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R E P O R T O N A C T I V I T I E S F O R 1 9 7 7

GENERAL REMARKS

The untimely death on December 16, 1977, of Risto Jarva, a member and chairman of the organization for many years, came as an unexpected and shocking blow to the Finnish Film Archive, its Board of Directors, its personnel and its membership.

The beginning of the year of the report was one of the most difficult in the twenty-year history of the Finnish Film Archive. The scantiness of the State subsidy received to finance general operations, amounting to 540,000 markkas (compared with Mk 495,000 the year before), and the delay in the granting of the additional assistance applied for from the Finnish Film Foundation caused the threat of a catastrophic situation in the early months of the year: the staff engaged in general operations received a warning about forced leave and the giving of notice of termination of the lease on certain premises was contemplated. The receipt of an exceptionally large grant-in-aid, amounting to some Mk 230,000, from the Film Foundation saved the situation at the last moment - at the end of April. The grant was made possible mainly by close collaboration among cultural organizations active in the field of motion pictures and the pressure they were able to exert. The increase to Mk 700,000 in the amount of the Government subvention for the project of salvaging old Finnish films (the fixed sum of Mk 600,000 granted in previous years plus 16.7 %) was a favorable development. But, owing to the inflationary trend, the money by no means sufficed to cover the amount of footage involved in the planned salvaging operations, although the length of film duplicated, - approximately 132,000 meters - did exceed the preceding year's footage (ca. 100,000 m). By the end of the year of the report, new copies had been made of 37 % of the total length of film planned to be salvaged (compared with the figure of 50 % in the originally projected schedule).

Late in the spring, in May, the Ministry of Education appointed a work group to recommend measures for the development of film archives activity. In the report it published in September, the work group set the nationalization of the film archives as

the objective to strive after, but it recommended as the primary provisional solution to the problem the placing of the archives under the wing of the Finnish Film Foundation. The dissenting opinion of the Film Archive's representative, Risto Jarva, was appended to the report. The recommendations made in the work group's report were received unfavorably, however, by both the Finnish Film Foundation and the Finnish Film Archive in their statements as well as in other key statements, such as that of the FIAF Secretariat. This meant the rejection of the scheme.

The most encouraging of the new developments relating to the activities of the Finnish Film Archive during the year covered by this report was a decision awaited for years reached at an evening session of the Government on Nov. 30, 1977, whereby the Ministry of Education together with the Ministry of Finance was assigned the task of preparing the way for the transfer to the jurisdiction of the State of the film archives maintained by the Finnish Film Archive, Inc. (which still today is a registered private association), so that the matter can be settled in conjunction with the State budget for the year 1979.

FILM COLLECTIONS

During the year of the report, the following firms delivered for safekeeping 35-mm prints of feature-length motion pictures: Aito Mäkinen 2 prints, Suomi-Filmi 2 prints, Lii-Filmi 84 prints, Parvis-Filmi 2 prints, Märta Wetterstrand 1 print, Magna-Filmi 4 prints, Kansainvälinen Kuljetus 1 print, The Institute of Industrial Design 6 prints, Warner-Columbia Films 78 prints and Fox Films 2 prints, or a total of 182 prints.

The following number of 35-mm short films was received: Parvis-Filmi 2 prints, The Institute of Industrial Design 1 print.

Copies of 16-mm films were received as follows: Deutsches Institut 68, Ministry of Foreign Affairs ca. 80, Canadian Embassy 62, British Embassy 114, Eino Ruutsalo 1, and Liikenneturva (Traffic Safety organization) ca. 400.

The archive made a 35-mm print of the motion picture Greed/ and a 16-mm print of Laggadör.

The following 35-mm prints were provided with Finnish subtitles: Counter-plan (Ermler-Yutkevich), Faust, Pyshka/Boule de suif (Mihail Romm), Nanook and Greed.

As a result of the project to salvage old Finnish films and to collect traditional material, 981 film titles, in addition, were deposited for safekeeping.

Lending and borrowing films

For exhibition series, films were borrowed from abroad as

follows: Centre Culturel Francais (6), Istituto di Cultura Italiana (13), Gosfilmofond (6), Staatliches Filmarchiv der DDR (11), Norsk Filminstitut (3), Svenska Filminstitutet-Cinemateket (4), Cinematèque, Brussels (1), Det Danske Film-museum (4).

The archives lent out during the year to film societies and others 132 full-length feature films, four 35-mm short films and 392 16-mm films.

BOOK LIBRARY

Acquisitions

During the year 1977, the library received the year's issues of 130 periodicals, 39 of them as gifts. Moreover, for the sixth year in a row, the library subscribed to the periodical card index of the FIAF, comprising 77 periodicals. Owing to the difficult economic situation, the number of book acquisitions was modest. The collection was increased by the purchase of 76 volumes and the receipt of 180 volumes as gifts. Annual volumes and single copies of periodicals were received as gifts. Owing to the tight monetary situation and rising costs, it was not feasible to have the periodicals bound.

FILM SHOWINGS IN HELSINKI

According to established custom, the archives arranged extensive series of showings in Helsinki in both the spring and the autumn. The exhibition days have been Wednesday, Friday and Saturday, when there have been two showings the same day. The films have been shown mostly in the Savoy theater and, in the case of 16-mm films, the Bristol theater. Exhibition activity has continued to be hampered by the fact that it has been necessary to hold the showings to the public at inconvenient afternoon hours, because the Film Archive has not been able to acquire a motion-picture theater of its own. A Soviet film series was held during the fall season in new premises, the Soviet Cultural and Scientific Center, on Thursday evenings, when two separate showings were arranged on each occasion.

In addition to the normal series of exhibitions, the Film Archive held a week's festival of Finnish films released in the 1930s in the local Capitol motion-picture theater in collaboration with the Helsinki Festivals organization. In collaboration with the Finnish-Swedish Cultural Center at Hanasaari and the Walhalla Film Society, series of showings of Scandinavian motion pictures were held during both the spring and fall seasons.

A poster-type program introducing the series of showings during both the spring and fall seasons was published. In addition to the program, a leaflet describing each film was distributed in connection with the showings.

Spring Season

The themes of the spring season were "Literature and Film", the French short film, the Italian film, the beginnings of the new film, the Japanese workin-class film and the Norwegian proletarian film. A Soviet film retrospective was dedicated to Vsevolod Pudovkin. The 20th anniversary of the archives was celebrated April 23, in connection with which were shown Eric von Stroheim's "Greed" and Jean Renoir's "Le déjeuner sur l'herbe".

Fall Season

In the fall season, the review of the Italian film was continued. Other themes were French motion-picture classics, masterpieces of American movies, early 1930 films from "Germany in transition", "Six decades of Soviet motion pictures", and a Finnish Film series "The Decades of Independence".

In connection with the presentation of the Soviet film series, the veteran director Sergei Jutkevitch visited the archives.

Festival of Finnish films of the 1930s

At the turn of the months of August and September, the Film Archive in collaboration with the Helsinki Festivals held in the Capitol motion-picture theater a festival of free showings of Finnish films released in the 1930s, which at the same time served as a presentation of the results of work on the project involving the salvaging and restoration of old Finnish motion pictures. The weeklong event proved a great popular success - there was not enough space at all the showings to accommodate all those desirous of gaining admittance. The festival was organized with the material support of the Finnish Film Foundation.

Film showings at the Finnish-Swedish Cultural Center (Hanasaari)

The Finnish-Swedish Cultural Center at Hanasaari, the Walhalla Film Society and the Film Archive joined forces during the spring season to present on the premises of the Cultural Center a series of historical Scandinavian motion pictures as well as during the fall season a series of première showings of Scandinavian productions.

SHOWINGS ELSEWHERE IN FINLAND

Activity involving the presentation of motion pictures continued in the past year, after the fashion of preceding years, at Tampere, Turku, Jyväskylä and Joensuu. During both the spring and fall seasons, there were series of 10 showings in each of these towns, being based on the series given in Helsinki. The series of showings at the Oulu Film Center were likewise based on the pictures shown by the archives in its Helsinki series.

FINNISH FILMS IN INTERNATIONAL CULTURAL EXCHANGE

The international cultural exchange of Finnish films continued during the year reported on actively and was extended more widely than ever. This activity was pursued in cooperation with

the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and it was supported financially by the Finnish Film Foundation.

Exhibitions of Finnish films were held as follows:

- A Finnish film retrospective in February, March and April in Washington, D.C., New York, Boston and Los Angeles, in the United States, arranged by the American Film Institute.
- A Finnish film retrospective in March in Toronto, Canada, arranged by the Ontario Film Theatre.
- A Finnish film retrospective in April in Mexico City, Mexico, arranged by Cineteca Nacional.
- A series of new Finnish films shown in June-July in Brisbane, Adelaide, Melbourne, Canberra, Mount Isa, Fremantle and Sydney, Australia, arranged by the National Film Theatre of Australia.
- A week of the New Finnish Film in November at Tserepovets, U.S.S.R.; arranged by the Urban Committee of the Lenin Youth League.
- A week's festival of the New Finnish Film in December in Bucharest, Rumania, organized by the ministry of education to be held during the Finnish Cultural Days.
- Separate showings of Finnish films at Varna, Bulgaria, in connection with the FIAF congress; on a number of occasions in the Federal Republic of Germany, as arranged by Finnish friendship societies; at Luleå, Sweden, under the auspices of the local Finnish association.

TRIPS ABROAD FOR STUDY AND OBSERVATION, AND RELATIONS WITH FIAF AND OTHER FILM ARCHIVES

Executive director Seppo Huhtala and Program Director Peter von Bagh attended the annual meeting of FIAF, held at Varna.

In January, Peter von Bagh attended the meeting of the administrative board of FIAF, held in Moscow.

In November, Seppo Huhtala visited the Film Archive of the Democratic German Republic and attended the short-film festival held in Leipzig.

The Finnish Film Archive received as visitors from abroad Vladimir Baskakov, of the Soviet Institute of Motion-Picture Theory and History, and Frank Taylor, of the Canadian Film Institute.

THE PRESERVATION OF OLD FINNISH FILMS

MAKING NEW COPIES

During the year of the report, a total of 132,605 meters of film were duplicated (including 5,173 m of 16-mm film), of which the share of fictional pictures amounted to 41,499 meters, for a total of 42 titles, including 16 full-length feature films. The salvaged fictional pictures are mostly productions of Suomi-Filmi dating from 1930s and 1940s.

As a result of measures taken by the Film Archive during the salvaging project as a whole up to Dec. 31, 1977, approximately 37 % of the total footage included in the salvage operation had been duplicated - in all, 783,985 meters, 1,476 titles, among them 214 full-length feature films, eight of which were documentaries. With only a few exceptions, the salvaged short films are all documentaries.

It has been endeavored to record the sound in all the sound pictures optically along the edge of the duplicate. In order to obtain the best possible sound quality, the sound in photo-plays has further been recorded electrically on both 16-mm perforated magnetic film and 1/4" archives tape. The sound in short films has also been recorded in this manner when there has been considered to be a special reason for it.

CONSERVATION MEASURES

For lack of space, it has not been possible to accept all the films offered for storage. Some 15 tons of nitrate film were stored in the repository at Herttoniemi. The temperature in the premises was 4-9°C and the relative humidity 50-65 %.

All the duplicates and magnetic tapes prepared have been stored for the time being in the State Archives. The temperature of the film magazine was 16-19°C and the relative humidity 45-55%.

RESTORATION

The basic material of many of the nitrate films brought for restoration had undergone such deterioration that postponing treatment would have caused their total destruction. In some cases, the film could no longer be salvaged. The material to be restored was frequently badly shrunken and the perforations broken.

In certain instances, the master film to be used in duplicating had to be assembled from several copies in poor condition or from small negative reels. The antiquated equipment of the restoration laboratory hampered the work, which would have been exacting under optimal conditions. If only unedited material could be found, the restoration of a film to be salvaged had to be discontinued after the completion of the initial duplicate because of the shortage of manpower, and the restoration of the final form of the film had to be put off until some future date.

The order in which the restoration work was done was generally determined by the condition of the material. The restoration and duplication of nitrate films in a critical state were undertaken without delay. Also the Film Archive's own needs as well as those of outsiders were taken into account - as, for example, in preparing exhibition copies for cultural exchange purposes or other activities involving film showings - in working out the order in which films were to be restored.