

CINEMATECA DE CUBA

INSTITUTO CUBANO DEL ARTE E INDUSTRIA CINEMATOGRAFICOS

REPUBLICA DE CUBA

CALLE 23 Nº 1155
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CABLE I.C.A.I.C.

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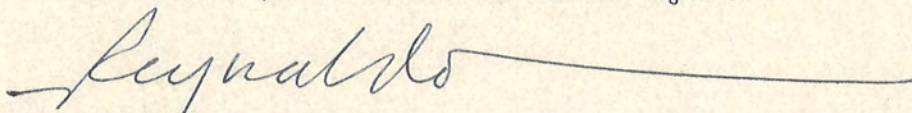
Brigitte van der Elst
Secretaria Ejecutiva FIAF
Coudenberg 70
1000 Bruxelles, Belgique

Estimada amiga:

Le acompaño copia de mi intervención en la IV Reunión de Ministros de Cultura y Responsables de Políticas Culturales de América Latina y El Caribe (La Habana, Sep. 19-21 de 1991).

Fue también un dossier con informaciones de la encuesta de María Rita.

Aprovecho para trasmitirle mi afecto.


Reynaldo González
Director
Cinemateca de Cuba



IV ENCUENTRO DE MINISTROS DE CULTURA
Y RESPONSABLES DE POLÍTICAS CULTURALES
DE AMÉRICA LATINA Y EL CARIBE

La Habana / septiembre 19 al 21 / 1991

CINEMA

DRAFT PROJECT PRESENTED BY CUBA TO THE 4TH MEETING OF MINISTERS
OF CULTURE OF LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

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Taking into consideration that:

- The 3rd Meeting of Ministers of Culture of Latin America and the Caribbean held in Mexico recognized the positive steps taken in signing the Cinematographic Integration Convention, the Co-Production Agreement and the Agreement for the Establishment of a Cinematographic Common Market, previously adopted at the Cinematographic Integration Forum as of August 1989, and urged all signatories to promote the effectiveness and scope of said instruments;
- During the 4th Conference of Ibero-American Cinematographic Authorities held in Caracas, Venezuela, July 1991, the Parliaments of Mexico, Peru, Venezuela and Cuba announced their ratification of the Agreement for the Creation of a Latin American Cinematographic Common Market;
- This Agreement comes into force once ratified by three or more countries as provided for under its Article IX, and that heretofore any film distributed or exhibited in any of the member countries of the Common Market will be considered as national films and will, therefore, enjoy the all benefits and all rights regarding exhibition spaces, screen quotas, exhibition quotas, distribution quotas and any and all other prerogatives established under the national laws of each member State;
- Parliamentary ratification is a necessary requirement for the coming into force of the Agreements and that there are still a number of signatory countries such as Argentina, Brazil, Ecuador, Nicaragua, Panama and the Dominican Republic that have not yet ratified them and
- Likewise, that there are a number of other countries that have participated in the Meetings of the Conference and have expressed their interest in joining this movement, such as Bolivia and Chile, without excluding other countries that may have later endorsed this same interest.

The Cuban Delegation, assessing the extraordinary significance of the progress achieved and recognizing that the full implementation of these Agreements, in addition to their importance vis-a-vis the Latin American cinematography, may contribute as an appropriate example of integration, to the undertaking of similar attempts in other fields, urges the 4th Meeting of Ministers of Culture of Latin America and the Caribbean to:

- Reiterate an appeal to those member countries of the Agreement that have not yet ratified it in their Parliaments, to do so and, thus, contribute to the strengthening and implementation of actions furthering integration in the field of Latin American Cinematography and
- Undertake the necessary actions so that those countries that have not signed this Agreement up to now, express their determination to do so, thus strengthening the integration of Latin American Cinematography and the impact of this document itself --already adopted and signed by several countries-- as a means to develop multiple actions of cooperation and cultural exchange in this field in the whole region.

Havana, September 1991.

**PRESERVATION OF LATIN AMERICAN FILM MEMORY PROPOSAL SUBMITTED
BY CUBA TO THE FOURTH MEETING OF MINISTERS OF CULTURE AND
CULTURAL POLICY-MAKERS OF LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN**

Distinguished Ministers of Culture and Cultural Policy-Makers of Latin America and the Caribbean:

On behalf of the Foundation of the New Latin American Cinema chaired by Gabriel García Márquez and the Cinemateque of Cuba which I head and, moreover, reiterating the concerns of the cinemateques, filmoteques and the motion picture archives of our hemisphere, I now address you to speak on a subject of vital importance: the preservation of Latin America is film memory vis-à-vis abandonment and irretrievable loss.

In keeping with a recommendation adopted by UNESCO's General Assembly of October 1980 regarding the need to contribute to the preservation of the continent's film heritage and as a result of the personal initiatives of Maria Rita Calvo of the Brazilian Cinemateque, a project characterized by a strict scientific rigor was born. This project was later promoted by the Foundation of the New Latin American Cinema and assistance was requested from several international agencies including the UNESCO itself and the International Federation of Film Archives (FIAF).

This subject was included in the agenda of the Meeting of Ministers of Culture and Cultural Policy-Makers of Latin America and the Caribbean held in Brasilia. A motion supporting this project was later included in the "Declaration of Brasilia," this Meeting's final document, thus bearing witness to the fact that you also share the concerns of the region's motion picture archive experts and specialists.

We have undertaken a survey of the film heritage situation in more than twenty countries, the existing collections of cinemateques, filmoteques and public and private institutions of capital and other major cities. This survey stressed the need for information on film conservation and environmental conditions and revealed that more than 93 percent of the silent films and 50 percent of sound films had already been lost. Warehouses and storage facilities, types of packaging, and understanding of film and related material archive standards were all evaluated. The most critical cases were listed as well as the all the film laboratories and sound studios and the type of services they provide or may provide faced with real work demands; available and operational equipment and technology; experience of the professionals working in these institutions; procedures and costs; existence of video storage facilities and the most critical priorities among many other undoubtedly pressing and important matters. We will place all this information at your disposition for consultations and evaluations.

The second phase of this project included the beginning of the training program for all personnel working directly in film archives. This phase counted with the support of the Brazilian Cinemateque and the FIAF. Brazilian experts travelled to a number of countries in the region to share their experiences. A regional workshop for film archive technicians which included a number of practical exercises was held with the presence of 28 technicians from 15 different countries. Several meeting of directors of cinemateques have also been held to update and review all matters related to this project. The Foundation for the New Latin American Cinema has repeatedly reported to both UNESCO and the FIAF on the current status of the project and the pressing need for a better understanding of the true scope of the process of recovering the region's cinematographic memory as an element of its cultural heritage facing an imminent danger of disappearance.

The scope of the project which involves the establishment of three restoration centers to attend the needs of South America, Central and the Caribbean --located in Sao Paulo, Mexico City and Havana, respectively-- surpasses the possibilities of the Foundation and the much evidenced concern and cooperation of the Brazilian Cinemateque of Sao Paulo. The Colombian Film Heritage Foundation is striving to conclude the establishment of a modest film laboratory that it will place at the service of preserving the film heritage of those countries ~~that cannot undertake this task on their own.~~ The Cinema Division of the University of the Andes in Merida has also undertaken steps to place its resources and facilities at the service of preserving Latin America's film heritage. Nonetheless, today's pressing needs require not only the efforts of willing individuals and institutions, but also the explicit support of governments in this crusade to defend what the Chairman of Foundation, Gabriel Garcia Marquez, called the holy land of our history.

At the request of the Foundation of the New Latin American Cinema, UNESCO sent a FIAF expert to Sao Paulo to evaluate the project's existing documentation for a definition of the activities to be undertaken. Pending the evaluation of this expert's report, UNESCO expressed its intention to review --prior agreement of the countries participating in the project-- the possibilities for extra-budgetary financing together with the UNDP and other interested member states.

We will now submit to your consideration the project's short-, medium- and long-term recommendations, requesting that you endorse them and provide the necessary backing of your respective countries for their implementation.

Short-Term Recommendations:

- Immediate and priority attention to the preservation of a number of important elements of Latin America's film and video heritage that are clearly facing the risk of being lost with irreparable social, political and cultural consequences, including even the possible loss of human lives. These include the video materials of Nicaragua and the film archives of Peru, Guatemala and Chile. In the case of the nitrate archives of Lima, deposited in the National Library of Peru, all its documentation and printed materials are also running the risk of being lost.
- Contribute resources to those cinemateques and film archives of the region that require financing to participate in the second training course for conservation technicians to be held in Mexico City in October 1991.
- Contribute resources for the holding of a Latin American meeting of cinemateques to examine a draft general policy for action, define new priorities, identify possible sources of financing and the commitment of film archives willing to participate in the project. This meeting will be organized by the Latin American Motion Picture Archives Co-ordination Group (CLAIM) and will be held in Montevideo, Uruguay, April 1992, coinciding with FIAF's 48th General Assembly.

Medium-Term Recommendations:

- Contribute to the preparation of basic technical manuals, lists of equipment requirements and international film conservation standards to be provided to existing technicians and technicians now being trained for cinemateques, filmoteques and film and video archives.

Long-Term Recommendations:

- Contribute resources for the construction of regional conservation centers and provide the support required during their first two years of operation.

Your Excellencies,

I have not insisted on the arguments that further highlight the above issues, since it is quite evident that you share our concerns regarding the need to safeguard Latin America's film memory. As you well know, all the social, cultural and political events that have taken place since the first years of the 20th century have remained alive in this heritage of motion picture images. To lose these images would mean to squander our memories and even deny the successive footprints we have left along the way. We can no longer postpone the decisions that must be taken in view of the current dangers. We await your decisions.

Thank you.