

BULGARIAN STATE KINOARCHIVE

R E P O R T

As Members recall, the Bulgarian State Kinoarchive was admitted as a Full FIAF Member at the Stockholm General Meeting. Actually this is the first report on our activities in the quality of a Full Member of the Federation.

In the meantime the administrative structure of the Kinoarchive has been re-organized. Administratively it has now been organized into two main sections - the first consisting of those activities concerned directly with films: film acquisition, film preservation, technical controls, etc., the second - of activities concerned with documentation - film cataloguing, stills collection and Research Department. The Research Department works in the history of the Bulgarian and the foreign cinema.

The primary duty of every FIAF Member is the preservation of the film inheritance for the generations to come. That is why our first task was to secure a satisfactory film vault for nitrate film in a village 10 miles to the South-East of Sofia and by a governmental decree was put an end to the showings of original copies.

In the course of the last and this year were effectuated contre-types and new positive copies of all Bulgarian early films and valuable foreign features onto nitrate film.

Our main concern was to enrich our national collection and a great number of early Bulgarian feature and documentary films were added to it. Along the Bulgarian films our Kinoarchive succeeded in obtaining also a great number of foreign film classics, among the most important of which are four of the twelve best films of all times.

At the moment energetic steps are being made before the Government for the construction of larger and more modern film storage vaults.

Of importance is to be mentioned the achievements of the Research Department, which began its work last year. At the beginning there were only a small number of photographs and documents, for the most part concerning the Bulgarian cinema. But they were neither systematized, nor well preserved. Moreover in this field no serious researches were ever made. That is why we threw all our forces there. For only one year the steep way of our film art was thoroughly traced back and carefully studied by documents, reminiscences, early publicity material in magazines and newspapers. The so collected data were systematized in a collection under the title THE FILM ART IN BULGARIA, which was published in connection with the jubilee of the Bulgarian cinema, the formal celebration of which took place last October on initiative of our Ministry of Culture, of the Kinoarchive and of the Union of the Cineasts. This collection, although not complete, is the first publication on the subject and extremely necessary for our cineasts and those interested in cinema art in our country. It contains a filmography of features, cartoons and puppets, produced in the country from the first days of the cinema to the present, a brief survey of the activities of Bulgarian cineasts abroad and varied informations concerning production in the country.

In the course of this year the work on filmographies is going on in the field of short film - newsreels, chronics, documentaries, scientific-populars, etc., the publishing of which in a bulletin is forthcoming. In connection with the scientific research work on the national production, a work will be completed, which, based on the collection THE FILM ART IN BULGARIA, on this bulletin and on other documents, will present the history of the Bulgarian cinema.

Along the work on filmographies the Research Department continues to complete the files on each film separately. These files contain pressclippings, posters, photographs, subjects, etc., as well as files of eminent early and contemporary Bulgarian cineasts, containing creative biographies, publicity material, photographs, etc.

A card-index has also been created in more than 80 aspects.

Within the framework of the activities of the Research Department much attention is being paid to the verification and the study of the foreign film collection. A considerable number of pressclippers, posters, stills and other documentation has been collected for the registering of all foreign features, which have been shown in Bulgaria. It has been also made a register of the most important articles in press concerning the Soviet cinema before the Second World War, about the Bulgarian films abroad, etc.

All these materials will furnish the basis for a more careful scientific work on the subject.

A new film exchange catalogue is scheduled.

With regard to the collection of films, our films continue to be in great demand for documentation purposes of the creative circles of the Cinema, Theatre, Television, Film clubs, as well as of other cultural institutions of our country.

At the beginning of this year a special cinema for archive films has been opened, where two days a week the public is being shown selected film classics. For the spectators are being prepared printed programs containing filmographies and film scientific informations for the creators as well as for the film shown.

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Along these showings the conference-projections on national and foreign cinema at cine-clubs and other cultural centres, by television, etc.

An important cultural event during this year was the Month of Soviet classic films in our country, realized on behalf of Gosfilmofond and our Kinoarchive. The Bulgarian public was shown 27 early Russian and Soviet classics.

In June the French Cinematheque has organized with great success in Paris a Bulgarian Film Week.

We would like to thank Mr. Privato and Mr. Langlois for their friendly help.

These activities of ours have greatly contributed to the heightening of the interest of those interested in cinema art. Every day we are receiving lots of letters, containing their suggestions and wishes. Thanks to the regular informations in the press and by the radio on our activities, many cineasts and friends of the cinema art are proposing their private collections to the State Kinoarchive.

Our report is perhaps too detailed, but we are reporting now on our pioneer period and every pioneer period is constructive and strenuous.

In the course of this period we were coming up with other archives, in which there are rich film collections and documentation, collected in a period of many years.

Naturally a number of new interesting initiatives are facing us, but on their realization we shall report to the next FIAF General Assembly.