

FIAF COMMISSION ON PROGRAMMING AND ACCESS TO THE COLLECTIONS

M I N U T E S

MEETING HELD IN MONTEVIDEO ON 24 AND 27 APRIL , 1992

Notes about the scheduled dates: The proposal submitted in March, 92 to the FIAF Secretariat for our meeting dates (25 and 27 April) had to be modified on 21 April, owing to the E.C. meeting scheduled on 25 April. Other prior and important commitments of our members made it very difficult to find spare time for meetings during a symposium co-organized by the Commission.

I INFORMAL SESSION ON 24 APRIL ,92 (dinner offered by Manuel M.Carril)

Participants: João Bénard da Costa (Chairman) (J.B.C.)
Paolo Cherchi Usai (P.C.U.)
Catherine Gautier (C.G.)
Manuel Martinez Carril (M.M.C.)
Steven Ricci (S.R.)

Languages: Italian and Spanish

A) PROPOSALS FOR NEXT MEETING PLACES--(1992)

- Lausanne (29 June-3 July): on the occasion of Paolo's attendance to Domitor.
- Locarno (7-9 August) : on the occasion of Steve's attendance to this Festival.
- New York (6-7 November): after the E.C. meeting.

B) SET OF INTERNAL PRINCIPLES FOR THE WORK OF THE COMMISSION AND FOR COMMUNICATIONS AMONG ITS MEMBERS -

- The Agenda should be faxed to all the members 2 weeks before our next meeting. Modifications to the agenda may be proposed by any member before it is approved. (P.C.U./S.R.)
- All documents should be circulated among the members before the meetings (minutes, reports, proposed drafts, etc...) (P.C.U./S.R.)
- When a project has been approved, responsibilities should be shared among us: if a member assumes the responsibility of a specific task, he would expect to get other members' opinion before initiating his work; if the person in charge is external to the Commission, a supervisor should be nominated for the coordination of the project.(P.C.U.)
- Each member of the Commission is not only expected to attend the meeting sessions but also to produce some effective work. (S.R.)
- Responsibles for the approved projects should be asked to determine deadlines and objectives on the occasion of the 27 April meeting.(P.C.U./S.R)
- A list of film festivals could be drawn up in order to set our meeting dates and places. Public relations would help to make the Commission known to a larger audience. (P.C.U.)
- Information on the Commission's accomplishments should be regularly exchanged among other members and the E.C. (S.R.)

C) MEMBERSHIP AND E.C. RELATIONS

Our President, J.B.C., reported that C. Dimitriu had invited him to give a lecture on programming in film archives, on the occasion of the LAUSANNE SEMINAR (November 1991). Though he had confirmed his participation, he then was unable to attend. J.B.C. confessed that his decision was made without the Commission's approval.

M.M.C. considered that the Commission should not represent an element of censorship against the individual.

P.C.U. felt it would be courteous to communicate such contributions to the other members and that the name of the Commission should not appear in public without the other members' knowledge.

J.B.C. reported on another aspect of the question, referring to the JERUSALEM SYMPOSIUM (November, 1991) organized by the Israel Film Archive on the occasion of the E.C. meeting. The presidents of the other three Commissions were asked to participate to this event. However, the communication on programming issues was given by Bob Rosen. J.B.C. stressed that this kind of procedure should not be tolerated in the future.

J.B.C. also informed about two letters he received recently, from the Lima Cinematheque, proposing the circulation of viewing prints among archives, and from Harriet Harrison, proposing a joint project on "selection criteria" between the Cataloguing and the Programming Commissions. J.B.C. promised that these letters will be circulated and discussed in the near future.

P.C.U. was concerned about the E.C. reaction to the vote about the name of the Commission at the General Assembly and remarked that, with the exception of Rosen and Francis, they had not taken part to the vote. He considered important to endeavour to make them understand our activity and demonstrate the positive aspects of our contribution.

M.M.C. felt rather sceptic about the possibility of acceptance within FIAF regarding programming-circulation activities and referred to the historical division. When in 1969 the Cinemateca Uruguay left the Federation, the role of programming was not recognized. Langlois and Buache had no interest in preservation.

J.B.C. felt that a real change had occurred within 6 months in the E.C., since the creation of our Commission: our first report after Açores had been very much criticized, the second one was highly praised.

D) APPROVED AGENDA FOR THE FORMAL MEETING SESSION OF 27 APRIL-

- 1.-MANUAL FOR TECHNICAL STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES FOR PROJECTION
- 2.-MANUAL FOR RESEARCH AND ACCESS TO THE COLLECTIONS
- 3.-WORKING GROUP ON ARCHIVES AND FILM EDUCATION
- 4.-SURVEY ON PROGRAMMING AND ACCESS IN FIAF ARCHIVES
- 5.-CENTENNIAL PROJECT
- 6.-LIST OF MISSING FILMS
- 7.-ANALYSIS OF FIAF PROGRAMMING
- 8.-JOINT PROJECTS WITH FIAF COMMISSIONS/NEW PROPOSALS

II PROJECTS UNDER DISCUSSION IN THE AGENDA (see I-D) 27 April,92

Participants: João Bénard da Costa (J.B.C.)
Paolo Cherchi Usai (P.C.U.)
Catherine Gautier (C.G.)
Clyde Jeavons (C.J.) as Commission Consultant
Steven Ricci (S.R.)

Languages: mainly English; French.

Regrettably, Manuel M. Carril was unable to attend, and our colleagues Gabrielle Claes and Enno Patalas were not present in Montevideo.

1.-MANUAL OF TECHNICAL STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES FOR PROJECTION

The general approach and aims of this reference manual were discussed and defined among the participants before Jean-Pierre Verscheure was invited to join the Commission for this issue.

Basic draft of the Manual: 3 main sections (a.,b.,c.)
Suggested shape: large format-easy to use at the projection room

a.-HISTORICAL AND TECHNICAL INFORMATION

Summary of the history of ratios, formats and soundtracks into a digested and selective form.

Evolution of systems and optimum practical applications to our collections and present-day viewing facilities.

Index with cross references for families of systems.

This section would be carried out by Jean-Pierre Verscheure, under the supervision of the Commission.

b.-SET OF FIAF STANDARDS FOR PRESENTATION AND PROJECTION AND PRACTICAL RECOMMENDATIONS.-

Parameters acceptable within the reality of F.I.A.F. circumstances.

Flexible options and alternatives for minimum standards (the use of 16mm, b/w version of color films, tinting & toning, a.s.o.)

Separate chapter or appendix including access to film images on electronic or digital media.

Clyde Jeavons confirmed he volunteered for coordinating the 2nd section (b.) of this manual, with the expertise of Dr. Henning Schou and Harold Brown.

Suggested deadlines: end of 1993, for the manuscript. Presentation at the 1994 Congress.

Open deadline for the publication

Since results would be presented on a regular basis to the Membership, the Commission would expect to get some useful feed-back.

Jean-Pierre Verscheure was requested to submit an outline-no longer than 5 pages- by the end of May 92, with indications about deadlines, maximum and minimum length required for each chapter, number of illustrations (b/w-color) and material conditions proposed. He was repeatedly and clearly advised to synthesize his broad knowledge in order to produce a practical reference manual for daily projection needs.

2.-GUIDELINES MANUAL FOR ACCESS TO COLLECTIONS

At the beginning of the discussion on the MANUAL OF TECHNICAL STANDARDS(1), Paolo Cherchi Usai felt that the project was closely linked to the GUIDELINES MANUAL FOR ACCESS and proposed to have them put under a single heading : a two books set, a single heading, Part I as Access to collections, Part II as Manual for technical standards for projection.

Following S. Ricci's proposal of working on a very detailed draft of the content for each project, the President postponed the decision. During the discussion on the former project, P.C.U. also stressed that the duty of a FIAF archive should try to get as close as possible to the photographic moving image in its original form and that we have to make clear that an alternative is an alternative dictated by a well justified necessity. Controversial views were then exchanged between P.C.U. and C.J. about the use of video technology for access purposes. C.J. felt it is acceptable to show a video instead of the film itself when access is made more flexible, without compromising the integrity of our collections ; when the object is to study a film, the film is wanted . Then, video itself should not be part of our rules yet, to C.Jeavons' opinion.

Paolo Cherchi Usai felt satisfied with the positive reaction to Access concerns at the G.A. and the reception to his text at the Symposium. He proposed to undertake this project with Anne Fleming as his joint editor. He would rewrite the text and send it to Anne and they would work together on a draft index which would be submitted to the Commission. P.C.U. also suggested to deliver the manuscript for the end of 1993.

Steve Ricci asked P.C.U. for clarification on certain issues as he felt strong differences with Paolo's general approach: regarding the so-called optimum technical conditions, the implied normative aspects and the object referred as "object of art". S.R. proposed to articulate his own point of view in writing when he would received P.C.U.'s final draft.

P.C.U. explained that they would also provide sets of options, an equivalent compromise as in the Manual of technical standards for projection.

3.-WORKING GROUP ON ARCHIVES AND FILM EDUCATION

The fruitful results of the Workshop moderated by Steve Ricci on 25 April, proved it to be a real starting point for the formation of a Working Group.

S.R. proposed to write a letter of thank you to the participants and ask them two questions: what specific problems are the most pressing to deal with? and what new initiatives could be suggested?

C.J. recommended that a summary of the Workshop contributions be done and P.C.U. felt it could be published in the FIAF Bulletin under the heading "the work of the Commissions".

Composition of the Working Group: P.C.U. suggested a small group and recommended candidates among the Workshop participants such as Kubelka, Marchand, Horak. C.G. suggested I. Trujillo and S.R. accepted to propose an effective working group to the Commission for our next meeting.

4.-SURVEY ON PROGRAMMING AND ACCESS IN FILM ARCHIVES

J.B.C. reported that 30 replies to the Questionnaire have been received. C.G. promised to send a reminder by fax in order to get more answers and to send copies of the replies to S.R. and P.C.U. as they offered to help analysing the information.

5.-CENTENNARY OF THE CINEMA

J.B.C. reported he had approached the E.C. in Jerusalem and proposed the Commission participation to the commemoration of the Centennial with new suggestions and by getting interesting feed-back from colleagues. JBC also referred to the Lima proposal to the Commission about the circulation of viewing prints among FIAF archives. The general opinion was that new ways should be found in the sense of decentralization as our former experience of FIAF packages was rather negative.

C.J. informed about the N.F.A. most successful project in a public way, "360 CLASSIC FILMS", which has been imitated because prints are restricted to one cinema. The B.F.I. itself is planning something similar. A unique person was responsible of the selection (David Meeker) for the N.F.A. and C.J. felt that most of it is incontrovertible, in spite of some eccentricities. C.J. suggested that the Commission present a similar project for the Centennial.

P.C.U. suggestion of having 364 titles (instead of 360 or 365) was very well received as "there is one missing and you are looking for missing films". The N.F.A. list would be circulated between the Commission members before the end of May and we would make the final list in July when we meet. J.B.C. pointed out that we have an option to show classics from a different perspective and that the selection should be made among the Commission members.

A part from the proposed selection, the Commission would provide information on the prints locations, copyright owners conditions for FIAF showings, etc...

J.B.C. also proposed to reconsider Luis de Pina's proposal to the E.C. related to a benefit for the Centennial fund. FIAF members could give one screening revenue to the Federation. C.J. also suggested to dedicate one screening to FIAF and inform the Membership through the Bulletin.

6.-MISSING FILMS

C.J. reported on other similar projects:

-The European Group LUMIÈRE is planning a research on European films (not limited to the European Community) under the coordination of Gian Luca Farinelli who would form a committee of consultants.

J.B.C. will contact Farinelli for further details.

- The Australian Film Search

- The MOMA missing films (restricted to 10 titles)

- The Cinémathèque Française (only occasionally)

- The NFA film search : a catalog of about 100 great British films will be published in September (fully illustrated, mostly films from the 30's and 40's , some silent films also).

It was then agreed that our Commission should not carry out this project by itself: agents should help, among our FIAF colleagues. J.B.C. promised to ask the Cataloguing and the Documentation Commissions for collaboration.

7.- ANALYSIS OF FIAF PROGRAMMING

J.B.C. reported that most archives send their programs now and he proposed to work on a study of the main outline of FIAF programming during the past 2 or 3 years. J.B.C. will send the results by the end of September, 92.

The Meeting ended with a BRINDIS to our missing (and missed) colleagues, Gabrielle Claes and Enno Patalas.