



INDIECOLLECT

A Program of the Laboratory for Icon & Idiom, Inc.



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INDIECOLLECT UNVEILS ITS WEB APP AT AMIA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Portland, OR (November 21, 2015) -- At the Association of Moving Image Archivists (AMIA) annual conference, the non-profit Laboratory for Icon & Idiom, Inc. (LII) will unveil the beta of its **IndieCollect Index web application**. The IndieCollect Index was designed by Israel Ehrisman, chief technology officer. Peter Hebert, former Citrix software architect, is developing the API and web application. Members of the New York filmmaking community who attended the International Documentary Association's DOC NYC "Preservation Summit" on April 1 got a sneak preview of the Index.

The IndieCollect Index is meant to be the first comprehensive online catalogue of American independent cinema. The IndieCollect archivists have already entered close to 10,000 motion picture titles into the Index and are now engaged in verification and data enrichment before adding the next batch of titles.

Israel Ehrisman will demonstrate the Index web app beta at a November 21 AMIA panel, entitled "Circumscribing the World of Indie Cinema: Collection, Preservation & Naming Challenges." Besides LII president Sandra Schulberg and CTO Israel Ehrisman, speakers include Tanya DeAngeles, Sundance Institute archivist; Shola Lynch, curator of the Moving Image & Recorded Sound Division of New York Public Library's Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture; and Ed Carter, documentary curator at the Academy Film Archive, a division of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences.

In its effort to document the full spectrum of indie output, the organization has worked with the Academy Film Archive, Sundance Institute, UCLA Film & Television Archive, Independent Filmmaker Project (IFP), Black Filmmakers Foundation, Women's Film Preservation Fund, Women Make Movies, and many individual filmmakers. But many more titles need to be added and properly described before this database becomes the preeminent encyclopedic source for information on American independent cinema. To that end, the IndieCollect team is reaching out to distributors, film festival programmers, film funders and scholars to capture thousands of historical titles. Eventually filmmakers, curators, archivists and film critics will be able to contribute motion picture titles directly to the IndieCollect Index.

Richard Peña has agreed to as editor-in-chief of the forthcoming **IndieCollect Codex**, the essay-based complement to the IndieCollect Index.

The indieCollect credo is that independent film artists track the socio-political and environmental issues of our time and visual artists who use moving images are the primary source of cinematic innovation. They are an integral part of the nation's artistic heritage and critical to the depiction of America in all its diversity.

Sandra Schulberg, who also founded the IFP, stated: "During the last century, Canyon Cinema, Filmmakers Coop, AIVF, NAMAC, IFP, Sundance and other advocates fought hard to develop critical and audience appreciation of American independent cinema, but there is no one source to find or study this body of work.

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Many people assume all indie films are listed by IMDB or the Library of Congress, but that is not the case. If we can't identify and locate all these titles -- let alone figure out which ones need to be preserved -- we can't make sure they will be accessible in the future. Our allies in the archive community are tremendously supportive, but there is nowhere near enough funding for indie film preservation, restoration and storage."

"Our success also depends on filmmakers," Schulberg says. "Launching the public version of the Index is a crucial step in getting filmmakers more involved in protecting their own work."

As part of its indexing and vetting process, the IndieCollect team is searching copyright records. In the past, relatively few indie filmmakers had the resources to deposit an extra 35mm or 16mm print at the Library of Congress, assuming they filed the necessary copyright registration forms. Today's young digital media makers often don't register at all. IndieCollect will attempt to remedy this, creating a one-stop shop to provide indie filmmakers with a regular "Digital Health Check-Up," including copyright record verification and registration.

"Most filmmakers have zero film preservation consciousness," says Schulberg," and even if they have, doing something about it sits at the bottom of their 'To Do' lists. I know this first-hand because I'm an indie filmmaker too. So we have to make it easy. Our message is, 'Come to us and we'll take care of you.'"

The Ford Foundation provided the Laboratory for Icon & Idiom with a major grant in 2014 that enabled the launch of IndieCollect. The Weissman Family Foundation recently made a transformation grant of \$100,000 to support IndieCollect's new film scanning and digital preservation initiative, "IC-Now." Other funds have come from the New York State Council on the Arts, Filmhaus Foundation, HRK Foundation, Ravenal Foundation, Estate of Grace Jackson; from individual donors Lyda Kuth, Gail Gaston, Ken Kroll, Ethan Hawke, Caroline Camougis; and in the form of in-kind support from the Papp family and TechSoup.

Thanks to the leadership and assistance of the Academy Film Archive, IndieCollect has been able to establish cooperative working relationships with the UCLA Film & Television Archive, Library of Congress, Anthology Film Archives, George Eastman House, the Museum of Modern Art and more than forty other archives to secure long-term cold storage facilities for indie film negatives and prints.

The IndieCollect/LII Board of Directors includes Caroline Camougis, Delphi Partners; Geralyn Dreyfous, Utah Film Center; Nicole Guillemet, OffCenter Films; Ted Hope, Amazon Studios; Lyda Kuth, LEF Foundation; and Brian Newman, Sub-Genre Studios.