

## FIAF CATALOGUING COMMISSION REPORT

Los Angeles, April 27 - 28, 1995

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**News Flash:** The French translation of The FIAF Cataloguing Rules for Film Archives has just been published. Translated from the English by Éric Loné (Centre Nationale de la Cinématographie), the new title is Règles de catalogage des archives de films. Paris, AFNOR, c1994. 280 p.

The Cataloguing Commission held its annual meetings last November in Bruges. Thanks to the good will of the Executive Committee -- in particular its Treasurer -- we were able to use last year's Commission savings for bringing Carlos Roberto de Souza from São Paulo to join us. Holding our meeting so near to the Secretariat was most helpful, as both Beatrice Trouveroy and Brigitte van der Elst were able to join us, each for a different half-day session. During the meetings we set ourselves the task of formulating Commission goals and objectives, and of evaluating our current and future projects in the light of these goals.

### Projects:

**Occasional Papers:** The Commission has now issued seven articles in our Occasional Papers series. Since our last Congress, two new papers, one by Liora Silberstein, entitled Accentuate the Positive [Catalog] the Negative and one by Roger Smither, entitled "Where's the Rest of Me? The Problem of Completeness in the Film Catalogue. FIAF members and affiliates may claim missing issues for any of the seven titles by contacting:

Harriet Harrison  
CPSO  
Library of Congress  
Washington, D.C. 20024  
FAX: (202) 707-6629; Phone: (202) 707-4378  
EMail harrison@mail.loc.gov

The Commission is particularly gratified that two of the papers in our series have been contributed by corresponding members, and we would like to encourage additional corresponding member participation in the coming year. Examples of suggestions for additional topics are:

- Finding catalogs on the Internet
- Purpose, creation and use of authority files
- Film location systems
- Cataloger subjectivity in the "objective" catalog;  
or, to what extent does the cataloger "own"  
the records he/she creates

Our target for the Occasional Papers is to issue at least two per year. Of course, more are always welcome.

**Computer Formats:** Carlos Roberto de Souza is now collecting data for our test of his sample format. Each of you should find information, and a request for participation in your pigeon hole in Los Angeles. Because we knew how easy it is to mislay papers received at congresses, we will also send copies of the test instructions to each of you this summer. V

**Early Production Companies and Logos:** This project was begun nearly five years ago with the intention of aiding catalogers in their film identification work by providing production company histories, linked with the logos they used during differing periods of their existence. Because we know that the project would be difficult and labor-intensive, we designed it to be ongoing -- for as long as it took to complete. Now, with some experience under our belts, we realize that even we were optimistic.

**Targets:** This year, Vladimir Opěla will publish the Czech Republic contribution. Peter Westervoorde has completed work for the Netherlands, and we look for publication of his work during the coming year as well. Olwen Terris and her staff have collected a large number of logos and are currently in the process of writing production company histories. She estimates that their work will require another two years to complete.

**Bibliography of National Filmographies:** Rolf Lindfors has the manuscript in machine-readable form and ready to give to the Documentation Commission for inclusion on their next edition of the FIAF CD-ROM.

**Genres:** Olwen Terris has now received the collection of genre lists accumulated over the years by former Commission members. She also has received the genre lists contributed quite recently by our corresponding members, and is currently working on collating the lists and preparing definitions.

**Target:** To issue a draft list of terms with definitions distributed to the FIAF archives for comment by the end of 1995.

**Intellectual access:** Closely related to and overlapping with questions of genre access, standardization of methodologies for intellectual access are the last to be developed -- in the library and paper archive world, as well as in our field. Basic options include:

- Hierarchical organization of knowledge through classification schemes such as UDC
- Relational organization of knowledge through standardized thesaurus terms
- Free text searches, with or without hypertext links

Moreover, there is little agreement about which and how many topics or themes are significant enough to merit access.

**Targets:** To demonstrate the problems, the Commission has decided to prepare a workshop on this issue for an upcoming congress. The format of the workshop will be to screen a series of four to five short films of differing types. Audience participation will be invited by requesting each person to assign subjects for each film. A discussion will close the session.

## STATEMENT OF GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

### FIAF Cataloguing Commission

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Cataloguing is both an integral and an integrating archival task. Its purpose is to organize, list and describe moving image collections in ways which support preservation, acquisition, administration, programming, and service to the archives' clientele. The Cataloguing Commission seeks to support these activities by providing guidance and tools which can facilitate the work of cataloguing staffs, thereby building communication among FIAF archives.

One of the basic ways in which the Cataloguing Commission works to foster communication and cooperation amongst archives is the development of a **common language of cataloguing**. This involves the development and maintenance (updating) of standards so that records created in one FIAF archive can be interpreted, copied, and used in another. To this end, projects undertaken and project include:

- cataloguing rules for moving image materials
- guidelines for technical description of moving images
- computer communications format for film archives
- establishment of common terminologies, e.g.,
  - credit functions
  - genres
  - film forms
  - technical
- identification of logos and standardization of names for early production companies
- intellectual access to moving image collections through subject description and analysis

Complementary to the Commission's task of creating a common language of cataloguing is the dissemination of "state of the art" information in the areas of computing technology, telecommunications, and the promotion and support of cooperative projects. Examples of activities in support of these goals include:

- conducting studies and surveys of computer technology applications for film archive use
- fostering special interest and/or regional working groups, e.g., software information exchange, European, North and South American catalogers groups, etc.
- the union catalog/database at the Secretariat in Brussels
- contributions to symposia and workshops at annual congresses
- reviewing cataloging activities in FIAF archives as reported in the published annual reports
- establishing a system of corresponding membership for the Commission
- issuing a series of Cataloguing Commission Occasional Papers
- preparation of bibliographies of moving image cataloguing resources

Together these goals and activities form a cohesive framework in accord with the overall aims of the Federation to support the preservation of films and the dissemination of film culture, and to encourage cooperation amongst archives in support of these goals.

**FIAF CATALOGUING COMMISSION**  
**LONG-TERM GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

The Cataloguing Commission has two major long-term goals:

**(1) the development and maintenance (updating) of standards (i.e., common terminologies) in support of improved communication and cooperation amongst film archives the world over. To this end, projects undertaken and/or projected include:**

cataloguing rules (published; requires mechanisms for update)  
guidelines for technical description (published; requires mechanisms for update)  
common terminologies for credit functions (published), genres (in progress), film forms  
computer communications format for film archives (in progress)  
identification of logos and standardization of names for early production companies (in progress)  
intellectual access to collections through the catalog (i.e., subject analysis) (preliminary studies only)  
rules for creating filmographies (preliminary planning stages; jointly with the Documentation Commission)  
guidelines for selection criteria (preliminary planning stages; jointly with the Programming Commission)

**(2) dissemination of "state of the art" information in the areas of information technology and cataloging and the promotion and support of cooperative projects. Examples of activities in support of this goal include:**

the preparation of cataloging tools such as the Bibliography of National Filmographies  
conducting surveys and studies/recommendations for the use of adp in FIAF archives.  
the union catalog/database at the Secretariat in Brussels  
the review of cataloging activities in FIAF archives as reported in the published annual reports  
the establishment of a system of corresponding membership for the Commission  
the issuing of a series of "Cataloguing Commission Occasional papers" either separately or as part of the FIAF Bulletin  
contributions to symposia/conduct of workshops at annual congresses  
the establishment of special interest and/or regional working groups, e.g., software information exchange, European, North and South American catalogers groups, etc.