



SAA Jump In Too/Two Program Report  
Team Members: Warren Sherk, Sharon Mizota, Lauren Sin

The changing digital landscape of filmmaking has propelled staff at the Margaret Herrick Library to start thinking about our digital initiatives and the future of archiving and providing access to special collections materials. The catalyst for this initiative was receiving two hard drives from the widow of film production designer J. Michael Riva in February 2014. Upon receiving these media and anticipating more to come, a cross-departmental team was formed to help shape a robust digital preservation strategy. We began creating requirements for our fledgling forensic work station, researching preservation systems, and creating a table of anticipated file formats for future acquisitions.

The timing of the SAA Jump In Too/Two program was serendipitous. The program provided an excellent gateway to begin analyzing the scope of our current holdings. Two departments in the Margaret Herrick Library participated in the SAA Jump In Too/Two program: Special Collections and Graphic Arts. Lauren Sin, Digital and Audio Archivist inventoried the majority of the materials, which was housed in Special Collections. Sharon Mizota, Production Art Librarian inventoried the materials housed in Graphic Arts. Warren Sherk, Manager of Special Collections provided guidance and oversight throughout the process.

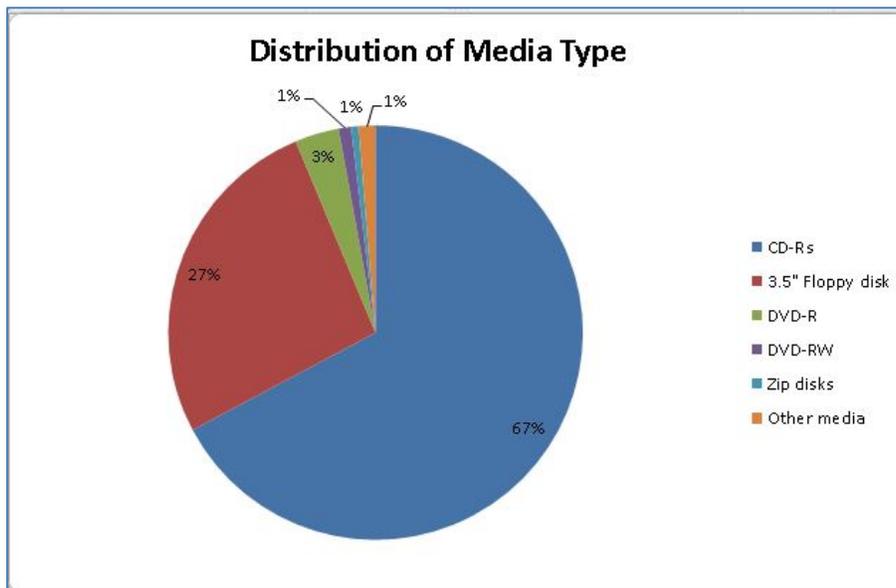
To begin the project, we ran several queries in our Inmagic databases, which hold our manuscript and graphic arts finding aids at the box, folder, and item level. Our queries were based on keywords such as CD, CD-ROM, digital, DVD, disk, disc, etc. We also asked our staff processors to flag records they knew to contain digital media. Our search yielded around 70 results, and the task force set out to locate, identify, and record the relevant information. Some of our holdings are stored in our Beverly Hills, California location, while other collections are held in library vaults in Hollywood.

The goal for our inventory was to capture the metadata with a holistic approach. While we started off capturing metadata on an item-level basis, this proved to be unfeasible due to time constraints and the amount of media we were discovering. Although we initially found 70 records for born-digital media, the number of items represented in each record varied widely from a single item to more than a hundred. Our report includes the following fields: department, collection name, quantity, media type, label information, markings on the items, and any other notes we deemed relevant. Using our cell phones, we photographed the media, to enhance our layer of documentation and to include in a media identification glossary for future use.



## Findings

We surveyed more than 1,200 media items over a period of three months. A large portion of our current holdings are CD-Rs (67%), followed by 3.5-inch floppy disks (27%). Other media included Syquest removable cartridges, hard drives, USB thumb drives, and one 5 ¼-inch floppy disk.



During our inventory, we made several observations:

- In the case of the Saul Bass papers, there was meticulous documentation on the media. Often the applications used to create the file, software versions, and file extensions were clearly labeled on the 3.5-inch floppy disks; chart below.

Department (GA, Special Collections)	Collection name & number	Quantity	Media type (CD, DVD, 5 1/4-inch floppy disk, etc.)	Label info (brand name, storage size, etc.)	Formatting	Other markings	Notes
Special Collections	Saul Bass papers 421	1	3.5-inch floppy disk	BASF 2DD Double Density	Mac	[On label:] Bass Yager & Associates; Los Angeles, CA; Casino 12F Scope (9.5.95); Macintosh FreeHand 5.0.2 file	No apparent printout in folder.
Special Collections	Saul Bass papers 421	4	3.5-inch floppy disk	Maxell MF2HD	Mac	[On label:] Bass Yager & Associates; Los Angeles, CA; Vertigo: Individual frames+strips	Saved as a self-extracting archive split across four disks. Instructions on how to retrieve the files on Disk 2. An .sea file will be created when reassembled.
Special Collections	Saul Bass papers 421	1	Removable cartridge	SyQuest	Mac	[On label:] BassYager & Associates; Saul Bass Title Frames; 7 YEAR ITCH; BIG COUNTRY; NORTH BY NORTHWEST; PSYCHO	Applications: Adobe Illustrator 5.5, Adobe Photoshop 3.0; System 7.1.2; Fonts: none; All fonts & EPS files are included on disk.



- A majority of the remaining media fell into the category of “limited” documentation, where occasional film titles, file extensions, dates, and/or any other content was labeled on the physical item. In a preliminary assessment, we discussed how one 3.5-inch floppy disk was labeled “blank.” We concluded that we could not make any assumptions about the media or its documentation (or lack thereof).
- While our processing guidelines for manuscript materials are documented, we will need to create an additional glossary for our digital media items. As we inventoried the SyQuest disks, we noted that a previous archival processor had mistakenly identified them as CD-ROMs. For the purposes of our inventory and to standardize our description of format types, we used the Getty’s Art and Architecture Thesaurus for our controlled vocabulary.
- Conservation-wise, our media is in relatively good condition. The media is currently stored in climate controlled vaults, with various temperature controls, but we did not come across any media that appeared warped or damaged to the naked eye. As a result of this initiative we will need to determine the feasibility of storing the source media separately from the manuscript component.

## Next Steps

As we take a step back from this inventory, we will prioritize collections and individual items as candidates for previewing on the forensic work station and possible ingest into a digital repository. We are currently working with the University of Southern California to establish an ingest workflow into their digital repository.

If each piece of media was filled to its maximum capacity, we would need a storage capacity of around 10 TB. However, assuming items are on average 30% full, we will need around 3 TB of storage. This knowledge is also helping us to plan for the storage of future acquisitions.

Much of our content is documents and images, but we cannot be sure of the nature and value of our holdings until we preview the contents and capture important metadata. This data and other information will enable us not only to better understand our current holdings but to plan for future acquisitions and create new processing and access workflows.

To date, the Special Collections and Graphic Arts departments have acquired born-digital materials passively, and only as a part of larger paper collections. As a result of this inventory, we realize that a robust pre-acquisition plan will be more important than ever for our digital preservation strategy. The filmmaking industry is becoming ever more reliant on



digital technologies and our archival processes will have to adapt. Because of the materials we currently have and the sheer volume we expect to receive, we plan to invest heavily in developing reliable parameters and guidelines for the appraisal process and to work closely with donors to select materials for long-term preservation.