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REPORT PRESENTED
IN ATHENS
(APRIL 1991)

THE FIAF PROGRAMMING AND ACCESS COMMISSION

Summary of the meeting held in Ponta Delgada, Açores, Portugal
on February 9-12, 1991

The meeting was attended by João Bênard da Costa (chair, Cinemateca Portuguesa), Gabrielle Claes (Cinémathèque Royale de Belgique), Enno Patalas (Münchner Stadtmuseum/Filmmuseum), Paolo Cherchi Usai (George Eastman House), and Steven Ricci (UCLA Film and Television Archive), appointed members of the Commission by the E.C. decision taked at Bologne, November 1990. The Chairman also invited Catherine Gautier (Filmoteca Espanõla) Clyde Jeavons (National Film Archive) and Alain Marchand (Cinémathèque Française). Catherine Gautier and Clyde Jeavons attended, Alain Marchand was unable to attend.

Affer the approval of the agenda proposed by the chairman, the chairman read a letter adressed to him by Robert Daudelin, President of the Executive Comitee, wishing the best work for the Commission.

After that, the discussion was around the name of the Commission.

Affer voting and approval by majority of the participants (5 votes against 2) the Commission was renamed "Programming and Access Commission". All the participants agreed upon the following definition of its purposes:

Mission Statement

The main objectives of the FIAF Programming and Access Commission are to set standards and provide guidelines for the programming of moving images; to make recommendations to FIAF archives for the most effective use of their viewing collections and screening resources; to promote access to FIAF's archival materials for research, study and recirculation.

During the discussion of agenda that took place during the days of February 9, 11 and 12 (February 10 was a free day for a visiting on the S. Miguel Island) the Commission agreed upon the definition of the following program of aims

PROGRAM OF AIMS

1- Technical Standards

The Commission will establish technical standards for the projection and presentation of moving images. Issues such as acceptable print quality, correct aspect ratio and projection speed will be addressed.

The development of such standards should lead to the publication of a reference manual.

2- Standards and Guidelines for Archival Viewing Facilities

The Commission will make recommendations and provide a set of alternative solutions for the establishment, development and improvement of on-site viewing facilities (film viewing machines, video monitors, laser discs, etc.), taking into account the possibilities afforded by new and changing technology.

The collation of such information should lead to the publication of a reference guide.

3- Programming Policy Guidelines

The Commission will try to define the tasks and aims of programming in an archival context, and will construct a set of policy guidelines for their achievement.

Issues to be confronted will include:

- the notion of both "classic" and "national" print collections;
- programming from archival and non-archival sources;
- the relationship of programming to preservation priorities and acquisition policies;
- the constructive use of documentation in programming;
- the problems posed by relations with the industry (producers, distributors, copyright owners, donors, depositors etc.) ;
- the concept of bona fide archives and cinematheques having cultural rights in relation to the use of their collections;
- moral and political censorship.

4- Access Policy Guidelines

The Commission will try to define the role and duty of archives in providing access to their collections for the purposes of research, study and recirculation. A further aim will be to establish and recommend conditions of and criteria for access, both on and off archive premises. Special attention will be paid to the common problems raised by demands made upon archives by film festivals, commercial users, educational institutions and other external agencies.

5- Central Information

The Commission wishes to see established as a matter of urgency centrally based mechanisms with the following objectives:

- a databank of archive viewing copies, implying a commitment on the part of all FIAF archives to reveal such information;
- systematic exchange of up-to-date information between archives about their programming initiatives and activities, e.g. via publication of a regular newsletter or bulletin, mailings of program brochures, etc.;
- the holding of an annual international forum for discussion and presentation of programming and access topics, including screenings, exchanging of ideas and innovations, setting up of collaborative projects, etc.;
- the publication of a central register of "missing" films and incomplete materials, to which the FIAF archives would be invited to contribute and to whom the register would be circulated with periodical updating;
- publication and circulation, as an information service, of an updated selective bibliography of books and documents relevant to programming and access activities in film archives (e.g. authenticated filmographies, dossiers and other materials).

6- Immediate Action

The Commission planned to conduct without delay a formal survey of FIAF archives in order to compile data within the following areas of enquiry:

- a) What kind of programming is done in each archive (detailed examples to be given)?
- b) What kind of study access is provided?
- c) What kind of commercial access is provided?
- d) What screening and/or viewing facilities exist in each archive?
- e) Feedback -- suggestions, proposals, problems, constraints, etc., which archives may wish to address to the Commission.