

MINUTES

MEETING OF THE CATALOGUING COMMISSION OF FIAF

HELD IN LAUSANNE ON NOVEMBER 23 - 25, 1991

Participants: Ms. Harriet Harrison, Mr. Rolf Lindfors, Mr. Vladimir Opela, Dr. Gunter Schulz, Mr. Roger Smither, Mr. Carlos Roberto de Souza, Ms. Ani Velchevska

Guest Expert: Ms. Dorothea Gebauer

On the first day of our meetings, we were joined by Mr. Christian Dimitriu and staff from the Cinematheque Suisse.

Agenda: The Draft Agenda for the meetings was amended to include additional topics. A copy of the final Agenda appears in Appendix A.

Item 1: Reports.

a) Athens

1) Annual Congress. Mr. Roger Smither reported that the Executive Committee voted to table the proposal for compulsory rotation of Commission members and to set up a subcommittee to study the problem further. Mr. Smither presented our Commission's report at the Annual Congress. Meeting places for upcoming FIAF Congresses are: Montevideo (1992), Bangkok (1993), and Bologna (1994).

2) Cataloging Workshop. Mr. Smither reported on the success of our Athens workshop, which was led by Mr. Smither, Mr. Gartenberg, and Mr. Lindfors. Despite the fact that an Executive Committee meeting was scheduled for the same time as the workshop, the workshop was both well-attended and successful. In addition to the three organizers, approximately twenty people attended. The Commission organizers invited everyone to make a brief statement about his/her work and the problems that each faces. The discussions proved so fruitful that the meeting continued for over three hours. A copy of Mr. Smither's report on the workshop appears in Appendix B.

b) Activities of National and International Organizations

1) Cooperation with IASA on the Unesco funded project to create a glossary of audiovisual terms. Reporting by FAX, Mr. Gartenberg told about his involvement with this project, which is considered to be an NGO roundtable project with participation by IASA, FIAF, FIAT, IFLA, and ICA. IASA President, Gerald Gibson, is heading the team. The first meeting of the working group was in Vienna, but Mr. Gartenberg was unable to attend, owing to a very short advance notice. The glossary is to be geared towards the training of archivists and will cover terms for film, video, and sound recordings, etc. Mr. Gibson plans to hold a second meeting in the Netherlands in January to review the structure of the glossary. Mr. Gartenberg had some reservations about the haste with which the glossary has been compiled and cautioned the Commission and FIAF about becoming intimately associated with it.

Ms. Harrison reported that she had approached Mr. Gibson about developing closer contacts between the Cataloguing Commissions of FIAF and IASA. So far, nothing concrete has come from these discussions because, according to Mr. Gibson, the Cataloguing Commission of IASA has not been very active in recent years.

2) OAS. Mr. Carlos Roberto de Souza reported on a proposal from Montevideo (Sodre) to build a computerized cataloging network in Latin America. This project has been tentatively approved by OAS. During the preliminary negotiations, the nature of the project was changed. The OAS officer in charge, Ms. Susan Bentson, called a meeting in Buenos Aires which Maria Rita Galvao and Joao Socrates de Oliveira attended. Discussions at the meeting centered around three projects: one for formalization of cataloging rules and standards, one for promoting and collecting information about cinema for children, and one for preservation activities. There was tentative approval to distribute (US) \$100,000 in OAS monies over a period of four years -- partly to support the purchasing of equipment so that a new information network of moving images in archives could begin functioning in 1995. By the end of the meetings, nothing firm had been decided.

In October, a letter was sent to all archives asking for a formal declaration of intention to participate, and for documentation on format specifications used by the various archives. Archives were asked to respond until the beginning of December. Mr. de Souza was elected coordinator for the project. So far, only one response has been received -- from Ecuador. Still, it is quite good to have OAS interest and potential support. Mr. de Souza will keep the Commission informed about further developments.

Item no. 2: The Future of the Cataloguing Commission.

a) Membership Issues - Recommendations to the Executive Committee. This year the Commission has been faced with the departure of three highly valued members. Dr. Gunter Schultz (owing to the merger of the Staatliches Filmarchiv with the Bundesarchiv), Ms. Ani Velchevska (owing to funding problems at the Bulgarska Nacionalna Filmoteka), and Mr. Jon

Gartenberg (owing to his resignation from the Museum of Modern Art in order to accept a new position in private industry with Broadway Video, Inc.). In his letter to the Commission, Mr. Gartenberg stated that he would like to remain a member of the Commission. The members discussed this option and decided to defer a decision to the Executive Committee. Ms. Harrison explained the nature of her own changed status within the Library of Congress. She is no longer on the staff of M/B/RS, but is now a senior cataloging policy specialist in the Cataloging Policy Office of the Library of Congress. In this new post, she actually has more time than before to work on FIAF activities. In the absence of Ms. Harrison, the Commission members then discussed her situation and decided to request that she stay on as Chair.

Strategies and possibilities for filling our vacant positions were the next topics for discussion. There seemed to be two differing philosophies: (1) try to expand representation geographically, or (2) try to expand representation of European languages. All agreed that there was no longer a need to maintain an "East-West" balance. Recognizing that the first official step is to request permission from the Executive Committee and the candidates' respective directors, the following names were suggested:

Georges Botinelli (Lausanne)
 Anne Derges (Harare)
 Michele Lefevre (Montreal)
 Nicola Mazzanti (Bologna)
 Jaime Tello (Mexico - UNAM)
 Olwen Terris (London - NFA)
 Mikiko Tomita (Tokyo)

The members also agreed that they would prefer to invite individuals to attend Commission meetings as guest experts before making any firm commitments or recommendations to the Executive Committee.

b) Continuation of Projects.

1) Computer Formats. Mr. de Souza reported that he has gathered an old version of UNIMARC, a copy of CCF, some formats from Latin American archives, and also an in-house format from Helsinki. He would like to send letters to all members and observers asking for copies of the formats they are using. A following step would be to see how these varying formats could be combined. Mr. Smither volunteered to send Mr. de Souza a copy of the survey conducted five years ago which listed the formats in use by FIAF members and observers. Ms. Harrison agreed to explain the nature and central importance of this project to the Executive Committee in Jerusalem.

2) Technical Guidelines. Dr. Schulz reported that he has finished this project, which should be published early in 1992. Originally he had sent the disc to K.G. Saur at the end of March 1991; after several requests concerning the status of the publication, Saur representatives finally confessed that they had lost the disc. In the Autumn, Dr. Schulz supplied

them with a new disc and preparations for publication are now back on track. The guidelines should be published in five languages -- with the glossary portion done to the same printing quality as was the FIAF Glossary. Mr. Opela volunteered to prepare a Czech version of the guidelines. Dr. Schulz added that Eva Orbanz is now pressuring Saur to complete the work in a timely fashion.

3) Glossary. Mr. Gartenberg reported by FAX that he had begun work on additional languages for the FIAF Glossary and had solicited term lists in the Danish, Finnish, Polish, Rumanian and Croatian languages. To date he has received only a Croatian language list. He requested the Commission to consider whether or not, and if so, how the Glossary project should continue. The Commission members discussed several options and decided that the most interesting next step would be to add non-European languages, so that any next edition of the Glossary would be more truly intercontinental, reflecting the worldwide membership goals of FIAF. Mr. Smither stated he had the impression that the FIAF Secretariat still has a large stock of the first edition of the Glossary. Ms. Harrison agreed to ask the advice of the Executive Committee about the relative importance of continuing this project.

4) Bibliography of National Filmographies. Mr. Lindfors reported that he has completed his research and entered all the updated lists of national filmographies onto his microcomputer. His next step, which he plans to complete in January, is to send the national lists to appropriate member archives for review and correction. He hopes to receive answers and to prepare the final manuscript for submission to the publisher by early summer. Dr. Schulz advised Mr. Lindfors to check with K.G. Saur about their rules for page layout and pagination/header styles before preparing the final draft. He suggested that if Mr. Lindfors could not obtain these recommendations from Saur, he should check with Eva Orbanz, who has one.

5) Early production company names and logos. Mr. Opela reported that he has not received any contributions from other archives for this project. The Czech Film Archive has now finished a Czech filmography which includes stills, posters, documentation and film materials. From this, he will make a special part of the book for companies and logos. Ms. Gebauer has completed work on some of the German companies and will send it to Mr. Opela. Ms. Harrison offered to ask a member of her former staff, Mr. Brian Taves, who has a PhD in cinema studies from USC, if he has an interest in collaborating with Mr. Opela by compiling information on U.S. company histories, names, and logos. Mr. Smither mentioned that he has heard rumors of an extensive logo collection in the BFI. He promised to seek further information about this from Anne Fleming. Ms. Harrison promised to mention this also to Clyde Jeavons.

6) Revision of manual, Film Cataloging. Mr. Smither suggested that the manual is too out-of-date to revise, and recommended instead that the Commission borrow the idea of the Preservation Commission to issue a series of short papers in looseleaf format. Such papers could be issued in a more timely fashion than major publications and will therefore also be easier to update. Furthermore, the Commission cca manage the distributing of papers to members

without having to trouble the Secretariat. Archives receiving the papers could be asked to supply their own binders. Ideas for the papers could come from FIAF members, observers or affiliates, from discussions at workshops, or could originate with the Commission member author. Ms. Harrison agreed to take this proposal to the Executive Committee for their approval.

7) Genres. Ms. Gebauer and Dr. Schulz would like to continue working on this project -- limiting it to include only "true" genre terms for fiction features. They wish to concentrate their work on terms which are widely represented on the lists they have received. Mr. Smither agreed to help with the English translation, and Ms. Harrison volunteered to send Ms. Gebauer the updates for the U.S. genre term list. She will also double check with the Executive Committee to see whether they would like for Ms. Gebauer and Dr. Schulz to continue this work.

8) Nitrate union catalog. Executive Secretary, Brigitte van der Elst, supplied the Commission with a list of members who are still not participating in this useful project, i.e., to create a union catalog of feature film titles from the nitrate era held in archives other than those of the country of origin of the films. Ms. Harrison will prepare letters for archives whose collections are in scope for the project, and who should be encouraged to participate. She will coordinate this work with Ms. van der Elst.

c) Workshop for Montevideo. Mr. Smither suggested to the Commission that we not prepare papers for the Montevideo Cataloguing Commission workshop. Instead, he recommended that we set up a special box or pigeon hole during the first days of the Congress where people could put suggestions for topics they want to hear about. He felt it was very important for us to talk about issues which are of major concern to the participants and which they want to talk about. He pointed out that questions can be wide-ranging, because some participants are catalogers, while others are heads of archives. He also felt that we should have a translator in Montevideo to help us with Spanish. Ms. Harrison promised to prepare a short article for the FIAF Bulletin telling members of our plans for the Montevideo workshop and asking if any would like to send questions in advance. [The workshop is scheduled for April 25, 1992.]

d) New projects.

1) Selection criteria for film archives. Following a suggestion made by Wolfgang Klaue, the Commission discussed the possibility of preparing a set of selection criteria for archives who are seeking guidance in deciding which materials to keep in their archives and which could be considered extraneous to their needs. Dr. Schulz volunteered to prepare a background paper listing special problems related to selection. He would collect the papers on selection criteria, which have been presented during the 1980 Annual Congress in Karlovy Vary and prepared by Larry Karr and others. Also, some archives have written selection criteria which we could collect; e.g., Mr. Kahlenberg has written selection criteria. At the beginning of this project, we need to consider theoretical problems -- such as those which may be

presented in the paper on "a philosophy of film archiving" which Ray Edmondson is preparing. The Commission members agreed that we should be willing to take a look at this project even though some felt that the underlying issues are not really cataloging issues. Still there are links to cataloging, particularly those which concern developing cataloging priorities. Perhaps this project could be undertaken jointly by the Programming and Cataloguing Commissions.

2) Looseleaf cataloging papers. The members of the Commission discussed possible topics for the series of short papers we have decided to prepare. Suggestions included:

The importance of a computer communications format. The paper should emphasize that this is the last essential link in establishing networks, that a format is in fact what members have wanted for so long, and that this is a project which is appropriate for the Cataloguing Commission to undertake on behalf of the members (Mr. Smither and/or Mr. de Souza).

A checklist for existing transliteration standards. (Mr. Smither).

Transcribing and alphabetizing signs, symbols, numbers, and other non-alphabetical matter appearing in film titles. How to cope with signs, symbols, characters, diacritics, or other matters that cannot be produced in relevant computer systems. Dr. Schulz has prepared a paper on this topic, which he gave to Ms. Harrison. She will send a xerox copy to Mr. Smither and also request an English language translation at the Library of Congress.

How to describe completeness on cataloging records. Questions to consider: is it a deliberate extract, or accidentally incomplete, or a result of censorship activities; is a comparison of footage a reliable measure; what about different language versions, or silent films whose footage may differ owing to intertitle requirements for different languages (length of subtitles can also differ from copy to copy even in the same language); should groups of extracts and/or censorship cuts be, in themselves, described as complete or incomplete; how, finally, can one determine with any hope of accuracy what the "original length" really was; problems in measuring the length of videotapes. (Mr. Smither)

Conventions for dates. Questions include how to deal with uncertainties within dates, particularly for the day and month; various types of dates: publication, distribution, copyright, reissue/rerelease, etc. This is an area where wide variations in treatment are possible among different archives, and it could be useful to survey archives concerning their conventions. Ms. Harrison volunteered to work on this paper.

e) Next Commission meetings. Mr. de Souza will host our next Commission meeting in Sao Paulo in April immediately following the Annual Congress in Montevideo. Ms. Harrison will confirm the precise dates with Ms. Galvao during the Executive Committee meetings. Mr. Opela has volunteered to host the 1993 meetings in Prague. This is the year when the Annual Congress is scheduled for Bangkok.

Item no. 3: Other.

a) FIAF Cataloguing Rules. None of the members of the Commission had any information on how well the cataloging rules are selling, nor had anyone seen any reviews. Ms. Harrison will FAX Manfred Link and ask him to whom he has sent review copies. She will ask him to send her copies of any reviews he may have collected.

b) Defining data elements for posters. Christopher Yost, who has been working on the computer software for the Cinematheque Suisse, has, as his next project, the preparation of a special screen for film posters. He believes that the work Lausanne is doing for posters could serve as a model which could be sold to other archives. He is therefore interested in suggestions for useful categories of information to be used in describing and providing access to posters. He noted that since the software will become the property of the Cinematheque Suisse, this could be quite a good deal for other archives wishing to obtain this software. Sony is also working with IBM to create a disc/computer interface for storing poster images (ca. 50,000 on one disc) and making them searchable through a variety of access points. The Commission members discussed the project and decided to recommend it to the Documentation Commission, as more properly under their area of expertise. Ms. Harrison promised to discuss the project with Michele Aubert.

c) Film cataloging brochure. In his FAX, Mr. Gartenberg re-raised the question of publishing the cataloging brochure. He suggested that we seek assurance from the Executive Committee about publishing the brochure before any further work is done on it. Commission members agreed and pointed out that if nothing else could be done, we could certainly produce a kind of Commission manifesto through our proposed looseleaf papers publication procedures.

d) Commission history. The Commission members agreed that we should try now, after over twenty years of existence (the Commission was founded in 1968), to produce a Commission history. The history should include both documents and photographs. Suggested sources include Wolfgang Klaue and Jon Gartenberg.

APPENDIX A

A G E N D A

Meeting of the FIAF Cataloguing Commission

Lausanne, November 23-25, 1991

1. Reports

a) Athens

- 1) Annual Congress**
- 2) Cataloging Workshop**

b) Activities of National and International Organizations

2. The Future of the Cataloguing Commission

a) Membership Issues -- Recommendations for the EC

b) Continuation of Projects

- 1) Computer Formats**
- 2) Technical Guidelines**
- 3) Glossary**
- 4) Bibliography of National Filmographies**
- 5) Early Production Company Names and Logos**
- 6) Revision of Manual, Film Cataloging**
- 7) Genres**
- 8) Nitrate Union Catalog**

c) Workshop for Montevideo?

d) New Projects

e) Next Commission Meeting

3. Other

REPORT ON THE CATALOGUING COMMISSION WORKSHOP
 held at the Hotel Grande Bretagne, Athens, 19 April 1991
 during the 47th FIAF Congress

Purpose and Framework

The intended purpose and framework of the Workshop are described in the following text, which was distributed in advance to Congress participants to encourage their attendance at the Workshop:

Cataloguing Commission Workshop

Managing Cataloguing Activities - Standards, Resources, Systems

The Workshop will provide an opportunity to explore what is required for successful cataloguing in film archives. It will look at issues such as the role and purpose of cataloguing, the requirements of a good cataloguing system, and the resources needed to maintain efficient cataloguing programmes.

Participants are invited to raise issues or bring specific questions for discussion and to share real experiences - good or bad. The Workshop is intended to get as close as possible to the day-to-day activities of film cataloguers.

The Workshop will be led by the following Cataloguing Commission members, who will make brief introductory presentations:

- | | |
|----------------|---|
| Jon Gartenberg | (Department of Film, the Museum of Modern Art, New York - editor of the Commission's <i>Glossary of Filmographic Terms</i> and author of the chapter on cataloguing in the forthcoming <i>FIAF Handbook for Film Archives</i>)
Presentation Theme: The Role of Cataloguing |
| Rolf Lindfors | (Cinematket, Svenska Filminstitutet, Stockholm - editor of the forthcoming new edition of the Commission's <i>Bibliography of National Filmographies</i>)
Presentation Theme: Resources |
| Roger Smither | (Department of Film, Imperial War Museum, London - editor of the Commission's <i>Study on the Usage of Computers for Film Cataloguing</i> and author of <i>Evaluating Computer Cataloguing Systems</i>)
Presentation Theme: Standards and Systems |

The workshop leaders have all had experience with the implementation of computer systems, which they will be pleased to discuss in the context of the Workshop.

Participants

At the start of the Workshop, participants were invited to make a brief statement introducing themselves and their archives,

and explaining either the state of cataloguing in their archives or their main interest in attending the Workshop. In addition to the three Workshop leaders, the following were present:

Name	Archive
Sylvie Piskin	Cinémathèque Universitaire, Paris
Sunniva O'Flynn	Archive Section, Irish Film Institute, Dublin
M H Khoshnevis	Film-Khane-Ye Melli-E Iran, Tehran
Peter Konlechner	Österreichisches Filmmuseum, Wien
Catherine Gautier	Fimoteca Española, Madrid
Francisco Gonzalez	Anthology Film Archives, New York
Betty Kidd	National Archives of Canada, Ottawa
Dan Nissen	Det Danske Filmmuseum, København
Vesna Maslovaric	Cinémathèque of Macedonia, Skopje
Kaarle Stewen	Suomen Elokuva-Arkisto, Helsinki
Kirsi Rinne	Suomen Elokuva-Arkisto, Helsinki
Ildikó Berkes	Filmarchivum, Magyar Filmintezet, Budapest
Masatoshi Ohba	National Film Centre, Tokyo
Gudmundur K Björnsson	Kvikmyndasafn Islands, Reykjavik
Lia van Leer	Archion Israeli Leserativ, Jerusalem
Luis Rosario Albert	Archivo de Imagenes en Movimiento, Puerto Rico
Penpan Jarernporn	National Film Archive, Bangkok
Vittorio Boarini	Cineteca Comunale, Bologna
Savel Stiopul	Arhiva Nationala de Filme, Bucuresti
Enrique Planas	Filmoteca Vaticana

Discussions

Following the introductions and the presentations by the Workshop leaders (which included a re-statement of the Cataloguing Commission's approach to the question of the endorsement of any one computer system for film cataloguing), there was a lively discussion between participants which included the following topics:

- the question of computer standards, with regard both to cataloguing systems and the exchange of information between archives; in this context, the increasing speed and capacity as against the decreasing cost of micro-computers, the importance of output in a standard (ASCII ?) character set, and the erosion (by the evolution of WINDOWS software) of the difference between IBM PC and Apple Macintosh platforms were among the points noted;
- the various implications of different database models (hierarchical as distinct from relational) and the specific capabilities of certain packages, linked to the overwhelming primary importance of ensuring careful definition of the requirements and priorities of the individual archive that is acquiring the system;
- the importance of ensuring that computer software adopted in an archive is likely to have a long, stable and well-supported life (also noted, however, was the extreme

desirability of having in-house at least one member of staff familiar with the system and capable of its day-to-day upkeep);

- methodologies for providing subject access, including the various benefits and problems of classification systems such as Dewey or UDC, of natural language keywords and the availability of thesauri such as the Library of Congress subject headings and the Unesco Thesaurus, and of text retrieval;
- correct procedures for cataloguing films held in multiple versions when the only difference between the various versions was a change in the language of the commentary;
- procedures that could help ensure (or enforce) consistency of terminology or of spelling among cataloguers in an archive - for example, authority lists that could be enforced by a computer with varying degrees of fierceness; data entry via word-processors with spell-checkers, etc;
- problems caused to archives by the Anglo-American origins of most software packages - whilst obviously most severe for those needing to use a language (such as Farsi) which is not only not a user of Latin script but also does not use one of the major non-Latin scripts such as Arabic, Cyrillic etc, this problem affects cataloguing in virtually any language other than English, for example by the provision of so-called spell-checkers that will not accept (or data bases that will not correctly sort) words incorporating diacritics; the absence of a world-wide standard for the computer coding of letters with diacritics was also pointed out;
- the need for universally agreed standards for transliteration between various scripts, and for authoritative statements of original titles (and perhaps also of correct translations of original titles) in publications purporting to be national filmographies - for example the Japanese title commonly given in the English-speaking world as *A Page of Madness* is actually an incorrect translation.

The Workshop leaders expressed their gratitude to all the participants for what was agreed to have been a useful and interesting afternoon. The Commission has been much helped in its understanding of the needs of FIAF members and observers, and will reflect this in the content and presentation of its future work: it is hoped that other participants also found the Workshop useful.

Roger Smither
Cataloguing Commission