Uncovering CUNY's Audiovisual Heritage
Final Report for *Cinema Then, Cinema Now*

Last updated: December 16th, 2021

This paper serves as a final report on the preservation and online accessibility of *Cinema Then, Cinema Now* (CTCN), part of Uncovering CUNY's Audiovisual Heritage Project (UCAVH). The goal of the report is to document issues and specifications unique to this collection. More general documentation on the project is available via the UCAV dashboard on Github.

1 Selection and Retrieval:

CTCN episodes are cataloged as assets in the CUNY-TV Archive Filemaker database. Episodes were identified by their asset id, a total of 178 line items. All episodes were recorded on U-Matic tape between 1985-1994. Boxes were retrieved from Iron Mountain and returned when digitization was complete.

2 Digitization and Conservation:

Assets were digitized between October 2020 and May 2021 at CUNY-TV. Problematic tapes were put aside and digitized throughout the remainder of the year as capacity allowed.

Assets Digitized (UCAVH)	128
Assets Digitized (pre-UCAV)	27
Assets Not Digitized (Duplicates, Failure)	23
Total Assets:	178

Assets not digitized were most often duplicate records in the Filemaker database, but others are described in detail in the section on "Strange Situations." These assets may be retrieved from off-site storage and re-digitized at a later date.

3 Captioning and Access:

Captioning took on three forms: manual correction, auto-correction via YouTube, and auto-correction via Descript, a post-production application with automated transcription services.

CUNY Captioning Guidelines follow those set by the Described and Captioned Media Program, which can only be realized through human skill. Only 22 episodes were captioned in this way, all by UCAVH interns; these were uploaded to the cunytv75 YouTube Channel.

The remainder of digitized episodes, 158 to-date, were auto-captioned and uploaded to Internet Archive. These episodes may be caption-corrected as part of future projects and mirrored to the YouTube channel for wider discovery. All eligible assets were uploaded to Internet Archive with a "captiontype" of either 'auto' or 'corrected' for easy identification.

Assets were auto-captioned by uploading to a private YouTube channel as 'unlisted.' This triggered Youtube's auto-caption service. The captions were then downloaded via the youtube-dl command-line tool. YouTube captions can be identified by their "scroll up" presentation. Some items were auto-captioned by Descript but due to paywall limitations, we could not utilize the software on all assets.

4 Metadata:

Descriptive metadata is available for all episodes on CUNY-TV's website, and for digitized episodes on Internet Archive. Technical metadata on the physical formats of the tape is available in the CUNY-TV Archive Filemaker database. Further detail about the transfer environment, conservation treatment, quality control, etc is available on the UCAVH dashboard in the CTCN project folder. During the project, the movement of the assets were documented in a temporary Airtable database and exported as .csv files.

Assets that received caption correction have the most robust description. Uncorrected assets follow a simple template for description where the date of recording, the title, the director of the film, and the guests' names are replaced for each episode.

> On this episode of Cinema Then, Cinema Now, Professor Jerry Carlson (College of Staten Island) sits down with GUEST (ORG) and GUEST (ORG) to discuss the DIRECTOR film, TITLE (COUNTRY, YEAR). Recorded on DATE at the Borough of Manhattan Community College Media Center.

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5 Strange Situations:

- CTCN0051, CTCN0091, CTCN0139 - these three episodes were ingested to LTO E/F00146 incorrectly; they contain dropped frames. The digital assets were removed from LTO tapes E/F00156. These items still need to be recalled, transferred and ingested.

- UMA00133 (Los Olivados) - The AssetID, CTCN0129, was assigned to two episodes in Filemaker, Los Olvidados and Simon of the Desert. Simon of the Desert was already ingested as CTCN0129. Los Olvidados () was skipped over and returned to storage because it was assumed it was already digitized. This item still needs to be recalled, transferred and ingested.

- UMA00031 (Fragment of an Empire) - This tape was digitized but the digital objects were lost during a hard drive erasure. This episode did not have an asset identifier in Filemaker. This item still needs to be recalled, transferred and ingested.

- A number of episodes can be visually observed to be oversaturated though they fall within SMPTE standards for broadcast range. This is sometimes due to the original production and mastering, especially on tapes recorded in the 1990s, but also due to the then-unobserved presence of the FOR.A time-based corrector in the digitization process (used in tandem with the DPS-475). While the FOR.A increases signal stability it also increases saturation levels that need to be compensated for when in use. If re-airing these works, color grading is recommended.