

F.I.A.F. Commission on Cataloguing and Documentation

Interim Report, presented to the 25th Annual Congress, May 1969

Introduction

The Commission was set up at the F.I.A.F. Annual Congress in London in May 1968. Members were appointed by the F.I.A.F. Executive but no instructions were given on the purpose of the Commission or its terms of reference. Consequently the Commission spent most of the time during its London meetings working out its aims and objects which were then submitted in a report to the Congress. It might be useful to summarise for the new Congress the main points of that report. These were that the terms of reference for the Commission should be:

1. To consider and analyse current problems of film cataloguing and documentation with special reference to the use of modern electronic and mechanical methods.
2. To decide how the use of such methods may in future facilitate the exchange of information within F.I.A.F..
3. To make one of its chief purposes the guidance of young Archives in the fields of cataloguing and documentation.

The Commission suggested for itself the following programme of work:

1. A detailed study of methods of film cataloguing with a view to the production of a new cataloguing manual.
2. A study of the co-ordinating of the indexing of periodicals.
3. A study of methods of storing, cataloguing and clarifying related materials and periodicals.

The above programme of work is of course a long-term one and the Commission set itself some more immediate tasks which it hoped to fulfil before the present Annual Congress.

These were:

1. To present the results of its discussions on the cataloguing of films and its recommendations on certain cataloguing methods. These recommendations should eventually form the basis of a new cataloguing manual if they are accepted by the F.I.A.F. General Congress.
2. To present a list of agreed abbreviations for the use of indexers and a chart of the periodical holdings in all F.I.A.F. Archives with an indication of the essential journals for the benefit of young Archives.
3. To present recommendations on the acquisition of related material and reports from the Museum of Modern Art and the National Film Archive on experiences in the use of Xerox and microfilm.
4. To present recommendations on the storage and cataloguing of still photographs and negatives, based on the systems used by the Archives in Belgrade and Rome.

General

The Commission has held two further groups of meetings since the London Congress - at Leipzig where it was the guest of the Staatliches Filmarchiv and the Leipzig Festival, and in Brussels where the host Archive was the Cinémathèque Royale de Belgique. On both occasions the Commission's meetings were attended by a number of observers many of whom made interesting and valuable contributions to the discussions. Most members of the Commission felt, however, that in order to concentrate firmly on the work it had set itself it would prefer to hold its meetings in private, and during the Brussels meeting the Chairman sent a Memorandum (Appendix XII) setting out her personal views on this problem to the F.I.A.F. Executive who were preparing to meet in Paris. No reply has been received to this Memorandum, and the Commission therefore seeks the advice and guidance of the Executive and the General Congress on the composition and operation of F.I.A.F. Commissions.

The Commission came to the conclusion, at the end of its Brussels meetings, that it had made all the progress possible on the detailed questions of cataloguing procedure, and that if the Congress approved its interim report and recommendations on this subject it should then either divide the present Commission into two groups - one to proceed to the compilation of a film cataloguing manual and the other to continue its discussions on documentation - or else set up a separate Film Cataloguing Commission. The present Commission favours the first idea and thinks it would be possible for two small groups to meet separately at the same time and place and to hold occasional joint sessions where items of interest to both sides could be discussed. The Commission is, however, firmly of the opinion that any such groups should be small (6 or 8 at most) and should consist of people who are actively and currently engaged in the actual work under discussion. (In the case of a Cataloguing Sub-Commission, for instance, the names of Mr. V. Dimitriev of Gosfilmofond and Mr. Roger Holman of the National Film Archive were put forward.) The Commission therefore submits this conclusion for the advice of the Executive.

The Commission does not propose, in this interim report, to give a detailed account of all its discussions. Its meetings were minuted and copies of the minutes have been sent to the F.I.A.F. Secretariat. Any member of the Congress who wishes to study these can no doubt obtain copies from the Secretariat. In this report we intend to summarise briefly the subjects discussed and to draw Congress's attention to our recommendations which are summarised under the appropriate headings in Appendix I. Where we were not able to arrive at any recommendation but some action was decided upon, this too will be reported. Probably the most convenient method will be to deal with our studies under the headings of the tasks we set ourselves to do for presentation to this Congress. (See Page 2 of this Report).

Discussion and Recommendations on Film Cataloguing

We began in London with a broad examination of the first principles, guided by the paper prepared for us by the Curator of the National Film Archive. Having established that our eventual aim should be to produce a new cataloguing manual, we proceeded at once to examine the problem in detail, and our first decision was that for purposes of our future discussions films would be divided into four main categories:

1. Newsreels
2. Documentaries
3. Compilation Films
4. Fiction

There were also long and interesting discussions on the problems of identification by title and it was agreed that films should always be described by the original title in the language of the country of origin, with a reservation in favour of the "title of the copy" in the case of unidentified films. We have spent a good deal of time examining the possibilities of using modern mechanised methods of cataloguing, and we feel it to be very important that we should keep in touch with developments in the field both within F.I.A.F. and outside it. As we have already stated in our first report, we feel that projects such as the proposed Catalogue of the American Film Institute, the proposed computerisation of the British National Film Catalogue, and the Working Party of the I.F.T.C. are of vital interest and that F.I.A.F. should organise machinery to keep in touch with them. Since we have received no response to our suggestion on this subject in our previous report, we bring it forward again for advice and guidance from the Executive. This time we go a little further and suggest that if it is agreed that this contact is desirable, one member of the Commission's proposed Cataloguing group should be detailed to keep in personal touch with these developments as they apply both to film cataloguing and documentation.

Following the decisions made in London, requests were sent out to all Archives for samples of cataloguing cards and those received were compared and discussed during the meetings at Leipzig. It was decided to concentrate on the cards from the National Film Board, Canada, the Staatliches Filmarchiv, Berlin, the Cinémathèque Royale de Belgique, the Österreichisches Filmarchiv and the Deutsches Institut für Filmkunde. The Commission then turned its attention to compiling a list of the minimum data required for use in cataloguing all four types of film, having regard to the possible future use of computers for data processing. This minimum data list has now been agreed and will be found in Appendix IV.

Compilation of a maximum data list for cataloguing fiction films was begun in Leipzig and continued in Brussels. The resulting recommended list is to be found in Appendix II together with the necessary additions for the complete cataloguing of Animated and Puppet Films (Appendix III). Maximum data lists for Newsreels and Compilation Films have still to be compiled. All of these lists, if approved by the Congress, will eventually form the basis for building up the proposed manual of cataloguing.

The Commission also submits two further papers on Cataloguing which it hopes will be of value to young Archives. One of these is a suggested list of "Genres" (Appendix IX). The Commission's comments on this list, which was drawn up at our Brussels meeting and based on a paper supplied by the Cinémathèque Royale de Belgique, are to be found in Appendix I. The second paper is a report from the National Film Archive, London, on "Subject Classification in Selected British Film Libraries" (Appendix X). The Commission has done very little work yet in this area but it may be useful to make this paper available for study at leisure. Meanwhile the Commission members have undertaken to investigate the situation in this field in their own countries.

Why?

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Is the work of the IFA intended to benefit young Archives?

Discussions and Recommendations on Documentation

(See items 2-4 on Page 1 of this Report).

As with the section on Cataloguing, the Commission is glad to report that it has completed virtually all the tasks it set itself in London. Appendix V is a list of recommended journals for indexing with alternative suggestions for abbreviations. The Commission's remarks on this list will be found in the Recommendations on Documentation, Appendix 1, paras. 6 and 7. Appendix VI is an additional guide for indexers provided by the Deutsches Institut für Filmkunde. We have not included the proposed chart of periodical holdings in all Archives since the response to the questionnaire on this did not provide enough replies to produce a useful result. Appendix VII is an interim report from the National Film Archive, London, on the use of microfilm in its Information Department. Further reports will follow as the new scheme goes into regular use. No report has yet been possible on the use of Xerox in the Museum of Modern Art for recording its collection of newspaper clippings because financial limitations have prevented the adoption of this method until next year. The Commission's recommendations on the acquisition of related materials and on the Storage and Cataloguing of Stills are contained under those heads in Appendix I and the approved paper on the Cataloguing of Stills is Appendix VIII.

In addition to the items above which were part of the agreed scheme of work, the Commission has some other concrete results to report in the field of documentation. During the Brussels meeting a sample paper for the exchange of indexing information, based on a single issue of Sight and Sound (Appendix XI) was produced and examined. As a result it was agreed that similar papers should be prepared regularly for exchange among Archives. Such papers are to be in French or English. They should cover the complete contents of the magazine and they should be produced and circulated quickly. As a beginning, the following Archives promised to provide papers:

Ceskoslovensky Filmoteka <u>on</u>	FILM A DOBA
Cinémathèque Royale de Belgique <u>on</u>	CINEMA 69 POSITIF MIDI-MINUIT FANTASTIQUE
Cinémathèque de Toulouse <u>on</u>	CAHIERS DU CINEMA ETUDES CINEMATOGRAPHIQUES IMAGE ET SON
Nederlands Filmmuseum <u>on</u>	SKOOP
Deutsches Institut für Filmkunde <u>on</u>	ACTION FILMKRITIK FILM
Staatliches Filmarchiv <u>on</u>	FILMWISSENSCHAFTLICHE MITTEILUNGEN
National Film Archive <u>on</u>	FILMS AND FILMING SIGHT AND SOUND

This exchange is already in operation among some of the Archives represented on the Commission, and a circular describing the scheme and asking for further volunteers has been sent to all Archives. Replies have been received from only two at this date.

Another scheme which was discussed in Brussels at the suggestion of M. Ledoux was the provision of indexes for important books which are published without an index. It was provisionally decided that the following books should be indexed by the Archives listed below:

- Two Reels and a Crank by Albert E. Smith. National Film Archive.
- La Grande Aventure du Cinema Suédois by Jean Beranger. Cinémathèque Royale de Belgique.
- The Public is Never Wrong by Adolph Zukor. -----
- When the Movies Were Young by Mrs. D.W. Griffith. Museum of Modern Art.
- La Foi et les Montagnes by Henri Lescounte. Cinémathèque de Toulouse.
- Vom Kintopp zum Tonfilm by Henny Porten. Deutsches Institut für Filmkunde.
- Ten Volumes of Film Kunst. Nederlands Filmmuseum.

An index to Henny Porten's book has already been received, but the Commission would be glad to hear from other Archives whether they know of any indexes already in existence for the above books.

The Commission has already spent some time discussing the indexing of old periodicals (i.e. periodicals published before 1930) and the Museum of Modern Art has produced and circulated an index to Close Up. Pilot projects have been undertaken by both the Museum of Modern Art and the Cinémathèque Royale de Belgique. Eventually the Commission established the following list of priorities for old periodicals to be indexed:

PHOTOPLAY		U.S.A.
NEW YORK DRAMATIC MIRROR		U.S.A.
VITA CINEMATOGRAFICA)	ITALY
REVISTA CINEMATOGRAFICA)	
PENUMBRA)	GERMANY
KINEMATOGRAPH)	
LICHTBILDUNG		GERMANY
BIOSCOPE		ENGLAND

We have also had discussions on the microfilming of journals, but finance is the obvious stumbling block here. PHOTOPLAY, THE NEW YORK DRAMATIC MIRROR and VARIETY are already available in this form and it is hoped that two German journals LICHTBILDUNG and KINEMATOGRAPH will eventually be made available. The Deutsches Institut für Filmkunde also has a project to microfilm the film pages of some German daily newspapers and these will be indexed. Since our Brussels meeting, enquiry in London has revealed that the following film journals are already available in microfilm form: ~~BIOSCOPE~~, KINEMATOGRAPH WEEKLY, AMATEUR CINE WORLD, AMERICAN CINEMATOGRAPHER, FILM NEWS, BUSINESS SCREEN, EDUCATIONAL SCREEN, FILM QUARTERLY, FILM WORLD, PROJECTIONIST, MOTION PICTURE HERALD, SEE AND HEAR, S.M.P.T.E. JOURNAL.

Two further projects on Documentation have been undertaken for the Commission by Mr. Klaue of the Staatliches Filmarchiv. He has produced a Draft Form for the Exchange of Filmographic Information Between Archives and a Draft Questionnaire on Related Materials. Both have been considered by the Commission and corrected versions are now in preparation.

Conclusion

The Commission feels that it has achieved some useful results during the past year and hopes that Congress will approve its work and have some advice and guidance to offer. We would all like to add that quite apart from any tangible results we may have achieved we have all greatly valued the contacts we have been able to establish as a result of our meetings. These personal contacts and the understanding of each other's problems which they bring, form in our opinion one of the most important aspects of the work of F.I.A.F. and its Commissions.

For the Minutes see Young by Mrs. D.W. Griffith. Museum of Modern Art.

In list of the Minutes by Henri Bouché. Cinéma de France.

For Minutes see Young by Henry Forten. Deutsches Institut für Kinematographie.

For Minutes of Film Council. Netherlands Film Commission.

An index to Henry Forten's book has already been received, but the Commission would be glad to hear from other Archive workers if they know of any indexes already in existence for the above books.

The Commission has already spent some time discussing the indexing of old periodicals (i.e. periodicals published before 1930) and the Museum of Modern Art has produced and distributed an index to these. First projects have been undertaken by both the Museum of Modern Art and the Cinéma de France to re-index the Commission established the following list of periodicals for the periodicals to be indexed:

U.S.A.	INTERNATIONAL
U.S.A.	NEW YORK BRITISH MIRROR
ITALY	VITA CINEMATOGRAFICA
	REVISTA CINEMATOGRAFICA
GERMANY	DEUTSCHE
	KINEMATOGRAPH
GERMANY	LICHTSCHILD
ENGLAND	BIOGRAPH

We have also had discussions on the international situation, but cinema is the obvious starting point here. However, the NEW YORK BRITISH MIRROR and VARIETY are already available in this form and it is hoped that two or three journals LICHTSCHILD and KINEMATOGRAPH will eventually be made available. The Deutsches Institut für Kinematographie also has a project to re-index the film pages of some German daily newspapers and these will be indexed. Since our Brussels meeting, enquiry in London has revealed that the following film journals are already available in accessible form: LICHTSCHILD, KINEMATOGRAPH WEEKLY, METRO CINEMA WORLD, METRO CINEMATOGRAPH, FILM NEWS, MOVIE NEWS, EDUCATIONAL SCREEN, FILM QUARTERLY, FILM WORLD, PRODUCTIONS, MOVIE TALKING NEWS, SEE AND HEAR, S.N.P.T.S. JOURNAL.

Two further projects on Documentation have been undertaken for the Commission by Mr. Klaus of the Staatliches Filmarchiv. He has produced a draft plan for the Recherches de Filmologie Internationale between Archives and a draft questionnaire on subject Nationalities.

F.I.A.F.COMMISSION ON CATALOGUING & DOCUMENTATION

Recommendations

Appendix I

Documentation

- 1) That Archives should always aim at acquiring the earliest original material - for instance, the original design for a poster as well as the poster itself - the original negative of a production still and so on.
- 2) That Archives should each recognise their special responsibility for the collection of material relating to their own national industries.
- 3) That new Archives starting collections of related material would be well advised to aim at a comprehensive collection in one field (say posters or stills) rather than spreading their limited resources over several small collections.
- 4) That Archives who have acquired duplicate material should, as a matter of principle, offer it for exchange with other Archives or where this is not possible, to libraries or educational bodies in their own countries.
- 5) That all related material whatever, however trivial it might seem, which belonged to the period of the beginnings of cinema history (i.e. up to 1945, or the first fifty years) should be regarded as being in a special category and should always be preserved in its original form however many copies might be made.
- 6) The Commission recommends to the attention of new Archives its list of essential journals for indexing (Appendix IV). It would like it to be understood that this is intended only for general guidance, mainly to European Archives, on the journals most likely to have useful reviews for indexing. It is not intended as an attempt to represent world film production or to select the best film journals.
- 7) The Commission also draws the attention of new Archives to the Abbreviations suggested on the list of essential journals. Those in the first column are in accordance with the principles laid down in British Standard 4148:1967 (Recommendations for the abbreviations of Titles of Periodicals). Those in the second column are the suggestions of the Deutsche Institut Fur Filmkunde. The Commission was not able to arrive at a definite recommendation on these abbreviations at this stage but it offers the two alternatives for the choice of new Archives.
- 8) The Commission offers for the guidance of Indexers in new Archives a list of definite and indefinite articles in nineteen languages (Appendix VI) prepared by the Deutsches Institut Fur Filmkunde.

Recommendations

Stills

Categories

- 9) The Commission agreed on the following as desirable categories into which a collection could be divided.
 - a) Film stills
Production stills } - Identified by original title.
 - b) Portraits - identified by name of individual.
 - c) Festivals and Conferences - identified by name of place.
 - d) Cinemas - identified by place and name.
 - e) Apparatus - identified by name.

Stills

10) Preservation and Storage

The first consideration is to make negatives. The recommended size for such negatives is 6 x 9 centimetres. Storage in hanging files in metal filing cabinets is recommended.

11) Identification and Handling

The recommended method for easy identifications is by the use of small contact copies but in view of the expense involved the Commission suggests that this method might be employed initially only for those stills most in demand.

Where stills cannot be identified it is suggested that the Archive in the country of origin be asked to help but it is recognised that this help must be limited by the workload situation in individual Archives.

12) Acquisition and Exchange

In principle it is desirable that all Archives should try to acquire a representative collection of stills from their own national production.

Archives are recommended to prepare lists of duplicate stills for exchange. Lists should be arranged alphabetically by original title, with the year of production where there is more than one film of the same title.

13) Sale and Supply of Stills

The Commission recommends that Archives should restrict the supply of stills to researchers or publishers doing genuine film work. It feels that it is not the purpose of Film Archives to supply stills for work unconnected with the cinema. In most countries there are Picture Libraries which can deal with requests of this sort.

Archives are recommended to make it a rule never to lend or sell original material but always to make duplicates for this purpose.

14) Copyright

Archives are reminded of the difficulties that may arise through carelessness about the laws of copyright. Great care should be taken to ensure that all duplicates lent or sold are clearly marked on the back (preferably by indelible stamp) to indicate that the Archive is not the copyright holder.

15) Treatment and Labelling

Great care is also recommended in handling and marking stills. Paper clips and other metal objects should never be used and labelling is not recommended. Marking with pen or pencil should be done very lightly on the back of the still.

16) Cataloguing

The minimum recommended data are Original Title and release title in the country of origin. Where more than one film exists of the same title, the addition of a year of production is suggested.

Stills

17) General

The Commission recommends the Yugoslav paper on Stills (Appendix VIII) as a useful and satisfactory description of a method of dealing with a Stills Collection which it recommends as a model for young Archives.

Cataloguing

- 18) The Commission recommends the list of "maximum data" (Appendix II) to all Archives. It represents the Commissions' view of the items which Archives should aim at including on their cataloguing records for fiction films.
- 19) The additional recommended data for animated and puppet films are included in Appendix III.
- 20) The list of "minimum data" recommended by the Commission (see page 4 of General Report) is to be found in Appendix IV.
- 21) { The Commission offers for the consideration of all Archives the list of "Genres" which it has compiled (Appendix IX). It was however to make it quite clear that the list is only a rough guide put together without reference to cataloguing principles. It was produced under pressure of the necessity to put ~~to~~ some sort of concrete recommendation at this stage. The Commission hopes to return to this subject eventually after more detailed study and preparation.