

LA
CINÉMATHÈQUE
FRANÇAISE

CINÉMATHÈQUE FRANÇAISE
HERITAGE VALUES



TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	3
01 COLLECTIONS EXPANSION POLICY	7
THE FILM COLLECTIONS EXPANSION	
General objectives	
Organisation	
Guiding principles	
Methods and means	
Procedure	
Relations with donors and depositors	
THE EXPANSION OF NON-FILM COLLECTIONS	
General objectives	
Organisation	
Guiding principles	
Methods and means	
Procedures	
Relations with donors	
02 CONSERVATION POLICY	14
FILM CONSERVATION	
General objectives	
General organisation of the film collections	
Film inventory	
Film storage	
Prints movement management	
Safeguarding and restoring films	
Film digitisation	
Training personnel	
Institutional cooperation concerning film conservation	
CONSERVATION OF NON-FILM COLLECTIONS	
General objectives	
Guiding principles	
General organisation of the non-film collections	
Inventory of non-film collections	
Storing non-film collections	
Movement management for non-film collections	
Restoration of non-film collections	
Digitisation of collections	
Institutional cooperation for conservation of non-film collections	
03 CIRCULATION POLICY	27
GENERAL OBJECTIVES	
CATALOGUES AND DOCUMENTARY DATABASES	
CONSULTATION OF COLLECTIONS	
LOANS OF WORKS	
SCREENINGS, EXHIBITIONS, PUBLISHING	
RESEARCH	
INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION	
04 PRACTICAL INFORMATIONS	32

15

s'en va quand il avait 15 ans - Il
devient bûcher, bûcherment, et elle s'ab-
lâche avec des Eule, des son a-
cune mure - Très aigreur, l'ab-
et sans un mot, va à l'œuvre d'est
l'a la ch, l'œuvre, déconvent un fait,
une carabine, des glacières, des fûts, des
folets, tout un matériel (ou la chose, la
pêche, et le bric-à-brac - Il prend le fait,
~~sur~~ une glacière, refuse zéguement
l'œuvre, et se retournant vers Eule et
sa famille, lui le regardant fûte, il
pousse le fait vers eux, un instant, puis
lui dit que s'ils abiment plus que ce sont
dans la maison, ils auront affaire à lui

INTRODUCTION

The year 2008 marks the 70th anniversary of the International Federation of Film Archives (FIAP), whose annual congress, organised by the CNC, is to be held in Paris at La Cinémathèque française. As a founding member of FIAP, La Cinémathèque française, through the work of Henri Langlois, participated actively in FIAP's development during its first twenty-five years.

La Cinémathèque française celebrated its own 70th anniversary in 2006. Since the French Government moved it to its new modern premises at 51, rue de Bercy in Paris, it has undergone significant changes, most notably the 2007 merger with La Bibliothèque du film (the Film Library) and the creation of a Heritage Department, bringing together for the first time under one roof all sections responsible for conservation and circulation of film and non-film collections. La Cinémathèque will publish its Heritage Charter during the FIAP Congress. In doing so, it intends both on paying tribute to the visionary genius of its founder and on strongly reaffirming the heritage values that it adheres to, in the spirit of FIAP and its code of ethics, to which La Cinémathèque fully subscribes. It is these principles, uniting its team in a common vision, which will guide La Cinémathèque française in its actions in the coming years.

The originality of La Cinémathèque française collections

One of the particularities of this institute, created in 1936 by Henri Langlois, was that, right from the start, it lent as much importance to "non-film" collections (archives, books, devices, costumes, posters, models, etc.) as it did to films. Aside from the actual film programme, this was La Cinémathèque's originality, compared to other institutes of the time. Thanks to this visionary thinking, La Cinémathèque over the years collected a vast array of films, archives and devices; in the same manner, and thanks to the means at its disposal, it was able to exert its influence over cinema curatorship and historiography.

Created in 1992, La Bibliothèque du film (or BiFi) managed a part of La Cinémathèque's archive collections; it also developed an acquisition policy and drew in significant funding from Centre National de la Cinématographie (CNC), the main national film school (La Fémis), and Cannes Film Festival.

For the sake of scientific and administrative coherency, the two institutes merged in 2007, bringing together their strengths, means, personnel, and their film and non-film collections. The scope of a new Cinémathèque Française, more powerful, richer, more dynamic, with enhanced access and means, and serving a wider public, was now redefined.

La Cinémathèque française possesses one of the greatest collections in the world:

- 40,000 classic and modern films;
- Over 500,000 photographs;
- 21,000 books;
- 415 periodicals;
- 11,300 drawings;
- 15,000 special collections files;

- 18,800 press files;
- 20,000 posters;
- 4,000 devices (including 1,000 from the CNC);
- 13,000 magic lantern glass slides;
- 6,000 photographic glass slides;
- 6,000 invention patents;
- 4,000 archive files on device manufacturers;
- 6,000 technical drawings;
- 2,000 costumes;
- 1,000 objects and set elements, etc.

Through their sheer scale, originality, and beauty, these collections constitute an inexhaustible resource for the study of the art, technique and industry of filmmaking.

Principal characteristics of the collections

These are **international collections**. We preserve drawings not only by French artists such as Etienne-Jules Marey, Lazare Meerson and Georges Méliès, but also by Sergei Eisenstein or Walter Röhrig. We have priceless items relating to Gaumont and Triangle film companies, to Abel Gance, François Truffaut, and Louis Malle, and also an exceptional Fritz Lang collection, as well as archives on Friedrich Wilhelm Murnau. The film collections cover practically all film traditions, from silent French, Italian, and Soviet films, through to Hollywood classics, and taking in experimental films along the way. The span of our filmic wealth ranges from the Will Day collection, compiled from the early 1900s in England, which is one of the most comprehensive collections on film archaeology, through to the legendary dress from *Gone with the Wind*, and including rarities such as the head of Mrs. Bates from Alfred Hitchcock's *Psycho*.

They are also **fragile collections**, contained on media of a very wide variety and whose conservation and restoration requires constant attention and specific resources.

Finally, these are **collections containing some items that are very old**. The Library lists "pre-cinema" works dating back to the 16th century; the collection of devices is rich in machines from the 18th and 19th centuries, including for example a 1770 camera obscura sporting the English coat of arms of George III.

We also preserve quite recent pieces, though. Directors, producers, distributors, and technicians today continue to deposit their films or archives at La Cinémathèque, allowing it to remain a **living institute**, the custodian of both the memory of the past and the archives of the future.

It is important to remember that these collections are compiled and continue to enlarge thanks to **voluntary donations and deposits**. French legal deposit implicate in fact three major institutions for the area concerning us: the CNC (for film deposits), the French National Library (Bibliothèque nationale de France, for printed matter and published videograms), and the National Audiovisual Institute (INA, for deposits of radio and television works). The obligations weighing on La Cinémathèque française to conserve and circulate its collections are thus not governed by law, but rather by contractual arrangements with

its donors and depositors, and by rules of ethics established within the international film archive community.

Importance of heritage values within the Cinémathèque Française

Over its history, La Cinémathèque française has always stayed true to its original mission. As both a place of conservation and a venue for film screenings and sharing of knowledge, its *raison d'être* lies in the dual and harmonious development of these two poles of activity. With the 2007 creation of its Heritage Department – the first of its kind – La Cinémathèque intends on re-affirming its commitment to cinematographic heritage, at a time when the digital revolution threatens, in just a few years, to render obsolete more than a century of film recording and projection technology. Given the situation, the appropriate conservation and highlighting of its collections, which bear witness to the last century, constitute a major cultural and scientific challenge and undertaking for future generations.

The mission of the Heritage Department, within La Cinémathèque française, and through its various activities, is to reaffirm the historical importance of our film and non-film archives. This reaffirmation finds expression in the continuation of its inventory and cataloguing tasks, circulation of collections, improvement of conservation methods, publishing of thoughtful catalogues, organising conferences, exhibitions, and screenings, carrying out restorations and digitising, making available internet consultations, developing databases and placing digitized works online, and maintaining relations with international archives, etc.

The Heritage Charter, the first edition of which is to be found below, elaborates synthetically the major principles guiding our action today for the expansion, conservation and circulation of our collections. It may evolve in its detail over the coming years, taking into account the development of knowledge and advances in technology in the area of heritage conservation, but the basic values that it underlines are, it would seem to us, perennial. By listing them out here, we hope to contribute to a lasting and lucid dialogue that we nurture with the public authorities, other French and international heritage institutes, industry professionals, and the general public.

The Cinémathèque Française

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A black and white photograph of a metal box, possibly a safe or a storage container. The box has a dark, textured surface. A metal latch with a handle is visible on the front. A piece of light-colored, crumpled paper is placed on the surface of the box. The paper has some faint, illegible markings and a small, dark rectangular label with the letters "MGM" printed on it. The lighting is dramatic, with strong highlights and shadows.

01 COLLECTIONS EXPANSION POLICY

Legal framework of the expansion policy

The expansion of La Cinémathèque française collections takes place through donations, voluntary deposits, or in exceptional cases through purchases. Each donation or deposit requires signature of an agreement between La Cinémathèque française and the donor or depositor. The type of agreement depends on whether the donor or depositor holds the rights to the items entrusted to La Cinémathèque. Deposit agreements are governed by articles 1915 and following of the French Civil Code.

THE FILM COLLECTIONS EXPANSION

General objectives

Remaining true to its historical mission, La Cinémathèque française acquires material for the purposes of preservation and circulation. As a film archive, the duty of La Cinémathèque française is to contribute towards the conservation of films, in particular those whose existence is under threat for whatever reason. As a programming venue, it is bound to show cinema in all its historical, geographical, and aesthetic diversity.

Organisation

Film collecting is handled by the Expansion Delegation (Délégation aux enrichissements). Liaising with the Film Collections Department, the Conservation Department, and the Legal Department, the Delegation is responsible for research, reception, inventory follow-up, and relations with donors and depositors.

Guiding principles

The vocation of La Cinémathèque française is to incorporate all films into its collection, whether old or recent, French or foreign. In particular, it shall strive to acquire:

- titles that have marked film history;
- films whose survival is less secure (independent, avant-garde, or experimental cinema, films from emerging countries, animated films, documentaries, and of course films from the early days of cinema);
- prints of films restored by others film archives or cinematheques;
- exhibition prints of titles reflecting the diversity of international production, past or present;

Moreover, La Cinémathèque française sets the objective of acquiring not only exhibition prints, but also master prints in order to preserve the best possible existing items and

to be able to restore films as faithfully as possible. It also has a budget at its disposal enabling it to strike new prints of films for which it does not hold the master.

In principle, concerning exhibition items, La Cinémathèque française will try to preserve three prints of each French film in its original version and two prints of each the original version and the French-dubbed version of foreign films.

La Cinémathèque française today is open to all formats of cinema on all existing media: film, video, or digital.

Methods and means

The principal method of expansion of the film collections is through voluntary deposit. The depositor, a person or corporation (producer, filmmaker, distributor, etc.), must be in physical possession and ownership of the items deposited. La Cinémathèque française also receives deposits from individuals or cultural institutes.

It also receives donations of film materials and has a budget to purchase new prints, mainly for programming needs and for screening films whose exhibition prints are no longer in screenworthy condition.

Procedures

Once contact with the depositor or donor has been established, the deposit is evaluated according to two criteria: the nature of the item (type, media, format, condition), and the level of its general interest to the collection. La Cinémathèque française reserves the right to refuse deposit of items whose physical state might constitute a danger for the proper conservation of other films (particularly items affected by vinegar syndrome). Final acceptance of the transaction takes place in the form of a contract signed between the depositor or donor and La Cinémathèque française.

As soon as the deposit or donation is received, the items are stored in a transit zone, awaiting inventory.

Relations with donors and depositors

The depositor always remains the owner of the deposit. The deposit agreement governs respective obligations and rights of the depositor and La Cinémathèque française.

La Cinémathèque protects relations with depositors by guaranteeing them the best possible conservation of their items, by promising to make them available within 72 hours, and, if required, by assuring confidentiality of origin of the deposit.

Donations, on the other hand, become the property of La Cinémathèque française.

Each donor or depositor can become a member of La Cinémathèque française and thus participate in the life of the Association, after approval of their candidacy by the Board of Directors.



THE EXPANSION OF NON-FILM COLLECTIONS

General objectives

Considering that cinema is not limited to filmed work alone, but includes everything relating to the understanding of such work, La Cinémathèque française undertook from its foundation the collecting of the most diverse items relating to cinema: devices, posters, sketches, photos, costumes, props, all kinds of archives, books, periodicals, video and DVD trailers, etc. Today, La Cinémathèque française follows an acquisition policy that aims to enlarge the non-film collections. It considers that these collections make up a memory of both French and international cinema on a cultural, historical, aesthetic, technical and scientific level for this generation as for future ones.

This policy concerns:

- Documents or objects from the period preceding the birth of cinema up to today: paper archives, photographs, glass slides, posters, sketches by costume and set designers, books, periodicals, electronic documentary resources, magic lantern slides, devices, costumes, set elements, props, and films on VHS or DVD;
- Collections of documents and objects relating to a particular work, theme, period, filmmaker, or technical trade of the cinema;
- Collections concerning national and international cinema (mainly, but not exclusively, in French, English, Spanish, Italian, or German).

The policy has three main goals:

- Offer an extensive range of documents to a wide public (students, researchers, film, culture, and media industry professionals, and film enthusiasts as well as the plain curious);
- Emphasise coherency between the different collections;
- Propose the most complete information possible on any given subject.

Organisation

Seeking out donors and depositors is organised and coordinated by the Expansion Delegation. Liaising with the collections supervisors, it is responsible for research, reception, and relations follow-up with the depositors or donors.

Guiding principles

La Cinémathèque française engages in large-scale acquisitions involving:

- promotional material for new films at their release in France (posters, photos, press kits);

- new books and new specialised cinema reviews in French (for books and specialised reviews in other languages, as well as for films appearing on DVD, acquisitions are more selective).

Concerning acquisitions touching upon heritage, La Cinémathèque française prefers pieces that complement or enhance the coherency of its existing collections. It has neither the remit nor the means to collect everything, and so it works in conjunction with other French heritage institutes in order to avoid redundant acquisitions, unless the pieces in question are deemed essential for its own collections. It is also not the policy of La Cinémathèque to bring pieces into its collection that it does not intend, in one form or another, on presenting to the public at some time.

Criteria applied to acquiring a particular piece or not would include:

- Is the acquisition in line with the Cinémathèque's overall acquisition policy?
- Does it already exist within our collections or in another French institute?
- Does it complement an existing collection?
- Does it relate to any collection enhancement project within La Cinémathèque française?
- Does La Cinémathèque have the means to treat and conserve this acquisition and to make it available in the short or mid-term?

La Cinémathèque française reserves the right to return, destroy, or donate items that it cannot make part of its collections.

Methods and means

Donations are the favoured means of expanding non-film collections. The donor must thus be the owner of the piece that is donated. The donor may also hold the intellectual property rights, if applicable. In this case, there is an agreement established with La Cinémathèque française, stipulating the extent of rights licensed with the piece. La Cinémathèque française reserves the right to return the item, offer it to another institute with similar goals, or to destroy any piece which may be a double of an existing piece or which does not fit its acquisition policy. Items presenting a health hazard will be stored in quarantine until a final decision has been made about what to do with them (decontamination or destruction).

Expansion through purchases is the regular means of acquisition of new works (books, subscriptions to periodicals, DVDs, etc.). Exceptionally, some heritage items of particular interest may be purchased if it is deemed that donations are not forthcoming. In this case, any intellectual property rights the seller may have will also be included in the transfer.

Concerning non-film collections, La Cinémathèque française can only accept deposits originating from the State, its public institutions (such as the CNC) or other public or quasi-public institutions, for items of collections the management of which they intend to entrust to La Cinémathèque française. Since it is essentially financed by public funds,

La Cinémathèque française cannot allocate significant resources towards conserving or restoring collections pertaining to private heritage, or which might later be withdrawn. Exceptionally, La Cinémathèque can accept, for an agreed time period, and on a free of charge basis, to hold certain collections of a particular heritage interest along with transfer of the property rights thereon.

Procedures

The main stages for an acquisition operation are:

- Selection for heritage expansion: proposals for acquisitions are submitted to the Heritage Department and its scientific counterpart. They are then examined more closely by the departments whose collections are directly concerned, in order to properly evaluate the interest for La Cinémathèque française.
- Logging the item's arrival: once selection has been made, the item is logged into a database and an agreement is signed (contract or administrative document with inventory) specifying the contents and type of acquisition (donation, purchase, or deposit).
- Once acquired, details of the item are entered into another database, according to type, and stored by the Conservation Department until it is catalogued for its presentation to the public.
- For acquisitions of new material, purchase orders are issued by the collection departments in charge. Items are then catalogued for their presentation to the public.

Relations with donors

Each donor receives a donation agreement. If the donor also holds the intellectual property rights over the items in question, the agreement stipulates the scope of the rights transfer.

Although the donor relinquishes physical ownership over the donation, he/she retains a right of access to the item, as stipulated in the contract. La Cinémathèque française undertakes, furthermore, to conserve, restore and enhance all acquired items within the limits of the human and financial means at its disposal.

Each donor can become a member of La Cinémathèque française after approval of candidacy by the Board of Directors and may thus participate in the life of the Association.



02 CONSERVATION POLICY

Conservation covers a wide range of methods, techniques, procedures, and other practices required in order to:

- maintain the integrity of the collections
- restore or stabilise collections
- keep storage conditions in line with conservation and safety standards

La Cinémathèque française maintains a preventative conservation policy for its collections, aiming to prevent deterioration of its items.

There are several types of action to be undertaken:

- general upkeep of cleanliness and tidiness of facilities;
- environment control (reduction of light levels, anti-UV filters, instruments measuring and regulating temperature and humidity, restrictions on penetration of pollutants into storage areas, elimination of biological agents such as mould, bacteria, insects, or rodents);
- proper use of adequate and appropriate packaging and storage material (ensuring use of material with a base or neutral charge rather than material presenting additional acid levels);
- use of suitable shelving and other storage fittings (compactus units, filing cabinets, etc.);
- making sure that items are handled in the appropriate manner (proper use of equipment, packaging material, and reinforcement of specific items depending on level of use, such as the binding of certain books and periodicals);
- standardisation handling procedures for items during processing or consultation by establishing and enforcing strict rules (informing readers about rules of consultation, surveillance of reading rooms, training personnel about preventative conservation, defining off-limit areas accessible only to authorised personnel);
- accident prevention (establishing a safety and prevention plan to be regularly updated for fire, flood, and natural catastrophe risk, as well as procedures in case of acts of war)

Preventative operations are to be carried out on different levels:

Starting with the intake of items, the Conservation Department handles packaging operations ensuring use of chemically neutral materials, carries out cleaning and dusting, and identifies any possible contaminants (fungus, insects, etc.). As they are catalogued, items are repackaged within conservation supplies adapted to needs of preservation and presentation. They are conserved within storage facilities that answer to safety requirements as well as appropriate temperature and relative humidity conditions (18-19°, 45-55%). Surveillance and handling of these conditions are the responsibility of the Conservation Department.

Preventative conservation policy is considered a priority, since it can save often very costly future restoration procedures once deterioration has set in.

FILM CONSERVATION

General objectives

La Cinémathèque française guarantees the proper conservation of items with which it is entrusted.

Conserving film materials implies: knowing the collections, guaranteeing optimal storage conditions for materials, according to their characteristics, saving and restoring works in their original form, and allowing for wide access to the works while affording the items in question the necessary care.

Particular care must be shown towards unique items, items on nitrate film, and negatives or intermediary items.

Furthermore, La Cinémathèque française is obliged not only to conserve cinematographic creations, but also any accompanying technical information on film media.

General organisation of the film collections

La Cinémathèque collections date back to 1936 and have since continuously expanded. Film materials are handled by the Film Collections Department in conjunction with the Conservation Department. The collections include items presenting all sorts of different characteristics: items on nitrate media, safety film, magnetic tape, negatives, inter-negatives, exhibition prints, as well as items on digital media.

Film inventory

The purpose of inventory is to be able to trace each item within the collections and to log initial information relating to the filmic item's actual identification. The process could lead on to the research of other film materials under the same title. The aim is to identify the technical origin of the filmic item and determine its position in the reproduction chain. The item may then be situated within our collections and in the context of other archives.

Once it arrives at La Cinémathèque française, the filmic item is tested for vinegar syndrome. If the item is badly affected, it is returned to the depositor or destroyed. Once accepted, the filmic item is inventoried (origin, nature, media, physical condition, basic cinematographic details), labelled, and inserted into the collections as quickly as possible.

Once inventoried, the item is catalogued and indexed. The physical condition of the item or its media type may necessitate priority conservation processing.

Each item is identified, catalogued, and packaged. After this documentation process, a decision is made on any action to be taken on the new items (immediate safeguard, comparison with other items of the same title, restoration, etc.).

Film storage

The organisation of storage of film materials takes their characteristics into account. The Saint-Cyr vaults harbour exhibition items (or safety prints). Temperature and humidity conditions are optimised for the best conservation. A transit area allows for adjustments before exposing items to outside conditions.

The organisation of storage of film materials takes their level of deterioration into consideration (vinegar syndrome) in order to isolate the most affected items.

Nitrate-based items and original negatives are conserved in the storage facilities of the CNC-French Film Archives in Bois d'Arcy.

Storage management is controlled through "Lise," a software programme operated commonly by the three national archives: CNC-Archives françaises du film, La Cinémathèque française and La Cinémathèque de Toulouse.

Organising the storage facilities in this manner – a legal obligation concerning nitrate-based items – allows us to conserve items of a same work on different vaults, thus insuring the work's survival in case of catastrophe at any location.

Digital media are conserved in external storage facilities, under optimal conditions.

Prints movement management

Prints stored on the Saint-Cyr vaults are often taken out (internal programming, loans to FIAF members, festivals, etc.).

Each item is tested for vinegar before taken out of storage, whether temporarily or definitively. Items are then verified and prepared for screening.

A verification slip is printed for each item. The slip is given to the requesting department and a copy is included with the print. Systematic verification of items provides a constant picture of the state of our collections. The delivery slip allows each item to be traced.

Upon return, the item is verified a second time. If the item was on loan to an internal department (for a programming or pedagogical event), verification is done by storage workers. If the item was on loan to an external client (through the Distribution Department), the print is verified by a specialist. Items are not returned to storage until they are verified.

The Logistics and Storage Department records all departure of material. This lets us localise the most requested items and insure that items are in screenworthy condition.

Unique items are only loaned out under special conditions.

Safeguarding and restoring films

Nitrate-based films (for which no other item has been located in other archives) are systematically backed up onto safety films, and the nitrate original is conserved in special purpose-built storage at the CNC-French Film Archives. Until 2007, safeguarding procedures were financed by the "nitrate plan" implemented by the French State and managed by the CNC. This plan having now expired, La Cinémathèque française has decided to continue

nitrate safeguards from 2008 out of its own budget. The safeguard plan is submitted each year to the National Heritage Commission.

Restoration happens when it is considered that the current state of a particular item no longer corresponds to its original and thus requires intervention before it can be screened. Restoring thus means undertaking the necessary steps to bring the film back as close as possible to its original state.

In any case, no restoration procedure can take place without the agreement of the rights-holders and the owner of the item in question. Restoration agreements are thus signed prior to any work carried out. The agreement also covers financial terms in which the restoration is carried out and the future terms of exhibition for each party once the item is restored.

Furthermore, the annual restoration programme is submitted to the National Commission of Cinematographic Heritage (Commission nationale du patrimoine cinématographique), chaired by a qualified public figure appointed by the CNC Director General, and consisting of members of the CNC-French Film Archives, La Cinémathèque française, La Cinémathèque de Toulouse, and other qualified public figures. This commission thus supervises and coordinates restoration procedures for the different national archives.

Film as a support medium contains many different elements that are required for any restoration procedure. But the actual film substance is doomed to decompose at some stage, regardless of whether nitrate or acetate. Within reason, it is important to keep a record of the film's characteristics, since many of these characteristics will disappear when the film is duplicated.

Moreover, a good knowledge of the techniques used in film manufacturing and processing (machinery, film stocks, lab techniques, etc.) means finer handling of the item and more sensitive processing of the work itself, keeping in mind the original creative process.

Restoring also implies preparing the original material into a state where it can be duplicated. It is preferable at this stage to conserve the maximum amount of information from the original material (splices, indications, etc.).

La Cinémathèque française tries whenever possible to apply the principle of reversibility: it should remain possible to go back later to the original item, whether through new duplication procedures, or advances in historical research. Any modifications should thus be recorded for future reference.

Restorations must maintain the maximum amount of original information for any conservation item, meaning that any apparent defects should not be touched until a second pass, when striking an exhibition item.

The basic principles of restoration are thus: respect for the original material, transparency of procedures, and recording of decisions taken.

For a long time, film restoration was carried out with the basic means available and was not always faithful to the creative cinematographic process. Now, however, we have the means allowing us to come very close to the original and so it is the duty of La Cinémathèque française to strive, with all the means at its disposal, to give life back to preserved films as faithfully as possible.

Film digitisation

Digitisation of films is currently being envisaged as a way of making some films from the collection available to a wider audience while preserving the original items (the film prints), which would then only be used for screenings. Digitised material is made available for consultation through individual screens in the Film Library. Depending on the copyright held or negotiated by La Cinémathèque française, some films may be published commercially on DVD.

La Cinémathèque française is also studying the possibility of digitising items from its collections for conservation purposes as well as for digital screenings (high-definition digitisation).

All digitisation procedures must have prior agreement from the copyright holder of the particular item. This agreement also addresses terms of exhibition for each party.

Training personnel

Because of technological progress and evolving methods of research into film conservation, training for the teams working on the film collections must be ongoing. Each year, a training plan is put into place so that personnel may follow the training they require to carry out their daily tasks. Training programmes are centred on work methodology, new technologies, and languages.

Furthermore, open study days are regularly organised within La Cinémathèque française, as well as workshops within the Film Collections Department.

Institutional cooperation concerning film conservation

As a founding member of FIAF (International Federation of Film Archives), La Cinémathèque française works together with the other archives to help bring about conservation, safeguarding, restoration and enhancement of the cinematographic heritage. It participates in the various panels and projects developed by the FIAF commissions.

On a national level, a heritage commission, consisting of the CNC, independent experts, and curators from the three national archives (CNC-French Film Archives, Cinémathèque Française, and Cinémathèque de Toulouse), meets twice a year to define national conservation policy.



CONSERVATION OF NON-FILM COLLECTIONS

General objectives

The main goals of the conservation policy include:

- Enable communication of all types of documents (new, recent, old);
- Allow both current and future generations access to our conserved heritage;

One particular ongoing problem to solve is that transmission of documents is itself one of the main factors of deterioration. Conservation policy must thus find a balanced solution between preservation of a given document and its accessibility.

Objectives:

- Finding ways to preserve a collection in the best way possible while allowing for others to be able to access it.
- Acquire the ability to slow or stop deterioration of documents or objects through different means:
 - preventative conservation
 - preservation / maintenance / duplication
 - restoration / curative conservation

Guiding principles

Conservation acts are part of yearly estimates that determine the collections concerned, work to be carried out, and supplies to be acquired. These estimates are calculated by personnel looking after the collections and are validated by the Heritage Department. They are then validated definitively by La Cinémathèque management according to funding allocated to the collections.

Financing is mainly covered by the French State. From time to time, in the case of costly operations, La Cinémathèque française may seek a sponsorship for assistance.

Orders of priority for preservation work are defined according to precise criteria:

- Works involved in projects of enhancement or presentation (e.g. exhibitions or theme sites) are treated in priority;
- Donations and purchases are also given priority over deposits for restoration;
- For works that are part of a larger set of works and which present more complex preservation problems, a conservation evaluation for the whole set is recommended, which would assess the global costs in terms of technical, human, and material resources that are called for as well as the orders of priority;
- As part of the general policy for processing of collections, works relating to films in the collection are to be preserved.

General organisation of the non-film collections

The non-film collections at La Cinémathèque française include a wide variety of objects and media. To ensure optimal conservation of these items, La Cinémathèque française manages them according to department and specialised section.

In this manner, the Conservatory of Cinematographic Techniques conserves and manages the collections of cinema devices (cameras, projectors, laboratory devices, and sound recording or playing devices, etc.) and related documentation, as well as devices from the pre-cinema era (magic lanterns and related glass slides), film costumes, set elements, props, etc.

The Department of Non-film Collections also handles the collections of posters, drawings, publicity material, photographs, books and specialised cinema reviews, and other various archives such as VHS and DVD. This department is supported by the Conservation Department, which looks after expansion logistics, inventory management, and oversees movements of works and storage management.

The Electronic Documentation Department manages the main catalogue descriptors (film titles and names of persons and companies) within its authority list department, thus overseeing the general coherency of the catalogue of non-film collections.

Inventory of non-film collections

Recording the entry of an item or group of items into La Cinémathèque française collections is of fundamental importance. Taking inventory makes the contents of a donation, purchase, or deposit explicit by establishing a detailed list.

The inventory is carried out on a single electronic database. It stipulates for the donor or depositor the exact contents of what is being handed over, and at the same time informs handling services about the volume and nature of items that need to be entered into their systems. The process also ensures that all items may be traced.

Furthermore, the inventory process at point of entry allows building a logical pattern to a particular collection, since, for processing and conservation reasons, items naturally belonging together may be stored in different collections or locations.

The inventory database for incoming items thus provides a constantly updated picture of all collections. Permanent removals (return of a deposit, destruction) are also recorded in the database.

Storing non-film collections

Storage of collections takes place over different sites that are adapted to the particular conservation needs of each item. In the near to mid future, La Cinémathèque française aims to establish permanent storage facilities on two vaults: the Bercy location for collections freely accessible to the public – through the Film Library – and a second site for other collections, which can be visited upon appointment.

At its current and future storage facilities, La Cinémathèque française will always respect certain principles about the arrangement and organisation of stocks:

- Vaults must adhere to norms concerning temperature, humidity, security, and safety (particularly in the areas of access control and fire prevention);
- Vaults must have a quarantine area and a sorting area;
- Vaults must be equipped with industry-standard filing systems for proper conservation of collections;
- Stored items must be packaged in containers adhering to industry-standard conservation norms, especially concerning chemical neutrality, shock absorption, warp resistance, and opacity.

The Conservation Department ensures that storage conditions conform to standards. It measures conditions and takes samples for analysis on a regular basis, especially concerning temperature and humidity. It relies on technological watch in order for the collections always to have the best-adapted equipment and material for their conservation.

Movement management for non-film collections

It is imperative that all movements of items of the collections can be traced. Because there are several storage and consultation locations and processing areas, and due also to loans, it is essential that each item from the collections can be located at all times.

An electronic database of movements is managed by the Conservation Department and the departments managing each particular collection. La Cinémathèque française is striving to standardise the use of bar codes on item containers, as long as this practice does not interfere with their proper physical conservation.

The presence and condition of various items in a collection are periodically verified.

The Conservation Department handles logistics for transportation of collections and ensures that adequate transport equipment is used and sufficiently trained personnel are assigned to handle movements of heritage collections.

Restoration of non-film collections

Definition

All methods employed by specialists (restorers) performed upon damaged articles so that they may be used again, also referred to as curative intervention. Articles may be damaged through exposure to light, pollutants, biological agents, improper handling, natural disasters, or even everyday wear and tear.

Direct restoration of a particular item would take place in order to reinstate it in its original form, to give it back its visibility, or to stop and/or stabilise deterioration due to aging, using adapted techniques and materials.

Organisation

Restoration plans are proposed each year by the respective sections responsible for handling the collections. They are validated by their heads of department. Most of these

plans are financed by the French State. From time to time, for loan out to an exhibition, certain documents are restored, financed by the borrower.

Before undertaking a restoration campaign, the section responsible for a collection will select documents, identify the type of restoration required, and request an expert opinion from restorers in order to determine exactly what work needs to be done.

For complex restorations requiring different types of expertise, several restorers might be called upon to suggest a coordinated restoration approach. An example of this would be the restoration of scripts necessitating different procedures for photos and for paper.

Principles

Restoration must always adhere to the general principles of French archive practice. So, whatever the methods employed, the purpose of restoration remains the conservation of historical documents which are in the custody of La Cinémathèque for an unlimited period of time. They must thus be lasting and permanent. All procedures must be reversible.

Each act of restoration is entrusted only to professionals, since no intervention is insignificant and requires the most skilful set of hands.

Each act of restoration is accompanied by detailed specifications and a formal public bid.

A formal record shall be kept of each act of restoration, describing the method, stages, and results. It is essential that records of all acts carried out on items be preserved.

Digitisation of collections

Definition

Operation consisting of obtaining a digital artefact from a physical document. The operation results in a picture file.

Within La Cinémathèque française, campaigns for digitising documents follow different objectives:

- easier consultation of documents;
- protection of fragile documents from handling during consultations;
- for documents selected for their value or heritage interest, high-quality publication in printed catalogues;
- remote or long-distance consultation, within the boundaries of copyright;
- participation in inter-institutional digital library projects.

Organisation

Digitisation plans are suggested each year by the departments in charge of the collection processing. They are then validated by their heads of department. Most of these plans are

financed by the French State and carried out by digitisation service providers specialising in precious or delicate material. For enhancement projects within La Cinémathèque, digitisation of priceless documents is carried out on the vaults by an expert photographer specialising in digitisation of heritage funds.

Batches of items designated for digitisation are organised. The sections handling the items carefully prepare the batches according to a precise order, and then catalogue each document. Every document to be digitised is catalogued.

This work done prior to digitisation allows each artefact to have a corresponding digital entity. Then, as the batches are integrated into the catalogue, each image can be shown along with its descriptive notice. The documents are then entrusted to the service provider along with a slip detailing precisely the items handed over. When the batch is returned, quality control is carried out by the respective section. This procedure verifies both the condition of the returning originals as well as the quality of digitisation performed. Quality control criteria for digitisation include compliance with nomenclature for each shot, fidelity of colours tested within a calibrated environment, proper framing, and focus.

Principles

- All digitisation operations of collections must adhere to objectives and technical guidelines as defined by the different sections concerned within La Cinémathèque française (Heritage Department, I.T. Department);
- Digitisation operations are only entrusted to specialised professionals working within the heritage field and who demonstrate care and respect for the integrity of the documents and artefacts;
- Digitisation campaigns are accompanied by detailed specifications and formal public bids.

Institutional cooperation for conservation of non-film collections

Conservation issues necessitate constant attention to technical and scientific advances. With this in mind, La Cinémathèque française personnel stay informed about institutes developing new knowledge and techniques, so that they might improve conservation conditions of documents as well as duplication methods.

La Cinémathèque française personnel attend training sessions on conservation issues organised by the French National Library, the National Heritage Institute and the French National Archives.

In the context of preparation of restoration plans or purchase of conservation material, these institutes may be consulted from time to time.

Student curators and restorers have the opportunity to do internships at La Cinémathèque française in the framework of their research and study. These training sessions allow an exchange of experience and knowledge between trainees and professionals at La Cinémathèque française.

With each new undertaking arises a fresh set of problems calling for prior consultation with the institutes who remain a source of reference in the field.

La Cinémathèque française contributes to national and international research and panels by participating in work groups and study days, organised by the network of French film archives, the Association des Cinémathèques Européennes (ACE), or the International Federation of Film Archives (FIAPF).

ESPACE CHERCHEURS

CONSULTATION DES ARCHIVES

aires de consultation

18h sur rendez-vous

aux personnes accréditées

2 57

2 59

@bni.fr



03 CIRCULATION POLICY

GENERAL OBJECTIVES

Circulation policy must consider the protection and enhancement of the collections in conservation, while aiming to satisfy the needs of a diverse public and taking into account restrictions relating to making collections available.

The following objectives have been established:

- encourage access to communicable items: allow direct access to originals when the particular document allows for it (books and reviews, and works presented within the permanent exhibit). Whenever documents call for particular precautions before being made available, they can be consulted either in special areas, upon appointment (viewing film prints, an iconothèque for photos, a research area for archives, older periodicals, and other delicate or precious works) or in controlled-access areas (for viewing videos and DVDs);
- make digitised or duplicated documents available whenever the original items cannot be consulted for practical reasons (posters, costumes, devices, fragile and precious documents such as drawings or older periodicals, etc.);
- develop tools facilitating intellectual access to collections by making sure catalogues and documentary databases can be easily and efficiently searched through and watching over the quality of information provided;
- enhance collections and any work performed on them through events such as screenings, exhibitions, and publishing;
- allow item loans to other cultural institutions for screenings or exhibitions, while guaranteeing their state of conservation.

CATALOGUES AND DOCUMENTARY DATABASES

The catalogues are the main tools allowing the public to access items from the collections that may be consulted. In the past, catalogues were mainly in paper form, or in volumes. Today, the main presentation of a catalogue is through electronic databases, often accessible online.

La Cinémathèque française aims to put together a general electronic catalogue for its film and non-film consultable collections. This catalogue should highlight the coherency and complementarity of the different collections.

To reach this goal, La Cinémathèque française draws upon work already performed by its teams, in the form of paper or electronic files. It sets itself the task of uniting, merging, or linking the different existing catalogues and standardising working methods in order to update and harmonise its future general catalogue.

To ensure quality and homogeneity within the catalogue, La Cinémathèque française has chosen to use authority lists of the main documentary descriptors such as film titles and individual and company names. Rules of syntax and management of these authority lists

depend on the proprietary standard (in this case AFNOR), taking into account systems information restrictions and the requirement for proper display of data.

Accompanying the presentation of film and non-film documents from the catalogues will be essential information on each work and person (credit, career bio, synopsis, bibliography, filmography, etc.), as well as specialised repertories and theme-related documentaries or monographies, intended on providing full and rounded film documentation on the collections.

Aside from its general catalogue, La Cinémathèque française has also decided to develop specific catalogues and/or documentary repertories designed to highlight a particular collection. Examples include catalogues on restored films, on devices, on magic lantern slides, and on the Georges Méliès collection.

A film thesaurus has been compiled and is used to facilitate access to certain documents based on theme keyword searches on the online catalogue (for books and articles from periodicals). In time, this theme indexation will be extended to include other collections such as the video and photo collections.

CONSULTATION OF COLLECTIONS

So as to allow the widest public access to the consultable collections at La Cinémathèque française, a specific section has been created: the Film Library (Bibliothèque du film, or BiFi).

The Film Library is open to all members of the public. This is a study library allowing for on-site consultation, with conditions adapted according to the different collections. In some cases, and again subject to conditions, it is possible to obtain reproductions of certain documents, subject to copyright licences.

The Film Library does not loan out documents.

For practical reasons, viewing films at a viewing station takes place on the vaults where prints are stored, at Fort de Saint-Cyr. Similarly, the collection of devices may be consulted within the stockrooms of the French National Library.

So as to provide visitors with the best possible assistance, La Cinémathèque française has erected a reception area run by qualified personnel specialising in the various collections (media librarians, documentalists, archivists, iconographers, and viewing technicians).

Information for those who cannot come to the vaults is available over the website. There, people may access the Film Library catalogue and repertories, via a remote information section run by documentalists (contactable by telephone, fax, or email).

Pricing policy has been studied in order to encourage wide access and promote attendance at all the activities proposed by the Cinémathèque, beyond simply the Film Library.

LOANS OF WORKS

Under certain conditions, La Cinémathèque française will loan works to French and international cultural institutions for purposes of screenings or exhibitions.

It has put into place a specific section and allocated resources so that loans may be exercised within the understanding that conservation conditions for works and transparency of decision-making be respected:

- A section controlling access to the film collections and another governing non-film works are assigned with management of loan activities. This includes reception and examination of requests, and administrative, legal, and logistic follow-up for loans granted;
- Public regulations setting the terms of the loan are established;
- A loans commission is set up to authorise loans. It is chaired by the Director General of La Cinémathèque française, and consists of members of the Heritage and Cultural Activities Departments;
- Loan contracts are issued, formalising rights and obligations of the borrower and lender.

Concerning loans of works, La Cinémathèque française applies certain fundamental principles:

- No work may be loaned out if it is not in a condition to be displayed or exhibited;
- No work may be loaned out if the borrower cannot guarantee acceptable standards of security and conservation for its screening or exhibition event, or if the borrower cannot provide proof of adequate insurance;
- No work may be loaned out if the borrower has not obtained permission from the holders of copyright and moral rights;
- When examining requests for loans, La Cinémathèque française will give priority to requests from its partners, in the context of either general agreements (International Federation of Film Archives), or particular agreements (partnership conventions drawn up for specific events).
- The "régisseur" of collections of La Cinémathèque française is a member of the "Association française des régisseurs d'œuvres d'art".

SCREENINGS, EXHIBITIONS, PUBLISHING

In order to develop public knowledge of the collections, La Cinémathèque française regularly makes presentations on and off the vaults, which include:

- regular screenings of films it has restored, either by itself or in partnership with other institutions. The aim is to present to the public the restoration work of a particular film.
- regular exhibition of items from the collections, either in the permanent exhibit or as part of temporary exhibitions, which coincide with the publication (co-published) of well-thought out catalogues for the collection on display.
- organisation of virtual exhibitions on La Cinémathèque website, allowing for perpetual presentation of a given collection.
- DVD editions (co-published) of certain films restored by La Cinémathèque française.

RESEARCH

La Cinémathèque française would like both to increase scientific knowledge on the collections it conserves and to open its collections to the community of researchers, particularly concerning the field of the history of cinematographic techniques.

Given this wish, La Cinémathèque is implementing channels designed to develop exchanges with the scientific community and universities, based on its collections:

- The Conservatory of Cinematographic Techniques, whose scientific board welcomes researchers, university students and professors and representatives from the technical professions, is a central focus point for exchange about the history of cinematographic techniques. It organises study days and conferences and offers an annual scholarship to one young researcher.
- The Commission for Historical Research, which also has a scientific board open to academics and professionals, aims to widen knowledge about La Cinémathèque française collections. It organises the compilation of interviews or lectures of professional figures involved in the archives and documents conserved, hosts academic events on university research into film history, and supports young researchers whose work draws upon La Cinémathèque française collections (annual research scholarship, material support for work done on the collections).

INSTITUTIONAL COOPERATION

La Cinémathèque française develops national and international partnerships, in the field of highlighting and circulation of the cinematographic heritage.

In France, La Cinémathèque française cooperates with the CNC-French Film Archives and La Cinémathèque de Toulouse, in order to develop a shared database for their film collections (known as "Lise"). It manages a collective catalogue for non-film collections ("Ciné-Ressources") belonging to regional, national, and European film archives (with La Cinémathèque de Toulouse, La Cinémathèque Euro-régionale Jean Vigo, the Monaco Audiovisual Archives, La Cinémathèque de Corse, and the Conservatoire Régional de l'Image de Nancy).

On the European front, La Cinémathèque française participates in work initiated by the European Commission on inter-operability of catalogues and databases and is associated with the "European Film Gateway" project initiated by the European Association of Cinémathèques (ACE), of which it is a member.

On an international level, La Cinémathèque française participates in specialised working groups organised by FIAF, namely in the field of cataloguing film and non-film collections.



04 PRACTICAL INFORMATIONS

LA CINÉMATHÈQUE FRANÇAISE

51 rue de Bercy
75012 Paris France
www.cinematheque.fr
+33 (0)1 71 19 33 33

TRANSPORT

Métro

Bercy, lines 6 and 14

Bus

N° 24, 64, 87

By car

A4, exit Pont de Bercy

Car park

77, rue de Bercy

Hôtel Mercure or

8, boulevard de Bercy

OPENING TIMES

Monday to Saturday

Closed Tuesday

President: Costa-Gavras

Director: Serge Toubiana

General Director Deputy: Michel Romand-Monnier

*** Direction du patrimoine**

Acting Director: Joël Daire

Scientific Director, Director of the Conservatory of Cinematographic Techniques: Laurent Mannoni

*** Department of Acquisitions**

- Expansion of Film collections

- Expansion of Non-Film collections

*** Department of Film Collections**

- Safeguarding and restoring films

- Inventory, storage, checking and logistics

- Cataloguing

- Access and Film-circulation

*** The Conservatory of Cinematographic Techniques**

- Cinema devices

- Film costumes

*** Department of Non-Film Collections**

- Posters, drawings, publicity material

- Special collections

- Books, periodicals, videos

- Photographs

*** Department of Non-Film Conservation**

- Inventory, storage and logistics

- Governed collections

*** Department of Electronic Material**

- Files and authority records

- Filmographic editing

*** Bibliothèque du film**

- Library

- Videothèque

- Iconothèque

- Special collections access

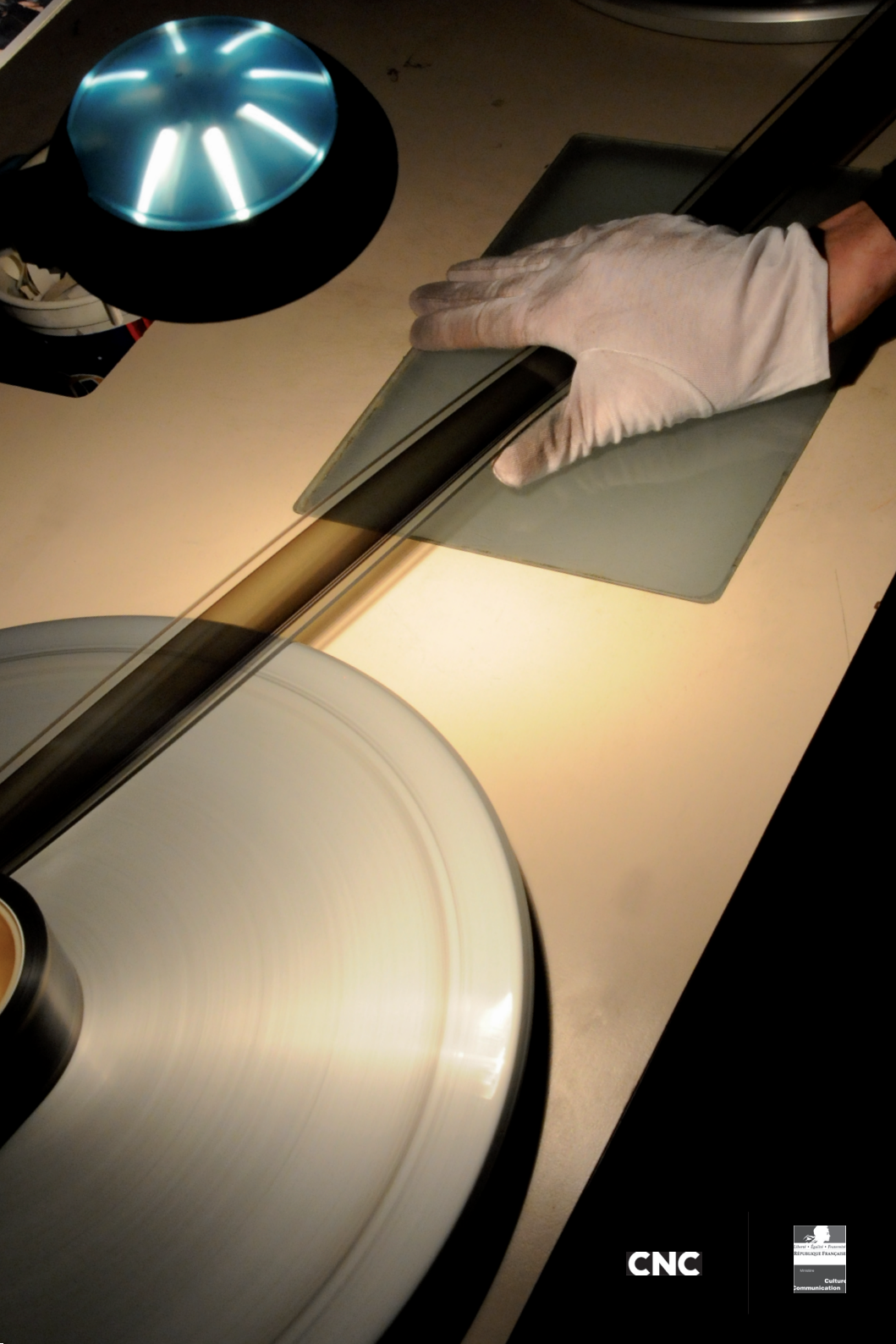
- Photographs and Digital image processing

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CNC

