

Podtalk: Co-Director Tommy Haines of ‘Saving Brinton,’ Opening in Chicago on July 20, 2018

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on July 19, 2018 - 9:10pm

- [Andrew Sherburne](#) [2]
- [Brinton](#) [3]
- [Cinephile](#) [4]
- [FilmScene](#) [5]
- [Frank](#) [6]
- [Gene Siskel Film Center](#) [7]
- [George Melies](#) [8]
- [HollywoodChicago.com Content](#) [9]
- [Indiana](#) [10]
- [Interview](#) [11]
- [Iowa](#) [12]
- [Iowa City](#) [13]
- [John Richard](#) [14]
- [Northland Films](#) [15]
- [Patrick McDonald](#) [16]
- [Pond Hockey](#) [17]
- [Saving Brinton](#) [18]
- [Thomas Edison](#) [19]
- [Tommy Haines](#) [20]

CHICAGO – In the early years of film and filmmaking, from approximately 1890 through 1930, an astounding 75% of films produced are considered “lost,” with no surviving reels, never to be seen again. Recently, an Iowa man named Michael Zahs finally convinced the University of Iowa to research and archive the Frank Brinton Collection, a cache of early films that barnstormer Brinton would show all over Iowa in the 1890s, on through the early decades of the 20th Century. What was found in that Collection is the subject of “Saving Brinton,” co-directed by Tommy Haines and Andrew Sherburne.

The story of “Saving Brinton” is a fascinating combination of Iowa niceness, a saver named Michael Zahs, and the right type of storage that preserved the films. Zahs is a historian who would often lecture about Frank (and wife Indiana) Brinton, after taking on their collection from the estate in the 1980s, but initially could find no interest in what he knew was a treasure trove of early cinema.



Michael Zahs of ‘Saving Brinton,’ directed by Tommy Haines and Andrew Sherburne

Photo credit: Northland Films & BrintonFilms.com

When the University of Iowa finally cataloged the Brinton Collection, they found the films of George Melies, a French film pioneer who was one of the earliest practitioners of film special effects... including a rare film of his that was thought to be lost forever. It was an astounding find,

equivalent to King Tut’s tomb, and the film follows Michael Zahr as his efforts to remember Frank Brinton and his legacy come to fruition. The film will play for one week at the Gene Siskel Film Center (link below) in Chicago, and on July 21st filmmakers Tommy Haines and Andrew Sherburne will appear on behalf of “Saving Brinton,” along with Michael Zahr himself.

In the following Podtalk with Patrick McDonald of HollywoodChicago.com, co-director Tommy Haines talks about Michael Zahr, what is most “Iowa” about his film, and what he would ask Frank Brinton if he were alive today.

“Saving Brinton” runs from Friday, July 20th through Thursday, July 26th, 2018, at the Gene Siskel Film Center, 164 North State Street, Chicago. Featuring Michael Zahr. Cinematography by John Richard. Directed by Tommy Haines and Andrew Sherburne. For more information about the film and a special appearance by directors Haines and Sherburne, plus film subject Michael Zahr on July 21st, [click here](#). [21]



[22]

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- [3] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/brinton>
- [4] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/cinephile>
- [5] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/filmscene>
- [6] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/frank>
- [7] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/gene-siskel-film-center>
- [8] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/george-melies>
- [9] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/hollywoodchicagodotcom-content>
- [10] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/indiana>
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- [14] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/john-richard>
- [15] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/northland-films>
- [16] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/patrick-mcdonald>
- [17] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/pond-hockey>
- [18] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/saving-brinton>
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