

**REPORT FROM THE
FIAF COMMISSION
FOR PROGRAMMING
AND ACCESS TO THE
COLLECTIONS**

Since our last Report, presented in Rome, the Commission met once, in Paris, on 29 and 30 June, hosted by the Cinémathèque Française.

The meeting was attended by João Bénard da Costa (Chairman), Gabrielle Claes (Deputy Chairman), Catherine Gautier, Dominique Paini and Edith Kramer.

I - THE COMMISSION AND THE E.C.

The Chairman informed the Commission about the general criticism expressed by the E.C. regarding the Commission's work, at the last EC meeting, in Rome.

The EC felt that the Commission had lost its way, was only concerned with programming and was thereby omitting the second part of its mandate : the issue of access to collections. Also the EC expressed major doubts about the usefulness of some of the Commission's achievements, like the "categories game". The EC pointed out the necessity to clearly define the mandate of the Commission and also the necessity to rethink the Commission's composition, by now clearly dominated by members mainly programme-oriented.

The Commission had a long discussion about these remarks and decided the following :

1 - To submit, again, to the EC the main statement made in Açores, February 1991, in order to obtain a clear answer from the EC to the main issues raised in this document. In fact, from the start, the EC had never clearly expressed a satisfactory position on this statement.

2 - To thank Clyde Jeavons and Hoos Blotkamp for their generous offer to help the Commission on redefining its mandate and to fix a meeting between

the Chairman and the Deputy Chairman, on one side, and Clyde Jeavons and Hoos Blotkamp, on the other, to openly discuss our aims and purposes. This meeting should take place, after the next EC meeting, in Tunis, and before the end of the year.

3 - The Commission, in order to balance its current composition has decided to invite another member, who could express viewpoints different from those of European or North American archives. After consideration of several possible names, the Commission chose unanimously Suresh Chabria, from the National Film Archive of India, and asked the Chairman to contact him, in order to know if he would accept such a task.

4 - The Commission agreed that it was urgent to make progress on the elaboration of the **Manual for Research and Access to Collections**, one of our major tasks, interrupted when Paolo Cherchi Usai, to whom this Manual was committed, left the Commission.

Considering that Paolo Cherchi Usai was unable by now to give the Commission a date for completion of this work, and considering that it was not possible, for us, to wait indefinitely, the Commission decided to ask Sabine Lenk if she would accept to work on it, and to present a draft-manual at our next meeting.

5 - The Commission totally agreed with Clyde Jeavons proposition that a large part of the workshop, planned for Los Angeles, should be dedicated to the item "how to use our collections". In fact, since the beginning, this has been one of the Commission's major concerns, emphasized in several internal documents, both by Gabrielle Claes and João Bénard da Costa.

6 - The Commission widely debated the Los Angeles workshop, considering it an ideal occasion to hear - from the FIAF archives - their reactions to our work and their concerns and ideas for the future. Edith Kramer was asked to propose a letter to all FIAF members and submit it to the Commission, in order that the announcement concerning this workshop could be made after the next EC meeting.

7 - However, the Commission also asked the Chairman to emphasize, at the next EC meeting, the specific nature of our work, dealing with controversial issues and theoretical questions while the other FIAF Commissions are concerned with more technical and practical problems.

The Commission also decided :

1 - To continue our work on the Survey for Programming and Access. The Chairman proposed the elaboration of a comparative study on FIAF Archive Programs during the last five years and volunteered to do this job, with the support of the Cinemateca Portuguesa.

2 - To prepare a document about **Guidelines for the circulation of copies among the Fiaf archives**, based on a draft made by Gabrielle Claes

3 - To enlarge the discussion about **film archives as film museums**. Dominique Paini will present at our next meeting a document on this issue, and also about how we should increase interaction between preservation collections and exhibition collections

4 - To propose to the EC the publication of the results of the so called "categories game" with the answers of the different archives, final statistics and a final proposal of a list of 300 / 360 films that could be programmed during the centennial celebrations.

The Commission also felt that, in spite of all the criticism, the fact that **programming** and **access** have increasingly become major EC concerns proves the value of our work. Even the Manual for Technical Standards and Guidelines for Projection, currently the responsibility of the Technical Commission, would not have been undertaken and produced if the Commission had not decided to invite Jean Pierre Verscheure to work on it.

The Commission fixed its next meeting in Madrid, February 1995.

After the Paris meeting, the Chairman invited Suresh Chabria, who accepted with great pleasure, and, so, we are, now, formally proposing his name as a new member of the Commission.

Sabine Lenk has been working on the Manual for Research and Access to Collections from September 1994.

Edith Kramer's letter announcing the Los Angeles workshop is now ready to be sent out to the membership.

Lisbon, November 10th, 1994

THE CHAIRMAN



(João Bénard da Costa)