

"CINE-ARTE" DEPARTMENT OF THE S.O.D.R.E.

Montevideo (URUGUAY)

When the S.O.D.R.E. (Servicio Oficial de Difusión Radio Eléctrica) inaugurated on May 19th 1944, the first cycle sponsored by the "Cine-Arte" Department of this institute, it can be said with certainty that the Uruguayan public had a legitimate notion of the historical and artistic trajectory of the world's moving picture industry.

Popular support and success came very soon and the essential goal of creating "Cine-Arte" was accomplished in full: to give the audience the cultural mission, entertainment education and recasting of arts which cinema could raise high. The Department had created a public conscience regarding the cinematographic fact. Its shows offered and are still offering the general outlook of the movement in the cinematographic creation and based on this creation is that many cultural institutions tried to impose subsequently the specialized focus characteristic to cinema-clubs, complementary to the Cinema-Art Department task. This department has had among its most important tasks to document and study the beginning, progress and evolution of cinema in all manifestations. With this aim started and still continues the search and filing of films of real historical and artistic value, having formed in this respect a valuable film library highly appreciated internationally. With this material and the one interchanged with other institutions affiliated to the F.I.A.F., SODRE's "Cine-Arte" has been offering in the lobby of the Estudio Auditorio its cycles of History of Cinema, since its foundation, in 1944. These cycles have included retrospective reviews of American, German, English, Swedish, Russian, French cinema and primitives of different origin. But its task did not finish with these functions. It also has organized exhibitions such as the French Cinema (November and December 1951) and the Northamerican Cinema in October 1953, in which the principal specialized institutions of the participating countries cooperated. Apart from offering graphic material until then almost unpublished (including documents of great historical value) and conferences in charge of learned specialists on the subject, these exhibitions discovered publically and thanks to special permits, films of fundamental importance withdrawn from commercial circulation, which punctualized the artistic cinematographic perspective persecuted with these demonstrations.

The cycle dedicated to the personality and work of Marcel Carné had in 1952 the same success also by publication of leaflets and maps which conveniently showed the main moments of that planned trajectory. Equal success had the International journeys of scientific cinema presented by the well known Jean Painlivé, in March 1954. On that same year apart from the In-

ternational Festival of art and ethnography held in November with the cooperation of UNESCO, during their 8th Conference in Montevideo, the organization of the First International Documental and Experimental Film Festival of the SODRE took also place during the month of May. 18 countries took part and during the exhibitions, among 112 films, important titles practically inadequate for commercial purposes were known, such as the ones by Arne Sucksdorff, of Czech puppets, of the English school and samples of cinematographies unknown in these latitudes.

The Second International Festival of this sort, held in 1956, joined 34 countries and several international institutions such as the UNESCO & CIME. With a total of 227 films besides most great producers of the world, participated industries less known such as the ones of Australia, Bolivia, Greece, Israel, New Zealand, Netherlands, Turkey, Venezuela and Yugoslavia.

The shows (as in previous festivals) were held daily, excepting Mondays Mondays and lasted, without interruption, during the whole month of May until June 17th, with the assistance of distinguished foreign guests such as Joop Hinsken, old assistant to Joris Ivens and today one of the principal documentarists of the German cinema, such as the great Dutch performer Bert Haanstra, whose films The Rival World and En de see was niet meer deserved first awards in the categories of cultural film and artistic documentary respectively.

During the months of May and June 1958, the III International Documental and Experimental Films Festival took place, in which 40 countries participated, and 238 films were show.

The English producer John Grierson and the Swedish Director Arne Sucksdorff werw guests of honour, Jorge Ruiz (Bolivia), Nelson Pereira do Santos (Brasil), Patricio Kaulen (Chile) Manuel Chambi (Perú) also assisted, and a numerous representation of various cultural institutiones, and directors from the Argentine Republic.-

At the same time with the III Festival, the First Latin American Congress of Independan Cinema took place, to which assisted Argentina, Brasil, Bolivia, Chilean, Peru and Uruguayan delegates. This Congress had as their main point to resolved diverse problems related to the production and distribution of films which due to their independant character, afront in our time the greatest difficulties.

Parallel to these Festivals, SODRE organized National Film Festival with important awards to the best films which automatically went to represent Uruguay at International Festival which are held ever two years. Besides and according to the publication policy of the Institute, the prized films in both competitions were shown later in all provinces of the Republic in cooperation with the principal cultural and educational centers, through a turn of this material which

lasted until November of that year.

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The "Cine-Arte" Department has also classified the film library material according to epochs, tendencies or themes offering them in programs which boosted the organization of:

- 1) Cycles promoted yearly at the lobby of the Estudio Auditorio.
- 2) Programs for elementary schools of the capital and the interior
- 3) Programs for lyceums of the capital and interior
- 4) Cycles for the Faculties of specialized studies, such as the Faculty of Law, Medicine, Engineering, Architecture, Agriculture and Veterinary.
- 5) Programs for different teaching centers and cultural institutions of the capital and interior of the Republic.

The continual work on this respect and the success obtained has left highly satisfactory results in the country and the cycles of the last 9 years on this respect are more than suggestives.

For 1950, on a total of 267 performances held, attending 44 institutions, the frequency of public registered was of 119.746 spectators.

For 1951, with the French Cinema Exhibition and 251 performances, for 47 institutions, the number of persons registered were 258.611.

In 1952, on 1.211 performances, made for 62 institutions the figures reached the figure of 236.103 spectators.

In 1953, with the Northamerican Film Exhibition and 56 institutions attending with the basis of 632 performances, the attending public reached 303.034.

In 1954, with the First International Documental and Experimental Film Festival and 125 institutions attending and on a total of 1.513 performances, there was a total of 411.220 spectators.

In 1955, on a total of 1.911 performances to comply with the request of 114 institutions, there were 306.540 persons registered.

In 1956, with the Second International Documental and Experimental Film Festival, and the attendance of 326 institutions of all the country, the figures reached the record of 2.171 functions to which 487.358 spectators attended.

In 1957, 215.691 spectators visited 641 film shows in 108 institutions in the Capital, the interior and the exterior of the country.

According to the outlined rules of the Depto. Cine Arte, contacts werestablished with similar entities outside the country, and special cycles were organized in San Pablo and Por-

to Alegre (Brazil) in 1950 and in Lima (Perú) in 1953. During the month of July, 1957, Cine Arte sent samples of its Film File to the Argentine Republic, in order to offer important and unknown titles of French and Swedish films out of commercial distribution, together with the best amateur pictures produced in Uruguay during the latest years. There were 26 shows in Buenos Aires, La Plata and Santa Fe, with 20.360 spectators in a whole.

Also in 1957, the material belonging to Cine Arte from S.O.D.R.E. was offered in the Chilean cities of Concepción, Santiago, Valparaíso, Viña del Mar, Coronel and Lota en 102 shows with 92.732 spectators.

The shows of the III. Festival held in 1958, als well as those given by the III. Festival of National Cinema and the usual ones organized by Cine Arte for the Capital and the interior of the country, made 658 in a whole and were visited by 165.530 persons.

Cine Arte from S.O.D.R.E. is at present preparing- paralell to the IV. International Festival of Documental and Experimental Films from the S.O.D.R.E., retrospective films from France, Germany, Czechoslovakia, England and U.R.S.S.

They are also going to start a permanent cycle: "Cinema of To-Day", in order to give the spectators a clear view of the situation of the film industry in the world. Faithful to its goal of developing the existence of Film Files in the South American countries which still lack of them, Cine Arte from S.O.D.R.E. -who made it possible for the University of Chile to ground their own Film File, is presently studying the possibility of new cycles of retrospective films in Chile, Perú, Ecuador, Brasil, Venezuela and Colombia. They shall be organized according to the National Film Files.

Along 1959, Cine Arte from S.O.D.R.E. continued with its regular cycles, organizing an Exposition with projection cycles about the work of Jiri Trnka, creator of the Czechoslovakian marionette pictures. Said Exposition was visited by more than 100.000 persons, including children, present during the shows.

Regarding its internal work, Cine Arte organized its Photo File and is presently working out a plan of reissuance of pictures and edition of new copies of 16 mm. for their circulation in the Film Clubs.

In order to complete its information work developed along the First Congress of Latin American Independent Cinema, Cine Arte is presently preparing a detailed documentation regarding the history of the cinema in this part of the Continent.