

45th FIAF CONGRESS

LISBOA - APRIL 89

NEWSLETTER 3

On the Symposia

Dear Colleague,

- 1 - We are now sending you, already under the sign of King Kong - who we chose, as one of the cinematographic symbols, to pose on the old "Elevador de Santa Justa", built by Eiffel and one of the ex-libris of Lisbon - some more detailed information about the symposia which will take place during this year's FIAF Congress.

Another newsletter with a final schedule (including the social programme, as well as some useful information on your arrival in Lisbon) will be sent to you in March.

- 2 - As already confirmed, the Lisbon Congress will feature two symposia open to the public:

20/04: Cataloguing and Filmographic Research:  
Tracing the Past

organized by André Gaudreault  
in collaboration with Harriet Harrison

21/04

22/04: Rediscovering the Role of the Film  
Archives: to Preserve And to Show

organized by Cinemateca Portuguesa

We think that both could be of vital importance, not only for the improvement of archivists, but also for the near future of the Federation itself. Therefore, before announcing the programmes, we would like to suggest some thoughts about the function and the organization of such meetings.

- 3 - In fact we have been noticing that, in spite of the intrinsic quality of most of the last symposia, not all of them had lively and involved participants. We think it is important to think about the reasons for this and what can be done to avoid it.

In a nutshell, we think that, apart from giving attention to the specific themes of a given symposia and its individual papers, we have to create the conditions for the involvement of all participants of the congress - before, during and after the happening - motivating them (as well as the participants who were not present at the congress) and giving an incentive to everybody to participate and to relate their own experience and individual activities to the themes that are being discussed.

In order to achieve this, apart from further ideas, there are, in our opinion, at least three practical measures which should be taken. If possible, they should be put in practice already at the Lisbon symposia. They are:

- (a) previous availability of detailed information on the specific themes to be discussed (an adequate amount of time in advance), launching various polemic clues on the themes.
- (b) a practical organization of the sessions, which guarantees both time and conditions for a wide participation, not overloading them with papers, but leaving enough time for discussion; (following this idea the papers should not only present a thesis, but also raise questions and open the perspectives of a debate);
- (c) a concrete idea of measures to take in the future should be one of the outcomings of the symposia (new structures and working groups to be created, research programme to be continued by one or several archives).

4 - The two symposia which are going to take place in April have been planned by the organizing bodies over the last year.

As far as the 1st symposium is concerned ("Cataloguing and Filmographic Research: Tracing the Past") preparation work has involved the GRAF (Groupe de Recherche et d'analyse Filmographiques), namely André Gaudreault, and members of FIAF's Cataloguing Commission, namely our colleague Harriet Harrison.

As far as the other symposium is concerned ("Rediscovering the Role of the Film Archives: to Preserve and to Show") a team was created in Lisbon which consists of João Bénard da Costa, José Manuel Costa and Manuel S. Fonseca. This team has arranged meetings with colleagues from other archives.

We would like to draw once more your attention to an article on the 2nd Symposium ("Rediscovering the Role of the Film Archives: to Preserve and to Show"), which has been published in FIAF's bulletin nr 37, with versions both in French and English and which is a first reflection on the issue.

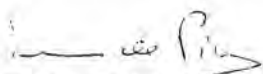
At this moment the programmes on both meetings have been established and you will find enclosed those programmes together with texts and annotations on the specific themes of each session.

According to what was said earlier on, these documents are mainly our way of asking our colleagues to think about these issues, discussing them before the symposium (individually or in groups) and preparing active ways of intervening during the meetings.

We repeat: we would not like the preparation of these meetings to be exclusively done by the organizing bodies. We believe both symposia have a large potential and will interest a wide audience within the archive's world and its users (the second one generalizing, among other things, the questions left open during the first symposium, creating the chance to think about the main issues of our work).

Looking forward to seeing you in April,

Faithfully Yours



Luis de Pina

Director

Cinemateca Portuguesa, February 16th, 1989