

R e p o r t

by the FIAF Commission on Documentation

At present, the members of the Commission are as follows:

Eberhard Spiess, Wiesbaden, Chairman
Karen Jones, Copenhagen, Vice-Chairman
Eileen Bowser, New York
Brenda Davies, London
John Luijcks, Amsterdam
Michael Moulds, Ottawa
Vladimir Vimr, Prag
Dr. Alfred Krautz, Berlin /DDR (Observer)

The Commission met twice since the last General Meeting, first in October 1970 in Budapest and then in March/April 1971 in Copenhagen. The main problems discussed during the last two meetings were:

- 1) Indexing and exchange of bibliographic information with a report on the studies made by Mrs. Jones, including the introduction of a budget for periodical indexing on cards. Mrs. Jones has come to the Wiesbaden Congress particularly for reporting on these studies. The detailed result will give most interesting aspects, also from the financial point of view. The indexing cards - all members agreed to choose cards instead of sheets - were accepted in their current form by the commission and will be presented here for approval. Project description, budgets ^{and} sample pages are ready for distribution. On April 20 of this year, the Commission sent a description of the project to all 47 F.I.A.F. member archives, together with a questionnaire soliciting their opinions on the project. So far we have received replies from 27 archives. 25 of these are quite positive toward the project. One archive (The National Film Archive in London) states that the project will be of no help to them, since they are already indexing their periodicals in their own way, using cards of a different size than the one adopted by the Commission. Only one archive is negative

toward the project as a whole: The Swedish Film Archive. We asked 28 of the 47 archives whether they would be willing to participate actively in the project by indexing a specified number of periodicals published in their own country. 17 of these archives have answered. 16 are willing to index all or some of other periodicals which we requested them to index. Some are even willing to index more than these. Only one archive refused completely to participate in the indexing work: The Swedish Film Archive. This is to be regretted but will cause no problem, however, since the two Swedish periodicals on our list can easily be indexed in Denmark. Some of the archives which were not requested to participate actively have indicated their willingness to do so. For instance the Uruguayan Film Archive volunteered to index 5 South American periodicals.

So far 37 of the 57 periodicals have been distributed among member archives. We are sure that at least a few more archives will answer our questionnaire and be willing to undertake to index some of the other periodicals. The periodicals left over (and it looks as if these will be some British and some French) will almost certainly be accepted by the more interested archives, as they represent almost no language problems.

Of the 27 archives which answered the questionnaire, 25 would like to receive the file cards. The NFA does not, and the Swedes are hesitant.

2) The Commission's biannual publication, called News Letter so far. Agreement was obtained on size (29,5 x 21 cm Din A 4), layout (rhoneograph duplicating method) and contents. The following subjects appeared to be important enough to be included in this publication:

It shall supply information about the documentation work in the FIAF member archives.

It shall introduce the officials in charge of the various archives.

It shall inform about quantity and quality of stock.

It shall make reference to the main collection fields of the various archives.

It shall give information about special assignments, studies and investigations under work, carried out by the archive or users thereof, in order to avoid overlapping or duplication of work on an international basis.

It shall promote the exchange of data between archives by publishing supply and want lists, in order to possibly avoid the currently high prices by second-hand booksellers.

It shall familiarize with new technical equipment for micro-film copying and for storage possibilities.

It shall state the special publications available and how microfilms can be obtained.

It shall list major private archives or private collectors not being FIAF members.

It shall point out newly appeared special periodicals, giving condensed summaries thereof.

As all members know, the questionnaire concerning the contents was sent out to all archives. The result of this action was laid down in a special report also to be published in the first issue of the News Letter. 17 sample pages which had been produced before the Executive-Committee will give you an idea of some of the aforementioned subjects which can be considered as interesting and informative. I should have produced as a sample copy a complete specimen issue but the time left for such preparatory work after having received the answers to be carried out by myself was too short. However, I hope that the examples given in the copies will nevertheless sufficiently illustrate the idea.

As the cost of publication for the first two issues (about 100 Copies each will be taken over by the Deutsches Institut für Filmkunde, a detailed budget has not yet been elaborated but will not be very high.

3) Computer Techniques.

Mrs. Bowser and Mrs Jones made a report on these techniques as both together have visited the headquarters of RILM-abstracts in New York (Répertoire International de Littérature Musicale). RILM-abstracts is a computer printed bibliography indexing and abstracting literature on music. FIAF was offered to use this RILM computer programme free. A generous offer indeed but we have not forget that for the research before such a programme can be started we have to spent at least a sum of 100 000 dollars. Mrs. Bowser promised to investigate the problem further. In any case it was felt that for the problem of computer work a special commission on those techniques should be appointed.

4) Key-word list.

Work was started thereon with the help of key word list of the BFI and the Index system used by the Deutsches Institut für Filmkunde. Appropriate key-words had been sorted out for Thesaurus.

Eberhard Spiess
(Chairman)