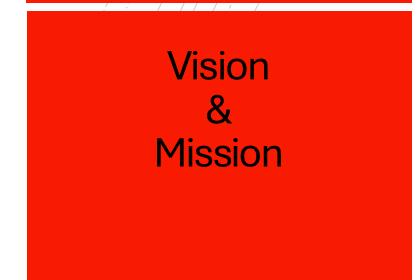
INDIECOLLECT

ARE YOUR FILMS FUTURE-PROOFED? Get the Low-Down Before It's Too Late!

(You have nothing to lose but your oeuvre...)

Presented by Sandra Schulberg

International Documentary Association, Los Angeles, Sept 12, 2025



#SaveIndieFilm!

IndieCollect considers indie cinema the lifeblood of an open society and indie films as acts of "reel resistance."

But like 80% of silent films, we fear the vast majority of indie films will disappear in the future unless we each take action now.

Your film can — and most likely will — permanently disappear!





To **#SaveIndieFilm**, we:

- Rescue
- Restore
- Reactivate





RESCUE Case Study – DuArt Lab

IndieCollect team moved thousands of negatives from DuArt Lab to:

- Academy Film Archive
- Sundance Collection at UCLA Archive
- Library of Congress
- George Eastman Museum
- and other archives.





RESCUE Cast Study – WRS Lab

Board Member Peter Conheim alerted us to approximately 70,000 elements stored for 20 years in a leaky plumbing garage after the WRS Lab in Pittsburgh shut down in 2001.

This is where Peter found the negative for the never-released feature-length version of *Nationtime* by William Greaves that we restored.

We subsequently arranged for this "accidental collection" to be acquired temporarily by Vinegar Syndrome and moved to safe storage.





RESCUE Case Study – Deluxe Lab

IndieCollect's Ed Carter was able to reunite Lily Tomlin with her long-lost negative for *The Search for Signs of Intelligent Life in the Universe*.

He found it among the Deluxe Lab elements and brought it to the Academy Film Archive where he was a curator.

IndieCollect subsequently restored it with funding from the Golden Globe Foundation, Lily Tomlin & Jane Wagner.





RESTORATION Case Study: *A Question of Color* (1993, 57 min, 16mm OCN)

Kathe Sandler's *A Question of Color* confronts colorism in the Black community, a long-taboo subject. It was inspired in part by the different skin tones in Sandler's own family.

The Black Film Archive at Indiana U. loaned us the 16mm Original Camera Negative (OCN) which we scanned in-house on our 5K Kinetta Archival Scanner in the fall of 2022.





A Question of Color

Partway through the editorial process, we realized there were shots missing from the negative.

BFA archivist Amber Bertin went back into the vault, opened myriad cans and miraculously found the missing shots which we scanned in December 2022.



Reference Copies for Editorial Re-Conform

A Question of Color

For every IndieCollect restoration, we seek at least two reference copies:

- To assure frame-accurate match to the original film.
- To get a sense of the original color palette and any subsequent distortions.

In this case, we used two reference copies:

- A Vimeo copy of the PBS broadcast provided by Kathe's educational distributor, California Newsreel.
- In January 2023, we also scanned a 16mm Answer Print to be sure we had a frameaccurate reference.



Picture & Audio Restoration

A Question of Color

Senior colorist Eva Yuma restored this film in 2023 on Dell Precision Workstations at IndieCollect using Resolve 18 software.

The audio source was captured from the PBS broadcast tape because Mixed Mag Track was not available.

Nick Bergh / Endpoint Audio Labs in Burbank does nearly all our audio capture & restoration.





Filmmaker Review / A Question of Color

In the case of *A Question of Color*, we were fortunate that Kathe Sandler lives in New York and was able to give notes on various versions of the restoration before it was locked.

She is pictured at left with IndieCollect's Isiah Babilonia, Eva Yuma, and Matt Hoffman.

When a filmmaker is unable to come to our NYC restoration suite, we provide the filmmaker with a color-calibrated iPad Pro to review the work in progress and give us notes using the Frame.io app.



Restoration Credits

IndieCollect creates a bumper at the head of each restoration that tells audiences they are watching a digital restoration and whether the filmmaker was involved in supervising it.

- We also recreate the original head and tail credits.
- We always append restoration end credits that tell you what original picture & sound elements were used for restoration, who worked on it, and what hardware & software we employed.
- These credits permit scholars and archivists to understand precisely what was done.



An INDIECOLLECT

Restoration

The 4K digital restoration of

A Question Of Color

was created in collaboration with director

Kathe Sandler.

Copyright Notice & Digital Preservation Master for Library of Congress

We treat each 4K digital restoration as a new "object" and affix an updated copyright notice.

If the original copyright was held by a production company or financing entity that no longer exists, we put the copyright in the name of the filmmaker.

We create a Digital Preservation Master according to LOC specs (MJPG2000 in an MXF wrapper) and place at Library of Congress in order to:

- Perfect the filmmaker's copyright
- Provide backup digital storage
- Make the restored film available to future generations of scholars, gratis.



A Question Of Color

[The IndieCollect Restoration]

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Cost Estimates & Funding

We submitted *A Question of Color* cost estimate of \$13,934.60 to Golden Globe Foundation in March 2020 and partial funding was received later that year.

Creating a loan agreement with IU took time, so work did not begin until 2022 and the restoration was not completed until 2023.

The final cost was approximately \$17,275, not counting additional revisions to the original end credits effected by Cameron Haffner in fall of 2024.



What's in an IndieCollect Cost Estimate?

An **IndieCollect Cost Estimate** is not a bid or a quote. It's an educated guess.

- Certain costs inspection and inventory are based on number of reels.
- Other costs -- ultrasonic cleaning & scanning -- are based on footage counts.
- The hardest part is estimating how many hours will be required for color grading & restoration repairs.
- Now we also budget for several theatrical test screenings.



Sample 1 IndieCollect Cost Estimate

The Amusement Park by George Romero (1973, 60 min, 16mm Prints, both scanned in 5K)

So much depends on:

- Condition of the original celluloid & scans.
- How engaged the filmmaker becomes in color-grading, as well as hair / scratch / dirt removal.
- In this case, we had perfect partner in George's widow, Suzanne, who trusted us to salvage his film from 2 horribly degraded prints.
- Let's take a quick look at the cost estimate and before/after demo.



Sample 2 IndieCollect Cost Estimate

The Search for Signs of Intelligent Life in the Universe (1991, 117 min, 35mm OCN + 35mm Print, both scanned in 6.5K)

- Cost estimate \$45,180. But you never know what you're up against!
- After we completed the restoration based on the 108min OCN and showed it to Lily Tomlin & Jane Wagner, they told us 9 vital minutes were missing – 3 weeks before the World Premiere!
- Restoration services chief Cameron Haffner & colorist Ciara Kain saved the day, aided by Nick Bergh who patched the sound.
- Let's take a quick look at the cost estimate.



Saved Does Not Mean Seen!

IndieCollect Launches RescueFest!

We are fortunate that prestige venues have premiered our restorations, including Museum of Modern Art, New York Film Festival, BAM, Film Forum & Academy Museum. This is essential to attract press coverage and distributor interest.

But we restore too many films for these venues to program, so last year we launched our own showcase: RescueFest!





RESCUE FEST

Showtimes: laemmle.com/theater/monica-film-center

12/6—The Search for Signs of Intelligent Life in the Universe Q&A with Jane Fonda & Lily Tomlin Tickets only at IndieCollect.org

12/7—Nationtime by William Greaves **Q&A** with David Greaves

12/7—F.T.A., produced by and starring Jane Fonda Q&A with Jane Fonda

12/7—Tokyo Pop by Fran Kuzui Intro by archivist Ed Carter

12/7—Thousand Pieces of Gold Q&A with Nancy Kelly & Rosalind Chao

12/8—Northern Lights Q&A with Rob Nilsson, Susan Lynch & Joe Spano

12/8—The Story of a Three Day Pass
By Melvin Van Peebles / Intro by Mario Van Peebles

12/8—Thank You and Goodnight Q&A with Jan Oxenberg & Winnie Holzman (Wicked)

12/9—The Atomic Cafe Q&A with Peter Conheim & Jayne Loader

12/9—Shadow Magic Q&A with Ann Hu & DP Nancy Schreiber

Access Now and For Future Generations

We support for Art House Cinemas!

Some distributors & streaming platforms do prize indie films — Criterion, Kino Lorber, Roadside Attractions, Film Movement, Oscilloscope, Magnolia, Kanopy, MUBI, TUBI — but they take only certain titles.

Films that do make it onto steaming platforms cycle off in a relatively short time.

IndieCollect and other stakeholders must grapple with how to enable the films we restore to be permanently watchable and how to make sure more indie films are documented & saved.



IndieCollect's Filmmaker Bill of Rights

At indiecollect.org, please watch brief video about our <u>Filmmaker Bill of Rights.</u>

- The right to have our master picture and sound elements stored in non-profit archives at no cost to us, the filmmakers.
- The right to be notified when a film laboratory, sound house, distribution company or film storage facility ceases operations, and the right to see the inventory of holdings before the films are disposed of or sold to a private collector.



IndieCollect's Filmmaker Bill of Rights

- The right to have our work remain searchable and accessible to the public in high-quality digital formats through digital conversion or restoration.
- The U.S. equivalent of the "Droit Moral" (moral right) so we can claim and protect our films even if we did not originally own the copyright or distribution rights.
- The right to retain a clone of the digital master and to show it even if the film has been licensed or sold to a streamer, hedge fund, or distributor that opts not to conduct in-person screenings.



Let Us Help You....

As part of this workshop, we are sharing:

- SaveIndieFilm Checklist
- SaveIndieFilm Resource List

Follow-Up Survey

- As a follow-up to this workshop, we are going to poll you to ask what film/video/digital and sound elements you hold and where.
- If you respond please do! —you will help us help you.



Contact IndieCollect

Please share your ideas and initiatives with us, and/or request our assistance.

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