

Answers given by the Staatliches Filmarchiv der DDR
to a questionnaire supplied by the Secretariat of UNESCO,
for a preliminary study on the preservation of moving images

I. PRODUCTION OF MOVING IMAGES

1. National production (average per year over the past
10 years)

- feature films: 15 to 20

- short films: (this term is not correct. Presumably
it implies documentary films which
need not always be short films)

for cinema: 25 to 30

for education and information: 300 to 350

newsreels: 52

animation films for cinema: 25 to 30

- TV films: (this term is not clear. Does it imply
only such TV productions that are
recorded on film material? Does it
mean only staged subjects - comparable
with feature films - or also pro-
ductions of a documentary nature?)

GDR Television productions on film or
video tape:

TV feature films: 50

TV productions of non-fictional nature: 3,500

TV programmes (mainly for children) of less than
10 minutes duration: 250

2. Policy of producers (film-makers, and broadcasting
companies) with respect to preservation:

a) estimate of holdings of major film-makers and
broadcasting companies:

- Fernsehen der DDR (GDR Television) 160.000 copies

- DEFA-Studio für Dokumentarfilme (DEFA-Studio
for Documentary Films) 30.000 copies

b) what is the policy adopted by major film-makers and broadcasting companies with respect to preservation:

- do they preserve material
mainly for their own purposes and needs
- do they destroy material; if so, for what reason
they destroy
 - almost any material which is not used in the final stage of a cinema or TV production (editing material);
 - any material emerging at intermediary stages during the physical working process of a cinema or TV production (correction prints, samples, etc.);
 - any material which must be destroyed due to legal obligation;
 - any material that has been selected for destruction
- do they select material for preservation; if so, under what criteria; with what objectives;

Selection is mainly based on the criteria of future use in their own productions.

GDR Television is testing a system, i.e. they ask the relevant production teams to recommend on completion of a production whether the material concerned should be preserved over a limited period or be preserved permanently. The experience thus gained is extremely useful making the selection more relevant and objective by employing a wide measure of co-determination.

c) where is material preserved?

- at GDR Television and
at DEFA Documentary Film Studio

d) if deposited with an archive, under what conditions:

- in what form is material deposited:

(this question is not clear)

Material deposited with the Staatliches Film-archiv is material (no videotapes yet), in gauges of 16 mm up to 70 mm, nitrate, acetate, black/white and colour, positive prints, dupe negatives, original negatives, dupe positives, silent, sound, combined or separated sound.

- is accompanying documentation (scripts, etc.) also deposited:

Supply of related documentation material for all productions of the film studios is an integral part of our legal deposit. The archive receives with each film: all stages of the script, stills, posters, publicity material, censorship files.

Documentation of TV productions are kept at TV.

- what are the conditions with respect to use by the archive of material (if agreements have been established, attach model agreement):

Due to the establishment of a central archive for cinema and TV films, the conditions covering the use of the stored material which had previously been formulated are at this time under revision. Regarding the use of the stored material the archive is aiming at the following legal positions:

- the right to use any material privately for study and information purposes
- the right to use the holdings for archive theatre screenings
- the right to use the holdings for film clubs, cultural activities abroad and for exchange, subject to permission of the copyright owner
- the right to decide on the use of extracts and quotations
- the right to charge fees for services rendered by the archive

- e) if material is preserved by the producers, under what technical conditions (give details of storage conditions, temperature, relative humidity; containers, cataloguing system);

Films are stored in air-conditioned space (+ 12°C, 50 to 70% relative humidity) which does not meet the requirements of optimum values for permanent preservation of film material.

Storage of films in metal containers (300 m and 600 m reels) as well as in boxes made of vulcanised fibre.

The cataloguing system is geared, according to the purpose of the institution, mainly to subject index of the film contents, to guarantee operative retrieval of the material. Recording of filmographic data is neglected.

- f) is material made available to researchers; to the general public:

There is restricted use of the material for research purposes, it is not available for the general public.

II. INSTITUTIONS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE PRESERVATION OF MOVING IMAGES

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A. Status, functions and decision-making process:

i) legal status

The Staatliches Filmarchiv is a legally independent institution. Like any other institution of film (film studios, film distribution, film export, laboratories) of the GDR, the Staatliches Filmarchiv is under the control of the main department of film of the GDR Ministry of Culture.

- ii) is institution profit making, or non-profit making:
non-profit making
- iii) what is the object of acquisition:
- a) national films, foreign films, TV films, feature films, etc.
- Films:
- national production (feature and non-feature films) before 1945 - to obtain a complete record;
- national production (feature and non-feature films) of the GDR - to obtain a complete record (with the exception of amateur films and a negligible number of information and publicity films which are produced by other than by the GDR national film producers);
- foreign films: all films exhibited in GDR film theatres and other films depending on their artistic and historical interest, in selection.
- TV productions:
- national productions or productions adapted for TV transmission (German versions) of foreign origin.
- b) censored or uncensored copies of films:
- This question cannot be answered with "either ... or", but only with "as well as".
- As a rule, such films/TV programmes are acquired by the archive, as are released for the film theatres or for transmission over TV network.
- In departure from that principle, the archive accepts material of a documentary nature and which is not primarily assigned to public use (editing material of documentary interest, shots documenting historical events or personalities).

c) original negative, positive print, etc.

The archive endeavours to acquire the original negative plus one positive print of films of the national production, provided that a negative is made during the production process. If there is no negative in existence - of historically valuable material - a duplicate negative is made.

Foreign films of which German versions are made in the GDR, are treated in the same way.

No duplicate negative of the original version of foreign films is acquired, if permanent preservation of the titles is guaranteed by some other archive.

iv) description of holdings:

a) size of total holdings:

approx. 150 million meter, i.e. 40,000 titles

b) breakdown into categories:

all film

v) by what authority is material acquired:

Mainly by legal deposit, although with the right to apply selection.

Further, by purchase from private collectors, and by exchange among archives.

indicate the mechanism for selecting material (establishment of Committee; criteria for selection):

At present, the principle of total acquisition is applied for the national film production and for all films shown in the film theatres of the GDR. In the further stage of development of a joint archive for cinema and TV, this principle has to be abandoned, as the number of productions for cinema and TV would not permit complete preservation, mainly because of economic reasons. The annual acquisitions of cinema and TV productions shall not exceed approx. 25,000 reels, that is about 30% of the total production.

Methods and criteria of selection are at present being discussed. As far as the methods are concerned, the suggestion is that the Staatliches Filmarchiv makes a tentative selection in the field of cinema and the central TV archive makes a tentative selection for TV films, which are then put before a joint committee for decision.

Within the criteria of selection the following must be taken into account:

artistic and historical interest

value of documentation in the representation of important contemporary or historical events

possible re-use of a production for TV, cinema, export

the necessity to avoid any duplication of preservation (if material of cinema and TV is stored in a joint archive)

the problem of multiple preservation (is it necessary in each case to preserve a positive and a negative print, if a film does not have historical or artistic value, or if the film is kept by another archive for permanent preservation)

the question of limited preservation (introduction of preservation periods of 3, 5 and 10 years after which period a decision must be taken whether a title shall be destroyed or permanently preserved)

vi) at whose expense is material acquired:

All material acquired by the archive by legal deposit is given free of charge. The majority of the material (negatives, transmission copies) are not produced for the archive, they emerge from the production process.

An exception are such films that are assigned for the commercial cinema and of which a positive print of premiere quality is made available to the archive prior to the public release of the film. The costs arising for such prints are borne by the distribution company.

- vii) under what conditions is material acquired (copyright, permission to use); if agreements have been concluded with producers, attach model agreement

see also item I.2. d)

Based on the intended establishment of a joint archive for cinema and TV, the whole definition of the rights of the archive is under discussion. Regarding questions of use, an answer has been given under the above mentioned item.

Moreover, definition of the following rights shall be given for the archive:

Basic principles

- mutual respect for the tasks of film production and distribution and television on the one hand, and of the cultural, scientific and historical tasks of the archive on the other;
- legal deposit for any film and television material that has been selected for permanent preservation;
transfer of selected positive or negative copies to the archive, free of charge;
- respect for decrees, instructions and agreements, in particular for copyright relating to the holdings, and use of archive films.

Rights and authority of the archive

Replenishment of the holdings

- the right to select from film and television productions, from other film producers and foreign films that are shown in the cinemas; once the material has been acquired it becomes the property of the archive. Such material can only be reclaimed by the producers for the purpose of use but not for destruction;
- the right to decide on destruction of material that is not considered to be of value for permanent preservation;
- the right of purchase of film material and the right of pre-emption of the archive as against all other institutions;
- the right to exchange film material;
- the right to complete recording of information on film and TV productions, use of foreign films and productions of other producers.

Preservation of the holdings

- the right to carry out the measures that are necessary to preserve the material that has been acquired;
- the right to destroy any material that is considered to be of no use;
- the right to limit use for reasons of preservation.

viii) at what point is material acquired (at end of commercial exploitation, etc.):

Cinema films of the national production and foreign productions that are exhibited in the film theatres of the GDR:

one positive print prior to the first public performance,
negative print after one year

TV productions:

after first transmission and one repeated transmission

ix) what is the primary function of the institution: to preserve or to use (i.e. to project to public, to lend out, etc.) the material acquired:

None of the above functions implied in the question is given priority in the activities of the Staatliches Filmarchiv. The Staatliches Filmarchiv endeavours to conduct a well-balanced policy among the four fundamental tasks of any archive: collecting, preserving, cataloguing, making available for use.

x) use made of material acquired:

a) projection to the general public

The Staatliches Filmarchiv does not arrange commercial performances. The performances of the Staatliches Filmarchiv are not public, only members holding a membership card of a visitors organisation or of a film club have access.

- . is the permission of the producer sought:

Non-commercial performances in the framework of the cultural activities of the archive do not require permission of the copyright owner, according to the copyright laws of the GDR. Permission is sought, if for foreign films special regulations are stipulated in agreements which are concluded for the purpose of exploitation of such films in the GDR.

- . what is annual audience reached:

between 100,000 and 120,000 spectators

- . what is the entrance fee charged

1,50 M

- . is a separate master copy of the film kept

A master copy (i.e. a film of which only one positive print is in existence) is never made available for screening. There is a second print made of a number of films which are in frequent use for cultural activities.

- b) access made available to scholars and researchers on the premises:

The object of the research work must be in agreement with the principles stipulated for the activity of the Staatliches Filmarchiv: preservation of peace, understanding among the nations, mutual respect of sovereignty, and it must not be a means to publicize fascism, racism, anti-communism, incitement of peoples or war propaganda. This has been the practice for more than 20 years, and during that time there have been very few cases where access was not granted.

In many cases - mainly private persons, students - no fees are raised. As a rule, for one hour screening time or for use of the cutting table, a fee of 12,50 M is charged.

Copies of documentation material are made available against reimbursement of laboratory costs.

c) material lent to other institutions:

- . what type of institutions (schools, film clubs, etc):
 - for study purposes: Film Academy, universities
 - for information: film studios, TV, theatres
 - for cultural activities: film clubs
- . audience reached (estimate per year):
 - for study purposes: 8,000 to 10,000
 - for information: 3,000 to 4,000
 - for cultural activities: 80,000 to 100,000
- . under what conditions, at what charge:
 - observance of the regulations of use and the conditions for lending of the Staatliches Filmarchiv;
 - lending charges are 30 M per film;
 - films for study purposes are lent free of charge;

d) material exchanged with other archives:

Exchange is made only with members affiliated with the Fédération Internationale des Archives du Film (FIAF), based on the statutes and rules of FIAF.

e) shots and sequences made from material for sale

This task is not observed by the Staatliches Filmarchiv but by the Archiv für den wissenschaftlichen Film der DDR which is authorised to make its holdings available for commercial exploitation.

Archive material is made available for cinema and TV productions only inasmuch as the pertaining rights are held by the Archiv für den wissenschaftlichen Film. This applies to the major part of German films produced before 1945, for which the archive was assigned to observe the rights under the law of property; to archive own productions (shots of documentary interest of contemporary events and personalities); to the use of quotations of films of the national production.

Use of the archive holdings for such purposes is made according to the same basic principles as described under A. x) b)

f) is material reproduced; if so, for what purpose:

Material is reproduced for the following reasons:

- for preservation
- for exchange
- for sale

g) material acquired for preservation and research purpose only:

Certain restrictions in the use of material are exceptional and not the rule. The restrictions are respected in the rare cases in which they have to be applied.

B. The means used to collect and preserve moving images

i) technical means of preserving moving images:

- in what form (what support, base, etc.)

The Staatliches Filmarchiv preserves nitrate and acetate material, in colour and in black & white in gauges from 16 mm to 70 mm.

- storage conditions (temperature, relative humidity; containers, etc.)

Temperature for all material: + 6 °C, ± 2 °C
(a vault for colour films, with a temperature of - 7 °C ± 2 °C, is under construction)

Relative humidity for all material: 60% ± 5%
(relative humidity for the vault under construction will be 25% ± 5%)

Containers: metal containers of 300 m and 600 m reels.

- treatment of material

- physical examination of the material prior to storage
- physical examination at certain intervals, after use of material
- putting chemicals into the containers to neutralise nitrous gases
- cleaning of polluted films
- ultra-sonic cleaning
- restoration of faded films
- polishing of films
- restorative duplication and other measures

- transfer of material to other supports

 - duplicating of nitrate onto acetate film

 - duplicating of film that is particularly endangered by physical or chemical effects

- ii) the staff in charge of preservation:

 - (this question is not precise. Does it imply the total number of archive staff who more or less all contribute to preservation, or only those employees who carry out technical work exclusively?)

 - the number of staff

 - total number of staff: 174

 - number of personnel dealing with preservation (vaults, air-conditioning, workshop, film examination, editorial restoration, laboratory): 75

 - the level of staff (qualifications, etc.)

 - in general there are three levels of qualification in all spheres of archive work: university graduates, cadres with secondary vocational training, skilled workers. They work in the fields of film technique, air-conditioning, archive science and history, information science, film history (only university graduates)

- iii) indexing and cataloguing systems used:

 - is a catalogue of holdings available

 - no -

 - The Staatliches Filmarchiv has compiled and published filmographic information covering the whole GDR production (from 1946 to 1964 publications were devoted to the production of individual film studios, and from 1965 the productions have been covered by the "Filmo-bibliographische Jahresberichte" (annual publication of filmographic and bibliographical data). Since the national production is collected according to the principle of complete acquisition, these filmographies can be considered as catalogues of holdings.

Since 1976 a number of catalogues have been published covering documentary material on certain thematic complexes.

- brief description of indexing and cataloguing systems used

Cataloguing system: mainly based on the recommendations of the FIAF Cataloguing Commission. Detailed description of the cataloguing system applied at the Staatliches Filmarchiv is given in the publication "Filmcataloguing" by FIAF (the publication will be published in autumn 1977 by an American publisher, the draft can be made available by the Secretariat of FIAF on request).

Preparations for the data transfer of the catalogues to a computer have been under way for 3 years. Indexing will be made mainly by means of electronic data processing.

C. Financial aspects

- 1) the resources made available for the preservation of material

- a) buildings

- size, location, facilities

The Staatliches Filmarchiv owns 11 film vaults, 6 buildings having work space for technical purposes, screening rooms, administration, two central plants for air-conditioning the vaults, 1 storage hall.

In addition, the Staatliches Filmarchiv has rented work space and screening facilities in 6 other buildings, and space has been rented in 5 buildings for storage of documentation material.

- who covers cost (rent, etc.)

The cost of maintaining the buildings and paying the rent for the hired space are covered by the Staatliches Filmarchiv.

- who pays for maintenance

Staatliches Filmarchiv

b) equipment

Detailed description of the technical facilities would go beyond the scope of this report. Therefore, only a general description is given: The Staatliches Filmarchiv possesses all the technical equipment necessary to store and keep the film material in an air-conditioned environment. It has screening facilities, viewing tables, facilities for physical examination, equipment for cleaning and restoring films, a laboratory with an annual output of approx. 2 million meters.

Due to its limited laboratory capacity, the Staatliches Filmarchiv uses the services of other laboratories for a volume of approx. 50,000 m per year.

c) staff costs met, by whom
by Staatliches Filmarchiv

d) total annual budget

The Staatliches Filmarchiv has an annual budget of approx. 4.0 to 4.5 million Mark, excluding major investment projects which are realised in addition to the budget (i.e. the construction of the new colour film vault).

The budget is supplied to the Staatliches Filmarchiv by the GDR Ministry of Culture.

ii) the funds used per year for acquiring material:

30,000 Mark per year is spent exclusively on the purchase of film material from private owners.

iii) the funds used per year for transferring from nitrate to tri-acetate

One third of the available laboratory capacity (approx. 700,000 m = 350,000 useful m) is assigned for the transfer from nitrate to acetate at a cost of approx. 1.0 million Mark.

iv) the funds used per year for preserving material

Since the budget of the Staatliches Filmarchiv is not subdivided into the requested categories, this question cannot be answered. This would require exact calculation of the individual items.

v) estimate of annual income

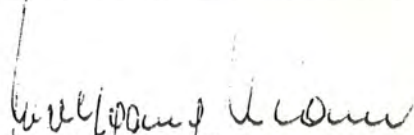
Income from fees, sale of material, projections amount to approx. 950,000 Mark to 1,050,000 Mark.

This income is paid over to the government and is not available to the archive as additional income.

D. Problems faced by institutions

We hold the view that all the problems which at present prove to be harmful and of concern to the preservation of moving images, are covered by the recommendation elaborated by the experts at the September 1975 meeting in Berlin and by other working documents presented to that meeting. In this respect the FIAF document is of special interest as it contains a number of concrete solutions. In my opinion, FIAF should become more involved in the further implementation of the recommendations of the 18th and 19th general assemblies, on problems relating to the preservation of moving images, than this has hitherto been the case.

The most prominent film archives from more than 40 countries are affiliated to this organisation, and many of them have experiences covering decades in this field.


Wolfgang Klau