

REPORT OF ACTIVITIES OF THE "FILMOTECA UNAM"
DURING 1985

1. Acquisitions

In 1985 the Filmoteca UNAM acquired a total of 790 films, of which 16 were bought, 21 donated, 732 deposited and 21 copied with the permission of the producers.

Among the outstanding titles of these new acquisitions are classics of the horror film genre such as The Birds (Alfred Hitchcock, 1963); science fiction: War of the worlds (Fyron Haskin, 1953); films of lasting success, for example West Wide Story (Robert Wise, 1961); and valuable examples of present-day cinema, such as Zabriskie Point (Michelangelo Antonioni, 1970).

Mention apart should be made of the acquisition of Mexican films, invaluable recoveries for the history of our national cinema. Among these should be included a documentary on the Mexican Revolution entitled Toma de Torreón; important films by two of Mexican cinema's most outstanding directors: Los Fernández de Peralvillo and Una Familia de tantas by Alejandro Calindo; and Flor Silvestre, by Emilio Indio Fernández. A total of 50 titles of Mexican films were acquired in 1985.

Here we should also mention the donation made by the American Film Institute to both the Filmoteca UNAM and the Cineteca Nacional. This donation consists of 15 original nitrate reels filmed between 1910 and 1916 in Mexican territory by the cameraman Charles Prior. These formed part of American newsreels and include scenes of battles and political happenings in the Mexican Revolution.

Approximately 60% of this work of copying and duplication was carried out in the laboratories of the Filmoteca UNAM. A total of 157,518 metres of positive copies were processed and 19,363 negative duplicates in the 16 mm; and in 35 mm : 13,647 metres of positive copy and 12,453 of negative duplicates.

We also obtained 20 collectors' pieces (projectors, film cameras, etc.), 101 posters and 80 film stills.

2. Progress in the Field of Conservation

The technical Department of the Filmoteca UNAM examined 601 films in the permanent archive and restored all those worthy of repair. 287 films of

this collection were protected with duplicates, and 41 copies were made of films in circulation, to reinforce the available stock. Six new titles were added to the catalogue of these last, and now it count with 392 in total.

Copies were made of all the photographs asked for by various publications, and amplifications made for the Filmoteca's own exhibitions.

The same Technical Department took the first steps in the organization of a videoteque, with the acquisition of 4 monitors for the examination and classification of the videos already in stock.

And for the preservation of nitrate films: a new vault was built with a capacity for 1,800 cans of film. This vault has adequate lining and ventilation, and is located in an isolated and suitably cold spot.

3. Documentacion

Because of its heavy work load, the Department of Documentation was divided and a new Department created called Cataloguing.

Cataloguing

This new Department began to draw up a register of current Mexican film production, based on our own archived chronicles; this catalogue will shortly have sufficient useful information available for the study of the national films phenomenon from its first stages.

Film card indexes corresponding to Mexican production from 1967 to 1970 were checked, in order to prepare annual statistical publications for use in studies on present-day national film production. This was achieved by checking the advertising material for each film, stills and posters from the Filmoteca's own archives, and criticisms from the press. At the end of the year the Cataloguing Department started to make indexes of the participants of each film, and the Department also began to synthesize the original filmscripts into synopses. These indexes will be published shortly.

Finally, with the help of the Technical Department, 485 film index cards were written, corresponding to the newly acquired films.

Documentation

This Department continued with the classification of film new appearing

in the main national newspapers. 70% of the photographs and posters in the graphic archive were catalogued and classified.

Library

The library was increased by 214 books, 471 leaflets, 254 magazines and 33 original scripts. With this growth, our library continues to be the most complete film-oriented library in Mexico. All the most recently acquired publications were classified, as were the previous ones, according to the guidelines established by the FIAF.

With regard to attention to the public, 2,360 readers used the library, and 300 students received expert advice.

Among the most important works written with the help of our Library, the following deserve a special mention: Historia de los Estudios Churubusco, by several authors; Maria Felix by Paco I. Taibo; La mujer en el cine mexicano, by Mario Monroy Santos and Ana Lourdes Bautista; Vida de María Felix, by Jhon Mraz; Gabriel García Márquez y Carlos Fuentes en el cine by Joel Pérez and others.

Research

The Filmoteca UNAM was of direct support to the following investigations: Bibliografía del cine mexicano, by Helena Almoína; Anuario cinematográfico 1985 by several authors, which is a collection of information on all the films shown in Mexico; El cine de Juan Orol by Eduardo de la Vega; and Gabriel García Márquez; la tentación cinematográfica, by Eduardo García Aguilar. Each of these investigations was published in the course of 1985. Other works begun in 1985 but still to be finished are: Historia del cine en la Universidad, by Manuel González Casanova, a study of one aspect of Mexican films -those made with the support of an educational institution - until now almost ignored by historians; Historia del cine mexicano, coordinated by Manuel González Casanova, with Moises Viñas as researcher and editor, and with the assessment of Aurelio de los Reyes and Tomás Pérez Turrent; this being a resume of recent research and new contributions to our knowledge of Mexican cinema, particularly in its silent era. This work is being written by agreement with the UNESCO; El cine hispano by Gabriel Ramírez Aznar, on North American films spoken in Spanish; Bibliografía en castellano del cine, by Helena Almoína;

El cine de Tin Tan by Nelson Carro; and Cinta de Plata by Louis Mario Schneider, about works written for the screen by Jaime Torres Bodet.

4. Films on Loan and Exhibitions

Our section on Programming offered its film-lending services to 450 institutions all over the country, such as film clubs, universities, government entities, schools and cultural and social centres, to all of which some 4,600 copies were loaned.

In the Filmoteca UNAM's own film theatre, "Fósforo", 331 films were shown in 31 cycles. Four Daily showings were made of each of these films, from Monday through Sunday.

Of the 31 cycles the following are worthy of mention: a cycle on French poetic realism; new Swiss cinema (in collaboration with the Swiss Embassy in Mexico); French vanguard cinema; contemporary Japanese cinema; a retrospective of Juan Orol; Cinema from Finland; Canadian cinema, and a cycle on the American serial. Here we should also mention a cycle of silent movies from Latin America which was also exhibited in the other Mexican film archive, the Cineteca Nacional, and in the Cinemateca of Cuba, as part of a series of celebrations marking the 25th anniversary of the Filmoteca UNAM.

As well as these activities, street film shows were offered every weekend, to capture the interest of a wider and less specialized audience. At the end of these projections the public was invited to an exchange of opinion with collaborators from the Filmoteca UNAM, to encourage an active participation on the part of the audience. This series of film shows concluded with the projection of the film Es herrscht Ruhe im Land by Peter Lilienthal, who gave both the presentation and made commentaries on his film.

5. Exhibitions, Lectures, Seminars, Courses, Publications and Production

Exhibitions

The Filmoteca UNAM carried out a varied programme: 15 exhibitions composed of graphic materials, cinematographic equipment, and videos belonging to the Filmoteca, each mounted specially. They were all exhibited in universities, educational and cultural centres, in the Churubusco Studios

and, of course, in the Filmoteca's own gallery. The most outstanding exhibitions were Juntos pero no revueltos (about comics in Mexican cinema); La Revolución Mexicana en el cine y la gráfica; Contra las cuerdas (against the ropes; the theme being boxers and wrestlers in Mexican cinema); Perdida te ha llamado la gente (about the rumba in Mexican cinema); and 25 años de Filmoteca, in commemoration of the 25th anniversary of our institution.

Conferences

The 31 film cycles given at the Filmoteca UNAM were presented and further commentaries given by specialists invited for the purpose; and by collaborators from the Filmoteca. The following are worthy of mention: Mr. Guillermo Orozco, President in Mexico of the world-wide club Sons of the Desert who presented a cycle on Stan Laurel and Oliver Hardy; the Swiss filmmaker Gertrud Pinkus and Mr Christian Dimitriu, from the swiss film archive, whose subject was film production in Switzerland; Mr. Sampovara Veijo from Finland, who spoke about Finnish cinema; and the above-mentioned Peter Lilienthal.

The commentary on a cycle of fantastic cinema was made jointly by a film critic and a biologist, who considered the aesthetic and scientific aspects of films such as King Kong and Jaws.

Films and the press was the title of a series of talks with well-known journalists and film critics, who spoke of their experiences and ideas on the relationship between these two media.

Lastly, a series of producers, researchers and film critics gave lectures on the film industry in Mexico.

Seminars

As part of the celebrations marking the 25th Anniversary of the Filmoteca UNAM, a seminar was organized with the theme: The participation of moving picture archives in the defence and salvation of national culture and identity, attended by representatives of 8 film archives in Latin America.

Courses

A course was organized withing the programme Film History and Criticism

which the Filmoteca UNAM has been organizing, devoted to the films of Jean Luc Godard and Orson Welles. This course was given by Professor Jean Douchet,

Other courses such as Cinematographic Appreciation, The Director is the Star and Ingmar Bergman, designed to promote cinematographic culture, were given by film critics and researchers.

Publications

Besides those mentioned in the section on research, the Filmoteca UNAM also published Video, National Culture and Development, a collection of text by various authors including Fátima Fernández, Michele Matellard and Octavio Getino.

Production

The production Department made a documentary commemorating the 25th Anniversary of the Filmoteca UNAM, and in spite of high costs, filmed the commemorative ceremonies of the 75th Anniversary of the UNAM, and also happenings in Mexico City of social, political and cultural importance. Besides, the Department produced the film Testimonios Zapatistas, a collection of remembrances of the survivors of one of the Revolutionary factions of 1910.

The Production Department also continued broadcasting the weekly radio programmes Encuadre Cinematográfico and Música en Imágenes, which by way of brief commentaries highlight interesting aspects of the film world.

6. Budget and Relations with Government Authorities

Despite the country's economic problems, the budget of the Filmoteca UNAM was again increased, this time 72.2 per cent over the year before.

With regard to relations with the Government, these were excellent in 1985. We supplied several government entities with film material and we received generous support in all our activities.

7. International Relations (FIAF) and Other.

As in previous years, the Filmoteca UNAM attended the XLI Congress of the International Federation of Film Archives (FIAF) in April of 1985 in New York.

Also in April, this time on the premises of the Filmoteca UNAM, the Xth Congress of the Union of Cinematecas of Latin America (UCAL) took place, a timely report on the work of this congress being later published. This work continued in Brazil in November, and in Cuba in December, 1985.

From 14 to 20 October, the Filmoteca UNAM attended an international Meeting in Milan, Italy. This meeting was organized by the UNESCO to discuss the problem of the preparation and unification of filmed anthologies of the History of Cinema.

A representative of the Filmoteca UNAM was present at the General Assembly of the International Association of Scientific Cinema (ISFA) in Göttinger, Germany. This same representative then left for Bath, England, where he attended the Symposium of Wild-Life Film-Makers.

8. Special Events

Among the special events of the year, we would mention first of all, the Commemoration of the 25th Anniversary of this Institution, the celebration of which included the meeting of the Xth Congress of the Union of Cinematecas of Latin America (UCAL).

One of the most important achievements of this Congress was the creation of the Latin American Coordinator of Moving Picture Archives. A report of the projects and objectives of this entity was given promptly.

Secondly, the First Film Festival on Indigenous Groups was organized by the Filmoteca UNAM in collaboration with the Instituto Nacional Indigenista and the Instituto Indigenista Interamericano.

90 films and videos participated in this Festival, from North, Central and South America; and from Canada, France and Finland. Thus the most recent examples of ethnographic cinema were shown in Mexico, especially those concerning the American Continent. At the end of the Festival the four most outstanding films were awarded prizes.

Also, within the same area of Scientific Cinema, the III National Festival of Scientific Films and Videos was celebrated. In this way the Filmoteca UNAM hopes to participate more actively in the promotion of this type of film production.