



Vinegar Syndrome: Coming out of the Closet

What is it?

Acetate film stock breaking down becomes acetic acid (aka vinegar)

What happens?

- Smell of vinegar
- Film becomes brittle and shrinks
- Eventually becoming unable to be projected



What can you do?

Once it has started, you can't stop it, but you can slow it down...

Separate it from your main collection.

(Some say it can infect other films, but even if it can't, you can't tell what is affected if your whole vault smells.)

Put it in a colder and drier environment to slow down the rate of degradation.

**Take the time to
evaluate your
collection!!!!**

Supplies needed:

- Gloves
- A-D strips (measures the level of degradation)
- Particle mask
- Well ventilated area to work



What we did:

With gloves and masks, and a list of the items, we checked each film and labeled them carefully.

Put in A-D strips, added molecular sieves (to decrease moisture) and checked that everything was correctly labeled in the catalog.

Determined the importance to the collection..is it our copyright? is it one of a kind? How much longer will it last?

Sent out the most valuable to be professionally transferred.

Resources

AIC Wiki

http://www.conservancy-wiki.com/wiki/Vinegar_syndrome

Image Permanence Institute

<https://www.imagepermanencyinstitute.org/imaging/a-d-strips>