

NEDERLANDS FILMUSEUM

Stedelijk Museum
Paulus Potterstraat 13

Amsterdam.

Concise report on the activities of the Nederlands Filmmuseum 1955-56

The year 1956 has finally been a year for the Nederlands Filmmuseum in which, by a larger grant from the Government, it was enabled to commence systematically the conservation of films, a problem which urgently required a solution. It is very satisfactory to know that this urgent problem has been recognised by the Government, and that from this year on this work will be continued regularly.

In 1955 unfortunately the NFM has not been able to find sufficient means to finance the conservation of films, as there were various other activities which were of importance for the introduction of the NFM in circles of Government, education and the film trade.

The courses in film appreciation, which were started in the previous season, have continued on a larger scale. 25 Students, mainly teachers and youth club leaders, attended the large course of 25 lectures and a special course of 12 lectures was given for 105 grade school teachers. The performances of the NFM in the Stedelijk Museum were attended by 8937 visitors this year as compared to 7689 in the previous season.

In the performances were included a series of lectures on film production with as guest speakers Mr. Edgar Anstey, Prof. Carlo Battisti, Mr. Robin Estridge, Mr. Alexander Mackendrick and Mr. Denis Segaller. Other guest speakers during this season were Mr. Francis Bolen, Mr. Ernest Lindgren and Mr. Jean Rouch.

In cooperation with Mr. Jean Rouch the NFM has taken the initiative in founding a Committee for the ethnographic film in Holland. This Committee has already begun its activities by analysing and cataloguing a number of films.

At present an investigation is being conducted as to the possibilities for acquiring larger financial means for the activities of the NFM, especially with regard to the storage of films in better vaults and a research department for the conservation of films. In this respect the NFM gratefully acknowledges the assistance of the B.P.M., the Dutch section of the Shell Petroleum Company.

August 1956.

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PAYS BAS

CENTRE INTERNATIONAL DE DIFFUSION ET
DE L'INFORMATION DU FILM SUR L'ART

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Concise report on the activities of the Centre Film sur l'Art 1955-56

Contrary to the original plans for the year 1955, the "Comité Directeur" of the Fédération Internationale du Film sur l'Art, as well as the UNESCO have decided on a different line of action with regard to the Centre Film sur l'Art at Amsterdam. The Centre, it is argued, has now established itself as an archive of films and as a service of information and documentation. Only a small amount of money shall therefore be allotted to it in the near future for the purchase of prints of films on art. More urgent is considered the necessity of enabling the international organisation in Paris to increase its activities. Only when these activities shall have developed sufficiently, the Centre in Holland shall be supplied again with the means to purchase prints of films on art on a larger scale.

Also it is the intention that active committees for the film on art shall be founded in various countries. A list of these countries is attached to this report. It is here that the Dutch section is largely counted upon to help in enlarging the archive of films on art.

As a consequence of the above decisions, the activities of the Centre Film sur l'Art have not developed to the extent originally expected. Although the activities in Paris have increased, the Centre could not realise its plans before instructions and directions from the F.I.F.A. and the UNESCO in Paris had been received. In view of these circumstances no international congress for the films on art has been organised. The work for the information and documentation service, however, has proceeded satisfactorily and a number of prints of films on art have been purchased.

Provisional National Committees

Austria	..... J. GREGOR
Belgium	..... Henri STORCK
Brazil	..... P.E.SALES GOMEZ, Mario PEDROSA
Danmark	..... Ove BRUSENDORFF, Sigurd SCHULTZ
England	..... Denis FORMAN
France	..... Henri LANGLOIS, Mme GILLE-DELAFFON
Germany	..... Curt OERTEL
Iran	..... GAFARY
Italy	..... Luciano EMMER, C.G.ARGAN
Japan	..... HAZAMA
Mexico	..... Fernando GAMBOA
Netherlands	..... W.SANDBERG
Portugal	..... Luis REIS SANTOS
Switzerland	..... F.BUACHE
U.S.A. William CHAPMANN
Venezuela Gaston DHIEL
Yugoslavia V.POGACIC, Mme DUBROVICK

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REPLY TO CIRCULAR LETTER FROM THE F.I.A.F. of 29-2-1956.

1. MOSCOW INSTITUTE

A catalogue of the book library of the Nederlands Filmmuseum will be sent to the Moscow Institute as soon as it will be completed, presumably in October 1956.

2. DESTRUCTION OF FILMS

The destruction of films is a serious problem in Holland. Very recently prints of "Citizen Kane" and "M" have been destroyed. Other films which have disappeared from the vaults of film distributors are a.o. "Train of events", "La bataille du rail", "The treasure of the Sierra Madre", "Alexander Newsky", "Roma, citta aperta", "The Halfway House", "La vie en rose", "Hotel du Nord", "Lumière d'été", "It happened tomorrow", "Monsieur Verdoux", "The story of G.I. Joe". The main cause seems to be that the film trade is not sufficiently convinced of the cultural, artistic, social and historical value of the film and considers it only as an object of commercial value. The film distribution companies are not entirely to blame. They rent the film for a certain period from the production company and when the lease has expired and the proceeds are not sufficiently large to justify a renewal, according to the contract the prints have to be destroyed or returned to the production company. Here lies an important task for the Nederlandse Bioscoop-Bond, the Dutch trade association for producers, distributors and exhibitors, which has to approve of every contract between a distributor and a (mostly foreign) production company. It should be possible to include in the contracts an agreement by which provisions are made for the deposit of a print of each film, imported or produced in Holland, with a central archive, presumably the Nederlands Filmmuseum, under conditions which protect the interests of the production company and guarantee the saving of the film for the future. That such a solution is possible is proved by the fact that in other countries as Belgium, England and France, the destruction of films has been virtually stopped in cooperation with the film archives.

3. RELATIONS WITH THE FILM INDUSTRY

Although the relations with the film industry are of a friendly nature, the cooperation from the film industry leaves much to be desired. Occasionally film distributors have deposited prints of films with the N.F.M., and many independent Dutch producers of documentary films allow the N.F.M. to draw a print from their films for the archive. Much more cooperation could be given, however, and especially the problem of the destruction of films is far from being solved.

4. RELATIONS WITH CINE-CLUBS.

There are in Holland about 70 cine-clubs, united in the N.F.F., the Dutch Federation of Cine-clubs. The secretary of the N.F.F. is a member of the Board of the N.F.M. About 30 of these cine-clubs receive regularly their programmes from the N.F.M. and most of the others receive films from the N.F.M. occasionally. A difficulty is that many of these clubs hesitate to present films other than current commercial cinema programmes and are especially reluctant to present silent films. If the cine-clubs wish to borrow films from embassies, the N.F.M. intermediates only when requested to do so.

5. INTERNATIONAL LIBRARY

A catalogue of the book library will probably be completed in October and copies will then be sent to all F.I.A.F. members. Microfilming one document will unfortunately be too expensive.

6. EXCHANGE OF PERSONNEL

The N.F.M. will gladly receive personnel from other archives and help them in every possible manner. However, financial facilities cannot be given, in view of the very limited budget, nor can it send its personnel abroad.

7. LOAN OF MATERIAL

The N.F.M. should like to borrow material for an exhibition, especially the material of the present London exhibition.

8. HISTORICAL RESEARCH

A report on the beginnings of the cinema in Holland will be prepared as soon as possible and will then be sent to all F.I.A.F. members. We regret that it was not possible to complete this report before the Congress.

9. BROCHURE ON THE F.I.A.F.

These reports also could not be completed before the Dubrovnik Congress. It is supposed that the publication of this brochure will also be a point of discussion at the Congress.