style, not powdered medical gloves), and clean the film in a well-ventilated area. Use only a clean soft cotton cloth that will not scratch the film. Replace the cloth as soon as there is a noticeable build-up of dirt on it.

From Film Forever: The Home Film Preservation Guide

13. Consolidate “outtake” reels into larger containers to save shelf space. Be sure to transfer any labeling information from the old containers to each consolidated item.
14. Isolate materials that are moldy or smell like vinegar when held at arms length by placing them in a separate area at least 20 feet from other film, video or audio materials. “Vinegar syndrome” is the common name for acetate decomposition and it is caused by chemical changes that take place in the acetate base of film. This can irreparably deteriorate the film. Heat, moisture and a sealed container work to concentrate the acetic acid released by the deteriorating acetate, accelerating the process. Just opening the can to let in new air can help. A bit of vinegar smell may not mean the immediate demise of your work, but it should move up on your priority list. However, you should deal right away with a film that has a strong vinegar odor. (See “Acetate Decomposition: Vinegar Syndrome” in box on page 88 for dealing with mold and vinegar syndrome.)
15. Build or purchase inexpensive sturdy shelves from a building supply store and set them up in a cool, dry location. If necessary install a dehumidifier. Purchase acid free boxes, or “Rubber Ware” style plastic containers and drill vent holes on two opposite sides. Group your films or tapes in these containers by title, chronology, genre or medium and place them on the shelves.

**Still ready for more? Do this:**

### Annotate and Place

16. Expand your list of works to include notes about each title or project.
  - 16.1. Title, color or b/w, sound or silent, format (e.g., 8mm, 16mm, Hi8 video), total running time, collaborators or important cast, crew or artistic contributors.
  - 16.2. Original gauge, film stock or video format and sound elements and what laboratory was used for making prints (e.g., “16mm, Ektachrome 7242 color reversal, shot at 18 fps but projected at 24 fps, printed to Kodachrome print stock at Filmtronics Lab, NYC, 1976”).
  - 16.3. Printing masters, if any (e.g., internegative or reversal).
  - 16.4. Video transfers or masters when done, what lab, what element the transfer was made from (e.g., “Transferred to ¾-inch U-Matic video master in 1980 at Tapehouse, NYC from Kodachrome answer print. 10 VHS dubs made from video master”).
  - 16.5. Location of original and master materials including video masters.
  - 16.6. Location of prints or copies.
  - 16.7. Notes about artistic intent, production history or context, especially any non-standard aspects such as intentionally visible splices, color or exposure, long sections of black or white leader, unusual instabilities or features of the image that might get “fixed” by someone in the future who doesn’t know your intent.<sup>6</sup>
  - 16.8. Ideas about future use. Suggest if the work must be shown intact or if it is okay to excerpt it in another work, update it or remake it. If you place it with an institution you can specify use.
  - 16.9. Description that might be used in a catalog, program notes or show announcement.
  - 16.10. Exhibition history—where and when was it screened publicly.
  - 16.11. Bibliography—books, catalogs, reviews and articles that discuss or mention the work.
17. One of the most important factors in storing films and videos is maintaining proper temperature and humidity (40°-54° F and 30%-50% relative humidity). Since few of us on our own can meet this standard, the closer we can get the better. A room that is fairly dry and stays at room temperature is a huge improvement over a humid basement or a hot attic. A simple way to monitor the physical environment where your work is stored is to purchase an inexpensive temperature and humidity gauge and watch it. You can get one at most hardware stores for only a few dollars. Even if you can store your work in a controlled environment, it may be in danger if that environment places the work where no one can find it, or where no one knows or cares about it. It is just as important to consider accessibility and the appropriateness of placement as it is to consider environmental controls.

**18.** Imagine that tomorrow you get squished by a bus. What would happen to your work? Here are some suggestions for helping those you leave behind care for the products of your creative life.

**18.1.** Make a will that specifically mentions your films and videos. You can specify your wishes for each individual work or in general for all of it together.

**18.2.** If there is someone or an institution you would like to be in charge of your work after you're gone, let them know while you're alive.

**18.3.** Leave enough notes, labels, workbooks and artistic directions to enable your designated person to find, understand, catalog, preserve and disseminate copies of your films. An archivist can never have too many notes, reviews, programs, technical sheets, stills, interviews and other background on a film if they have to preserve it.

**19.** You may be able to place your work in an archive or museum that has better storage conditions than you can provide for yourself. Here are some questions to ask yourself as you consider placing your work. We've got no answers here, just questions.

**19.1.** Is it more important for your work to be with the collection most appropriate to the kind of work you make, or it is better to place it with the institution most likely to survive economic difficulties, changes in cultural fashions or technology?

**19.2.** Should we be grateful if a museum or archive wants to accept our work for safekeeping? Should we be expecting to sell our work to these cultural institutions for financial gain or for the benefit of our heirs? Even if we're not selling it, what conditions or commitment can we expect that the work will be maintained, preserved, distributed or exhibited?

**19.3.** Do we have relatives (parents, spouses, partners, siblings or children) that we hope will benefit from our work in the future, even if it has no market value now? Or conversely, do we have relatives who might be negligent, uncaring or greedy? Or finally, do we want to protect our loved ones from having to deal with the work we've made and the people who may make a claim on it one way or the other?



NYU Moving Image Archiving and Preservation graduate students visit the National Archives and Records Administration in 2005. Photo by Howard Besser

**19.4.** Should we keep all the work together in one place or is it better to disseminate it to the institution most appropriate for each particular work? Will spreading it around serve as insurance against the decline of any one institution?

### Get the work seen: Distribute and Imagine

**20.** In conclusion, a work is not preserved if it sits on a shelf and no one ever sees it. While you are logging, inspecting, repackaging or relocating your films, think about what you can do to get them seen by placing them with distributors, suggesting curators exhibit them, or by transferring them to a contemporary format like DVD. The more they are seen the more

likely they are to be remembered and preserved. Even if the work is best seen as a projection in its original format (e.g., 8mm or 16mm), making it available on video, DVD or online streaming can help generate interest in seeing it in its proper form. Furthermore, if your work is distributed, it is less vulnerable to a catastrophic event, such as a fire or flood.

**21.** Whether you've taken only the first urgent steps or have completed a more thorough reorganization of your archives, you should sit back a moment and think about your work as a collection. Try to imagine it well organized, safely housed, carefully labeled and apprecia- tively placed, restored and exhibited. Try to imagine someone helping with the tasks outlined in this guide. Picture your work being appreciated and viewed by audiences you may not currently have. Even baby steps in thinking and acting now can make all the difference in saving your work and making it possible for others to preserve and enjoy it in the future.

### A Case Study

**22.** As a case study, let's say someone has offered to purchase a new print of an old film.

Imagine that even if they aren't offering to preserve it, you want to do all you can on your own even though it could cost you more than you'll earn from the sale of the print. Let's say you have a 16mm color reversal film with an optical sound track. You have one print at home and one print with a distributor. You have located the original A&B rolls and the optical negative track. You have even found the workprint and several cans of outtakes. The film was shown a few times in group shows when it was completed decades ago but it has not been exhibited since. You can't just make a new print from the A&B rolls because reversal print stocks are no longer manufactured. So here are the steps to take:

**22.1.** Locate and identify originals, masters, outtakes and originating materials such as mattes, drawings, scores, production stills, notes to labs and letters to collaborators.

**22.2.** Inspect originals, masters, outtakes and originating materials to identify variations or versions and evaluate the condition of each element.

**22.3.** Create an inspection log with digital photographs of the "before" condition and evaluations for "vinegar syndrome," shrinkage, splices, etc. Also copy into the log any information from the can and leader.

**22.4.** Re-can and label original and master materials, outtakes and prints. Replace shrunken leader or attach new leader if none exists. Save the paper work you find in the can with the A&B rolls including any old notes to the lab, the timer's handwritten or typed timing notes, the paper computer timing tape, and the printer log often taped to the inside lid of the can. These can be crucial clues for making new prints. If the lab that made the old prints still exists, it is possible the lab can still use the old timing numbers. But it is more likely that the old records will only be a guide—although an important one for creating new prints. This is because new film stocks act differently than the old ones or the lab may need to compensate for fading in the original. You also may want to make the corrections you couldn't manage or afford when you first made the film.

**22.5.** Create a polyester base preservation optical track and magnetic safety track from the best element. Your lab will help you evaluate which element is best. The most likely element to be considered the best is a 16mm or 35mm magnetic track master or DAT safety track. The next best element will most likely be a positive optical track from a good print. The least likely to be the best element is the optical negative track used with the A&B roll originals.

**22.6.** Give a lab the original A&B rolls and your best print as a reference for exposure and color timing. If your prints are faded or damaged, the workprint might be the best reference element.

**22.7.** Make a polyester base color internegative from the A&B rolls, then a positive print from the new internegative and the new optical negative track.<sup>7</sup>

**22.8.** Inspect and approve the first answer print from the internegative.

**22.9.** If necessary, recommend corrections.

**22.10.** If necessary, inspect corrected print.

**22.11.** Order release prints.

**22.12.** Make a high quality video master (Digital Betacam or High Definition) from the preservation internegative. Make a DVD master from that and distribution copies from the DVD master.<sup>8</sup>

- 22.13.** If a museum, archive or library is paying for all this work, perhaps through a grant, they will expect to own the internegative. You may want to make a second internegative and optical track and video master for yourself.
- 22.14.** Place and label the master materials and prints in vented archival containers.
- 22.15.** Write a preservation history that describes each step that was taken and the rationale for the decisions that were made.
- 22.16.** Place the internegative and a reference print in an archive or appropriate storage location.
- 22.17.** Exhibit the film. The creation of new preservation negatives and prints can be an occasion for exhibition and critical attention for the work.

### Notes

1 The idea for the essay came from years of shared experience with Toni Treadway and from a specific conversation we had at the 2001 conference of the Association of Moving Image Archivists in Portland, Oregon, which focused especially on the problems of small gauge film preservation. Toni was instrumental in organizing that conference.

2 For "preservation basics," see the National Film Preservation Foundation Website at:

<http://www.filmpreservation.org>

see also, The Home Film Preservation Guide at: <http://www.filmforever.org>

National Film and Sound Archive, Commonwealth of Australia at:

<http://www.screenound.gov.au/screenound/screenso.nsf/HeadingPages>

Display/PreservationFilm+Preservation+Handbook

Independent Media Arts Preservation (IMAP) "Preservation 101" at:

[http://www.imappreserve.org/pres\\_101/index.html](http://www.imappreserve.org/pres_101/index.html)

Keep Moving Images, Preservation information for artists working with the moving image, Lux, UK, at:

<http://kmi.lux.org.uk/index.html>

and Brodsky and Treadway at: <http://www.littlefilm.org>

3 It is probably more efficient to work in a dedicated period of time such as a solid week or two with a crew of helpers. But rather than wait for an opportunity that may never come, it may be more realistic to do a bit at a time over an extended period.

4 Take care of the most vulnerable materials first, not necessarily the oldest. For example, Ektachrome films from the 1970's—especially those processed at drug stores or small labs

—are at particular risk of fading and cupping while older films on Kodachrome in cardboard containers stored at room temperature have proven remarkably stable. Anything with a strong vinegar smell is definitely an urgent matter and should be put at the top of your list. Move it away from other films and consider having it professionally handled and copied.