

MINUTES OF THE FIAF DOCUMENTATION COMMISSION

Sofia, 6-8 June 1979

PARTICIPANTS:

Members: Eileen Bowser, Department of Film, The Museum of Modern Art
Karen Jones, Det Danske Filmmuseum ^{Copenhagen}
Alfred Krautz, Staatliches Filmarchiv der DDR, Berlin (DDR)
John Luijckx, Nederlands Filmmuseum ^{Amst}
Aura Puran, Arhiva Nationale de Filme ^{Bucarest}
Milka Staykova, Bulgarska Nacionalna Filmoteka ^{Sofia}
Frances Thorpe, International Index to Film Periodicals ^{FIAF London}

Observers: Magdalena Kirkova and Margarita Ilieva of Bulgarska Nacionalna Filmoteka

Absent members: Brenda Davies ^{London} and Eberhard Spiess ^{Wiesbaden}

- I. Opening. Todor Andreykov, Director of the Bulgarska Nacionalna Filmoteka, welcomed the participants with generous words of praise for the work of the commission. He invited the commission to meet with the initiating committee of the General History of the Cinema during the final session on June 8. Eileen thanked him for his kind remarks and expressed the hope that the work of the commission while in Sofia would justify them. She gave thanks on behalf of the commission for the generous hospitality offered by the Bulgarska Nacionalna Filmoteka. Eileen read extracts from letters from Eberhard and Brenda explaining their absence, reserving the rest of their letters for the appropriate points on the agenda. Brenda's letter contained notice of her wish to resign from the commission. Those present were very sad to learn of it, but agreed that she had worked many years for the commission, having served with honor as its first president. A vote of thanks was given in appreciation for her valuable work, and her resignation was regretfully accepted.
- II. Agenda. The agenda was reorganized to give an earlier place to the UNESCO feasibility study, and amended to include a point on the Basic Manual.
- III. Minutes. The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as written.
- IV. Report from FIAF. Eileen reported on the activities of the Cataloguing Commission and on the various correspondence she had undertaken on behalf of the Documentation Commission; the meeting with FIAF and FIAT Executive committees; the growing relations of FIAF with UNESCO.
- V. Projects Under Way.
 1. Summer School followup. Participants told about the use they had made of the papers produced for the summer school. It was decided Eileen should discuss with Anne Schlosser the possibilities of organizing a second summer school on documentation for FIAF in Los Angeles.
 2. The classification of film literature. Karen announced that Michael had nearly completed his work and the scheme was expected to be published by ASLIB by the end of 1979. It would be about 100 pages, containing the full scheme and the abridged scheme on opposite pages. Eileen's draft preface was read and approved, and Frances agreed to carry it back to London.

3. The coordinated list of unpublished script holdings. Eberhard's letter explained why he had not been able to work on this project, as he was having to move the holdings of his archive to Frankfurt. However, he said that he expected the addition of one staff member for the second half of this year who would take on this task.
4. Guidelines, film posters. John said he had been unable to get this project underway. However, he still hoped to do it at some time in the future. It was agreed to drop this from the list of projects under way until he was really able to begin.
5. FIAF Directory of film and television documentation sources. Frances reported on Brenda's behalf that she had received a disappointing number of replies to her questionnaire. The commission thought that the new edition should be published anyway with whatever information we had, and with as little delay as possible after information was received in order that the Directory should be up-to-date when it went to press. Frances should ask Brenda if she was willing to complete the project of the new edition in the light of her resignation from the commission. In that case, the commission thought she should send a reminder with a second copy of the questionnaire to those who had not replied. To those who had replied, there should be sent a copy of the entry with another chance to up-date the information. The end of September should be given as a deadline for replies, and the manuscript for the revised directory sent to the Secretariat by the end of the year, for publication by FIAF. Eileen will write the Secretariat asking if it can be fitted in the publication schedule at that time, providing Brenda says it is possible to complete the project.
6. UNESCO international documentation center. This topic was moved to this section of the agenda instead of being discussed under new projects, as a contract had been signed by the President of FIAF with UNESCO for a feasibility study for an international documentation center. Eileen distributed copies of the contract. She explained that by a failure of communications she had only learned of the existence of this contract a few days earlier at the Executive Committee meeting in Lausanne. Although no one was very certain what UNESCO had in mind, the E.C. had agreed to ask the commission to handle it, and Wolfgang Klaue had offered to write a section on training for it. Eileen asked Karen if she would undertake the study on behalf of FIAF, inasmuch as it related to a favorite project of her own. After the commission discussed it, Karen said she would agree to write it together with Frances. The two of them undertook to prepare a draft outline for discussion and were excused from the following session of the meeting to work on it. Although the discussion on this point continued later in the meeting, the decisions taken on the project are listed here.
 - 1) Financial arrangements: Karen and Frances agreed to meet in London in July to do the writing of the feasibility study and would use the UNESCO payment to meet the costs of travel and staying in London. We would ask the FIAF Treasurer if FIAF could advance the money through the London office accounts, with the reservation that Klaue should have a part of it for his work, and whether Frances could then use this money at her discretion for the project. FIAF would be reimbursed the money upon delivery of the project to UNESCO.
 - 2) Work plan: Karen and Frances' outline of topics was discussed in detail by the commission. It was agreed that Karen would type it and send it to members of the commission and also to Klaue for his comments, asking for all comments to be sent immediately, so as to arrive in time for

the meeting in July. The study would be typed in final form by the third week in August and sent to Eileen. If she had no major changes or additions to make in consultation with Karen and Frances by mail, she would send it to the FIAF officers by the end of August. The deadline for submission to UNESCO is October 15. These minutes do not reflect the discussion on the contents of the document since all members will probably have received the outline agreed on before receiving the minutes. When received, this outline should be retained with the minutes as part of the record of this meeting.

7. International directory of cinematographers, set- and costume designers.

Alfred reported that volume one of the directory of set- and costume designers had been sent to FIAF members; 30 copies were sold in DDR to socialist countries and 70 copies were sent to a bookstore in Federal Germany. The proceeds were used for the expenses of printing in Wiesbaden. A publisher, K. G. Sauer in Munich, had offered a contract to publish future volumes if cinematographers could be included as well, as one whole record of the visual expression in film. Alfred had negotiated a draft contract for Volume I, to cover the cinematographers and designers for Poland and DDR; the manuscript would be ready for delivery in the autumn of 1979. 800 copies would be printed, free copies would be given for FIAF members and a discount permitted for the purchase of further copies. The contract terms were discussed and approved. The commission requested Alfred to go to Munich for final negotiations and the delivery of the manuscript. The final version of the contract will be approved and signed by our new FIAF President, Mr. Klaue, if he agrees. Alfred's preface for the new volume was approved with a few suggestions from the commission and Eileen agreed to help try to perfect the English wording. Alfred discussed the present and future work of the subcommission working on the project. At Eileen's suggestion, he had invited Anne Schlosser to join the group in the hopes of getting her help with the U.S. data. The group will meet in Berlin August 27 - 30 for further work.

8. The international index to film and television periodicals. Frances reported on progress for the publication of the 1978 volume, to be published by FIAF itself by agreement with the Executive Committee, after the withdrawal of MacMillans as publisher. She said that 800 copies would be printed, and as she was already reading proofs, it might even happen that the volume for 1978 would appear before the one for 1977, still to be published by MacMillans and not yet completed. The commission was asked to use their efforts to sell the volume in their countries. Frances had prepared material for a brochure and for adverts, and the best periodicals to advertise in were discussed. Eileen agreed to send a mailing list of 350 potential buyers in the US to Frances. She also agreed to investigate the possibilities that the American Film Institute might be willing to be a distributor of the 1979 volume in the US, in the case that FIAF continued to publish it in the future. For the 1978 volume, we were accepting the offer of St. Martins Press in New York to take 300 copies at a very reduced price because it would mean an immediate cash payment.

Frances reported on subscribers, and on periodicals under consideration for inclusion. She said that the office opposite hers on the same floor was becoming vacant in June and that she would like to add it to her space

if possible, since the tv indexing project made additional space imperative. Eileen said there might be a problem because it was not foreseen in the 1979 budget. However, Frances should discuss it with the FIAF Treasurer and also with David Francis, as he had the responsibility on the part of FIAF to oversee the London office, in practical details.

The subcommission working on this project agreed to hold a meeting in Amsterdam in November, just in advance of the next Executive Meeting in Oslo. Eileen agreed to ask the FIAF Treasurer if some of the funds for commissions could be available to help with staying costs.

9. Handbook for film archives. (formerly Basic Manual) This publication is about to go to press, and the editors had raised two or three minor points for correction or updating. These points were decided, with the exception of one last information from Michael Moulds. Frances was given the material to take back to London, to get the needed information, and to send on to the FIAF Secretariat as quickly as possible, in order not to delay publication.

VI. New Projects

1. General Film History. The commission discussed the forthcoming meeting with the initiating committee for this project. It was decided that it would be useful to present them with a summary of the work undertaken by the commission which would aid the film history project, and the contents of this presentation were discussed. Further, it was agreed to propose that the committee should recommend that each national team should add as advisor a documentation expert from the national archive, whether or not it was a member of FIAF. In the final session with the committee, the historians accepted this proposal with thanks. (Note: later, the proposal was accepted by the general assembly of historians and incorporated in the principles of methodology adopted by this assembly.)
2. International directory to dissertations on cinema. Participants reported on their investigation of this subject which had been proposed at the 1976 Congress in Mexico. Eileen reported that the Stiftung Deutsche Kinemathek was now compiling lists for the Federal Republik of Germany. She described the project of Raymond Fielding in the U.S., who had been publishing retroactive and current lists of dissertations in the University Film Association Journal (UFA Journal). A cumulative listing was to appear about the end of August this year, which would contain 420 entries, cross-indexed and with statistics and interpretation. It covers all U.S. doctoral dissertations and selected masters' theses. He intends to update the list every two years in the UFA Journal, and said he would welcome contributions from other countries even if incomplete. Because there is so much activity in the U.S. in this area, Fielding's work is already the most substantial source, and the commission decided it would be desirable to contribute to his project rather than initiating a new one which would have to depend on his work to a large extent. Eileen agreed to ask him if he would be able to supply free copies of the publication to those who contributed to it. In that case, she would send a circular letter to FIAF documentation departments asking if they would be willing to contribute the information about dissertations and theses (the latter only selectively) on cinema in their own countries, together with an English translation of dissertation titles, in exchange for a copy of the issue containing the information. Eileen will be responsible for the carrying out of the project.

3. International cinema statistics and legislation. In her letter Brenda described a BFI project to issue information sheets on "British cinema statistics" and "British cinema legislation." She suggested that if other archives would prepare similar fact sheets on their national production, it might be a basis for a small periodical publication. The commission agreed that this was a neglected area of documentation and Brenda's idea was a very useful one. Eileen will ask Brenda if she can supply some sample sheets which would suggest a format to other archives. Then they could be sent out with a circular letter to all FIAF documentation departments to find out who might be able to participate in such a project.

- VII. Other business. As previously suggested by Brenda, the participants reported on the activities of their own documentation departments since the last meeting, which provided an interesting discussion.

- VIII. Next meeting. The commission received offers to host future meetings in Bucharest and in Frankfurt, but no final decision was taken.

- IX. Closing. Eileen thanked the participants for their work, and a vote of thanks was extended to Milka, Magdalena and Margarita for their help in organizing the meeting, as well as to the Bulgarska Nacionalna Filmoteka for the generous hospitality.