

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS  
Washington, D.C. 20540

1988 ANNUAL ACTIVITIES REPORT

ACQUISITIONS OF THE YEAR.

Our collections are being enriched by a growing number of new films produced outside the U.S. We have expanded our purchases and exchanges to supplement those films we are receiving through copyright registration in the U.S. This year, with the cooperation of the Cinemateket, Svenska Filminstitutet we are purchasing copies of a number of Ingmar Bergman's productions which were not in our collections. We received ten film classics of the post-war Japanese cinema through an exchange with the Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo supplementing our very fine collection of pre-1945 Japanese films. We have expanded our program to acquire Russian News broadcasts. Among the films received through copyright deposit were: Fatal Attraction, Empire of the Sun, Wall Street, Broadcast News, Dirty Dancing, The Unbearable Lightness of Being, Tucker--The Man and His Dreams, Moonstruck, Ironweed, Soldaat Van Oranje, De Aanslag, Metropolis (the recent commercial release), Otello (Zeffirelli), Sanjuro, Ran, When Father Was Away on Business, Sen Nog Svatojanska (Jiri Trinko) and Le Retour de Martin Guerre. We purchased copies of El Pensamiento Vivo de Peron, and La Cruz Invertida, Historia Politica de Colombia 1930-1974. The Cinematheque Quebecoise gave us La Cinematheque Quebecoise Muse du Cinema a 25 Ans. Through the National Center for Film and Video Preservation, AFI, we received Martin Johnson's Cannibals of the South Seas (1918), a number of previously lost silent films including a rich group of American films from our colleagues in Wellington, New Zealand.

PROGRESS IN THE FIELD OF PRESERVATION.

During the year we completed a major reconstruction of our nitrate vaults at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base improving the temperature and humidity controls and the fire warning system, and restoring the interior of each vault, with the result that the conditions for storing our nitrate collections are the

best that they have ever been. Plans were also completed for a remodeling of our preservation laboratory to enlarge the printing rooms and improve the ventilation so that we can make full use of the wet-gate and immersion printing capability which has made great improvements in the quality of our preservation work. A new Hazeltine-type analyzer was purchased and it has improved both the quality and the speed of timing. Quality prints of a number of classic films were made for our Mary Pickford theater. We have found that the production of a quality exhibition print is a valuable way to analyze the steps necessary to produce the best quality preservation master. Among the titles copied this year were: Steamboat Bill, Jr.; The Treasure of Sierra Madre; Coquette; Ann Vickers; Annie Laurie (a previously lost MGM film starring Lillian Gish); The Horn Blows at Midnight, In This Our Life, The Moon and Sixpence, The Life of Emil Zola, Morocco, Sergeant York, Shoulder Arms, and Twenty Dollars a Week (Selznick, 1924). Three early silent films preserved by the Library in cooperation with the National Center for Film and Video Preservation became instant hits among the not-for-profit retrospect exhibition circuit: First Circus, a tinted print of a silhouette animation done by Tony Sarg in 1920; Algy the Miner by Solax produced by Alice Guy Blanche with Billy Quirk; and Fine Feathers (Rex, 1912) starring and probably written and directed by Phillips Smalley and Lois Weber, also tinted.

#### CATALOGING - DOCUMENTATION - RESEARCH.

The automated cataloging of film, television and sound recordings is in full swing but has been hampered by staff shortages resulting from budget restrictions. This year 8,882 MARC records were created. All incoming film and television copyright deposits were routinely entered. These records are now being distributed nationally and internationally through the Library's MARC distribution service. We are completing a study of our control of the Library's audio collections. Staff members have participated in meetings of the American Library Association, On-Line Audiovisual Catalogers, Inc., the MARC Visual Materials Users Group, and the NAMID Standards Committee, and Harriet Harrison continues to chair the Cataloguing Commission of FIAF.

The research facilities of M/B/RS continue to have heavy use. Universities in the U.S. are the dominant users of the collections, but we also welcomed a number of scholars from abroad. Although staff shortages have affected our ability to organize our collections of film-related materials (documentation), we did benefit by the work of several interns who produced filmographies of our holdings of French silent films and silent animation films, and prepared a finding aid of a collection of 1,600 press books for U.S. films which were generously donated to us by the Swedish Film Institute.

#### FILM SHOWINGS - EXHIBITIONS - PUBLICATIONS.

More than 11,000 persons saw films in our Mary Pickford Theater, although it only seats 64 people. Almost every one of our programs was filled to overflowing. After a year away during which Barbara Humphrys programmed the theater, Scott Simmon, Curator, returned to Washington but resigned in December. The new programmer is Patrick Loughney. Program series were: DISCOVERY OF AMERICA, BUT DID YOU SEE?, TWENTY YEARS APART, HOLLYWOOD'S HOLLYWOOD, UPSTAIRS, DOWNSTAIRS: THE LOST EPISODES, THE SOUTHERN, BEFORE HOLLYWOOD, SOVIET FILMS and THE WESTERN. Special events included the world premier of The Afterglow, Burgess Meredith's film tribute to Robert Frost; and the American-Soviet Film Initiative, a week-long cultural event that introduced Commissar and Cold Summer of 1953 to U.S. audiences with the directors and principles from the cast in attendance. Singin' In the Rain; the episode of Alistair Cooke's America on "Immigration"; Friendly Persuasion and To Fly were made available in the Soviet Union. The effects of glasnost continued with a premier performance of Repentance and the showing of Blue Mountains and The Extraordinary Exhibition with the prominent Georgian director Eldar Shengelaya in attendance.

It was also a banner year for the exhibition of films from the collection at festivals and non-profit screenings. More than 40 films were sent to Pordenone for LE GIORNATE DEL CINEMA MUNDO's retrospective of American feature films from the 'teens; a dozen films went to Festival Avignon for their program on the transition from silents to sound; Taormina borrowed films for a retrospective of films by pioneer women directors; the Pacific Film Archive featured a number of films preserved by the Library; and the National Film Theater in London showed several one-reel Biographs directed by D.W. Griffith.

The Library has reissued the 1944 film Hymn of the Nations with Arturo Toscanini conducting the NBC Symphony Orchestra and Westminster Choir with Jan Pierce as soloist performing the work by Giuseppe Verdi on 1/2-inch VHS and BETA videocassette (NTSC). The score was re-mastered from a contemporary radio broadcast and it includes the "International" which had been removed from release versions after World War II.

#### BUDGETARY MATTERS, RELATIONS WITH GOVERNMENTAL AUTHORITIES.

Continuing budget restrictions throughout the U.S. government have had an impact on our operations. We have been unable to fill vacant jobs and this has affected every aspect of our work. Our annual appropriations for film, television preservation and the staff have remained at the same level or slightly reduced levels for several years. With costs and wages rising, this has affected the amount of film we can preserve, slowed cataloging, and impeded the service we provide to the public. On a brighter note we did get funds to remodel our nitrate vaults and our nitrate preservation laboratory.

#### INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS (FIAF AND OTHERS).

As noted above, we have had a number of events reflecting the improvement in U.S. and Soviet relations. This has been stimulated by the strong personal interest of Dr. James Billington, a noted Soviet scholar who became the Librarian of Congress in 1987. Following the FIAF Congress in Paris, Mr. Saudek visited the National Film Archive in London, Ms. Harrison met with her Cataloguing Commission in Toulouse and Mr. Spehr attended the International Federation of Television Archives in Hilversum with visits to Amsterdam and Brussels after that. Mr. Gerald Gibson represented M/B/RS at the annual meeting of IAML/IASA in Amsterdam. Mr. Spehr and Ms. Gillian Anderson of the Music Division attended Le Giornate del Cinema Muto in Pordenone where Ms. Anderson conducted the original score at the screening of the Museum of Modern Art's restored version of Way Down East. Ms. Anderson conducted Way Down East in Ljubljana and several of the silent features shown in Pordenone went on to screenings in Ljubljana and Belgrade. Ms. Anderson worked closely with Peter Williamson of the Museum of Modern Art in restoring Way Down East through clues as to structure and timing from the original music scores. They are currently working on Intolerance.