

The Moving Image Archiving and Preservation proposes, as part of its Film Preservation and Restoration Lab to preserve *Chuck's Will's Widow* in cooperation with the film's director Bill Brand.

Chuck's Will's Widow is a 16mm color, silent film made in 1982 by director Bill Brand. In his own words, the film "is a eulogy for my father and mother whose ashes are spread in the Adirondak mountain woods where the film is shot."¹ While certainly a film imbued with personal significance for the artist, the thirteen minute film is also noteworthy for its design. Utilizing mattes, the film creates what one reviewer has called "a perpetual motion jigsaw puzzle."²

Through the artist's own notes and documentation, there exist eight prints of this film in circulation ranging from Canyon Cinema Coop and Filmmakers Coop, two distribution venues focusing on avant-garde and experimental films to public libraries, including New York Public Library, and the Toledo-Lucas County Public Library as well. In addition, the Pr ea Archives du film experimental d'Avignon is the most recent institution to purchase a print of *Chuck's Will's Widow*. In addition, *Chuck's Will's Widow* has been exhibited throughout the United States, beginning in 1983 at such locations as Pacific Film Archives in Berkeley, CA., The Cinematheque in San Francisco to its inclusion as part of the "Image World" at the Whitney Museum of American Art in 1989. Most recently the film was exhibited in 2003, again at San Francisco's Cinematheque, as well as the Massachusetts College of Art Film Society in Boston and the Chicago Filmmakers.

Being a film preservationist himself as BB Optics, in addition to being a filmmaker, Brand is all too aware of the film's innate ephemeral quality. As such, he himself has stored both the film's A and B roll camera original negatives, as well as the workprint and answer print. Therefore, the all too frequent necessity of having to seek out the best print to preserve is fortunately unnecessary. While the storage conditions of the original elements are not ideal, such conditions help to underscore the necessity of preserving these original materials. Moreover having the extensive paper documentation that has been kept with the A and B rolls will help to facilitate the preservation process as well. Indeed, not only will such documentation assist the process for the lab itself, but such records will also provide a unique learning experience for the students in the class.

This "jigsaw puzzle" effect that has been often cited by reviewers is not only stylistically noteworthy, which lends the film a certain importance in itself, but in terms of the

¹ Canyon Cinema Catalogue. Available at <http://www.canyoncinema.com/B/Brand.html>.

² J. Hoberman, "Film" *Voice* 19 April, 1983. *Chuck's Wills' Widow* has also been reviewed in the 19 June 1984 issue of *Voice*, also by J. Hoberman, 22 October 1987 issue of *Port Washington News* and the February 1984 issue of *Choice*.

preservation process is also extremely important. Having the documentation of the original process will be immeasurably helpful in the preservation process.

Students have already spent some time examining both the paper documents and film elements in an effort to not only better understand the production process of film in general, but this film in particular.

The students in the class will be the first to graduate with a MA in Moving Image Archiving & Preservation from NYU. The growth of both this and other graduate level programs both in the United States and overseas indicates the increased awareness of needing both educated and experienced professionals in such a field. The completion of preserving Bill Brand's *Chuck's Will's Widow* will increase and broaden their knowledge as well as ensuring that this wonderful film survives for future exhibition and study.