On "Wild" Film Restoration, or Running a Minor Cinematheque*

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I am very grateful to Vladimír Opela for his kind invitation. Initially I only wanted his permission to attend this event as an auditor, which he kindly granted; but he said he would invite me, if I would be ready to "transfer to the delegates your experience.» I thought I could do this during one of the discussions, but Mr. Opela insisted I deliver an address at the symposium. So here I am, and now I am supposed to talk on something I wanted to learn about.

Three years after having retired from the Munich Filmmuseum, I began to get interested in reflecting critically on my work at the Filmmuseum. When I heard about the Archimedia seminar in Paris last November, «The Methodology and Aesthetics of Restoration: Cinema and the Other Arts,» I went there, and found myself confronted with questions the urgency of which I had been feeling for some time. I quote from Gian Luca Farinelli's presentation of the first day: «Finally, the necessarily hasty decision-making and improvised restoration activity » - that is what I practiced and I would call "wild" film restoration - «are making way for a practice founded on criteria and philological selections which are both well-considered and thoroughly documented." And Dominique Païni, (presenting the Archimedia program on «Methodology and Aesthetics of Restoration») noted that after an initial phase of film restoration "dictated by urgent chemical criteria" and a secondary step "that saw the rise of more aesthetic and historical considerations,» film restoration is now entering a phase where "new issues [are] taking centre stage, the ethical, aesthetic and philological questions".

As you know, the Munich Filmmuseum is a secondary instition, the cinema department of a municipal museum, and nothing you would compare to an autonomous national film archive. When I took over from Rudolf Joseph in 1973, there was very little money, practically no collection, no technical equipment, an inadequate provisional screening room with wooden walls, and just three people, including me. At the Moscow FIAF Congress that year, we applied for the status of observer and we were denied. Six years later we were admitted as an associate, and Munich became a provisional member only last year.

All the same, FIAF meetings have been a very fruitful experience for me - not the general assemblies, but meeting people at breakfast, or at night in a bar. At the Moscow congress I met Viktor Privato and Vladimir Dmitriev and we agreed on an exchange Soviet "classics» for new West German films, that later was extended to films other than Soviet "classics", especially German films that we were interested in showing in Munich. That's how our collection in Munich started.

I remember Vladimir Pogacic, then director of the Yugoslavian film archive, at breakfast in Ottawa, in 1974, where he told me about an entirely unknown film he had once seen mentioned once in a Russian magazine: the full length Sovcolor documentary on Stalin's funeral, by Kopalin, Alexandrov, Gerassimov, Chiaureli and Romm. This was *The Great Goodbye* (*Velikie proshchainie*). Twenty years later I got a beautiful colour print of it from Krasnogorsk, the Photo and Film Documentary Archive, and the film had what was probably its first public screening during our «Cinema of the Dictators" program. I remember Peter von Bagh in Turin, 1975, telling me about a print of Leni Riefenstahl's *Tag der Freiheit* he had seen at the Pacific Film Archive (the "most perverse Nazi film,» he had ever seen); a film the filmmaker herself believed to be lost. What Peter had seen in Berkeley proved to be (when we got access to it through Tom Luddy, from David Shepard, then still in Davenport, Iowa) reels one and three of the film. Later I realised that the GDR State Archive had reels one and two, so I contacted Wolfgang Klaue and we brought together all three sections of *Tag der Freiheit*. I remember Jerzy Toeplitz, telling me about one shot of Lenin with Karl Radek, from 1920. During the Stalinist era, when Radek had become a non-person, the film had been retouched, covered by a greyish blur; I had to wait until 1989 to find the shot, unretouched, in a print of Vertov' s *Leninskaia Kinopravda*, again in Krasnogorsk. This print, with all the shots of Radek, Sinoviev, Kamenev, Bukharin, missing in the 'pictorially superior' Gosfilmofond print, was the basis of our restoration (only the original tinting is still missing). I discovered the retouched version of the shot, the one Toeplitz had told me about, at Gosfilmofond, in that remarkable Stalinist documentary by Mikhail Romm, *VL, Lenin*.

Originally I had no intention of collecting, not to mention restoring German films of the twenties, as this was the task of our national archives. I wanted to collect contemporary West German cinema, the then "New German Cinema", the "Munich School», films by people I knew, Straub, Kluge, Schroeter, Fassbinder, Wenders, Herzog...and Hellmuth Costard, and Vlado Kristl, and later on Herbert Achternbusch. and Romuald Karmakar, and I was able to do this. I also wanted to collect foreign films - films I was eager to show again and again.

But then I realised that for a "Weimar Cinema" season our archives in nine out of ten cases, when we had a print at all, it was incomplete, poorly duped, with foreign language intertitles or re-translated ones; often these were sound versions of silent films, with one fifth of the picture cut off, and almost always 16mm copies.

Today I think somebody should look systematically for the fifties versions of German films of the twenties, those poor 16mm prints with recorded piano accompaniment, to be screened in fast motion (that is, sound speed), as we saw them for the first time. Or make available again *Siegfrieds Tod*, the 1933 "heroified" sound version of *Siegfried*, part one of *Nibelungen*, UFA's present to the new Reich's chancellor. These versions belong to the history of these films as much as their supposed "original" versions. Dubbed versions, mutilated and falsified versions should be

collected for study, like the 'denazified' adaptations of Nazi films from Adenauer's time, as well as the versions of American films of the same period (whose explicitly anti-nazi content was suppressed after the war) such as *Casablanca* and *Notorious*. Where are these prints now?

I never wanted to become an archivist, and never regarded myself as a conservator. I was a critic, who became a curator and as a curator remained a critic. Composing a program, let us say, *Gesamtkunstwerk Stalin*, or *Wiener Söhne* (*Viennese Sons*), or *Drei Volksschauspieler* (three popular actors - a program that compared Toto, Will Rogers and Hans Moser) was not, to my way of thinking, very different from writing about such subjects. To quote Dominique Païni again: "Programmer, c'est écrire, avec les oeuvres des autres, faire 'parler les films' plutôt que 'parler du cinéma'.

The first sentence of the first issue of *Filmkritik* (January 1957), the magazine I edited during the sixties, quoted Walter Benjamin: "The audience must constantly be put oin the wrong and yet always feel itself represented by the critic." This, I believe, is not a bad motto also for museum programming. We all know archivists who never feel the desire to exhibit their films, and we know people working at cinematheques who rarely attend their screenings. But I think a good film archivist should be like a good filmmaker, who will always regard himself as his first spectator - as Henri Langlois did, according to Païni.

I also gained a lot from seeing films we were working on with an audience. Not only have our audiences helped us with objects they may have donated (a screenplay, a program booklet, a still), but sometimes just their advice and criticism was valuable. I also found it much easier to recognize the faulty editing of a sequence or misplaced title when I saw the film with an audience rather than screening it alone in our theatre (or viewing it on the editing table).

I have always tried to make the audience an accomplice in our activities. Each print we got from Moscow or Milan or Montevideo was screened first in its native condition. I would explain its particularities to the audience, the special characteristics of a foreign version, a "corrupted" print, the differences and errors and ellipses that distribution or deterioration had visited upon the film. While the audience saw foreign language intertitles on the screen I read to them the original German titles and occasionally told them how they should imagine absent tints and tones. Some films we presented again and again, to the same audiences, as the versions evolved (with missing footage restored, German intertitles remade, original colours reproduced, an original score performed). This was part of the pleasure I took in my work.

Even before I began to work on the prints, I realized that something should be done about screening facilities. We outfitted our room with full gauge, variable speed projection (with a three blade shutter to avoid flickering - still is rare in archive theatres), with aperture plates to accommodate all of the historical formats, from the almost square size projection formats of silent films and early sound films (Fritz Lang's *M*

for instance) to the original Cinemascope format for films made with four channel sound (such as Max Ophuls' *Lola Montes*, a mint print of which we got from the editor of the film - a print which was kept under the editor's bed for twenty years and now finally, with financial assistance from Martin Scorsese, may be preserved) and Dolby SR, for Godard's *Allemagne Neuf Zero* - to mention just a few films I felt we should show in a program to be called *Alles, alles über Deutschland*.

So, my answer to the question Païni asked at the Archimedia seminar: «Que restaure-t-on: une pellicule ou un spectacle, autrement dit, un objet ou une relation imaginaire?» always would have been: the spectacle, the imaginary relation.

When we were offered the opportunity to design a new cinema, I remembered what I had heard about Jonas Mekas' and Peter Kubelka's first Anthology Archive cinema in New York. I liked the idea of having black walls, so that nothing would reflect but the silvery white rectangle of the screen, sharply limited by a movable mask. That theatre, that black box filled with perfect sound (recorded or live), or tense silence (created by the acoustics of a hall especially designed for that effect) has been a source of pleasure for me at least as intense as that of the restored prints of *Nosferatu*, *Metropolis* or *Sumurun*.

We collected films solely because we wanted to show them; rarely have I shown a film I wouldn't have wanted to see myself. I have always wanted to share with an audience my interest and pleasure, not only in "good films", of course, but also in characteristically bad, dangerous, nasty ones, films often not necessarily "politically correct", but that reflected something interesting about society, that played a role in history and politics. We showed documentaries (and amateur films too), dealing with contemporary dance, art, architecture, and of course with Munich, such as the notorious *Hauptstadt der Bewegung* (*The Capital of the Movement*), as Hitler had baptised our city.

The fact that we had to leave preservation to others sometimes led, through defective communication and our lack of expertise, to bad results, such as the case of Joe May's *Das indische Grabmal*. It's my belief that the main source of film restoration problems and shortcoming in Germany lies in the separation of archival work and programming, in the fact that these activities are practiced by different people, and by different institutions, often geographically separated.

Our «wild» archival practice began as a rather innocent comparison of film «texts.» As we drew together film resources from diverse sources in order to assemble an exhibition, we began to make discoveries. We realized that the dupe of a scratchy print of *Die freudlose Gasse* we got from Gosfilmofond (from a Russian release print of the twenties) contained pieces that were missing in the better-looking print of the British release version that we secured from London, while image quality was best in the shortest print, the French version we obtained from Paris. So we began our practice of comparison, and of creating a new copy by splic-

ing the best remaining material from all the available sources to create the most complete version of a given film.

Comparing two versions of *Metropolis*, one from Moscow and another one from London, we observed, that in one shot John Fredersen left the room with his head up (in the Moscow print), and in the other (the London print) with his head down. In the Moscow print, a certain segment consisted of one long shot, while in the London print, the segment was broken into three short ones. We later found that the London print had been duped from MOMA's material in New York, which derived from the UFA negative they received in 1937. And the Moscow print, the longest one we were able to find, was based on the American (Paramount) version (which, as Mr. Dmitriev told me recently "has been preserved at Gosfilmofond for a long time"). A feature of the archival world which I find particularly fascinating is the complicated way films traveled between archives before, during and after the war. Some of this traffic is an important part of FIAF's still unwritten history, which will have to include a comprehensive account of the relations between the Cinémathèque Française, MOMA and the Reichsfilmarchiv, and especially between Henri Langlois, Iris Barry and Frank Hensel.

There is still an aspect of chance in the ways we come upon the diaspora of elements for a film like *Metropolis*. I learned through Kenneth Anger (whose films we had shown to enthusiastic audiences at the Filmmuseum) of another *Metropolis* print in Australia. A collector in Melbourne, Harry Davidson, had shown Kenneth his print of *Metropolis*, which contained some unique shots and sequences (which until then I hadn't been able to locate in any other source). When Harry Davidson died, the Canberra archive acquired his collection and made what they thought was an inferior duplicate negative which they donated to our Filmmuseum. As it turned out, the quality was very good, and we used it to further extend our reconstruction of the film.

We received another negative of *Metropolis* as a gift from MoMA. This was the nitrate negative that MOMA had obtained from UFA in 1937. At this time, MoMA was able to fund the preservation of its nitrate material on the film (optically the best in the world, a second generation dupe neg of the German version) by making a duplicate available to Moroder, who wanted access to the highest quality material for his project. Once MoMA had created its safety fine grain master, they did not need the nitrate negative any longer, and so that element was able to come to us in Munich.

In the later sixties, the GDR state archive had attempted to restore *Metropolis*. When they had gone as far as they could on the film, they admitted that the work was still incomplete, but that one could probably go further unless written source material like the scenario would be found. This discovery occurred in the seventies, when we got access to a copy of the scenario kept by Huppertz, the composer (which was acquired by the Berlin Kinemathek), along with his score containing more than one thousand cues for the conductor, and the German censorship cards. Such items - scenarios, scores, censorship cards - along

with other non-film materials (reviews, program booklets and novels based on films, in which dialogue sometimes proved to follow the film's intertitles) have become important secondary sources that we learned to seek out and to use as guides in our restoration work. What I came to know about film restoration was not derived from manuals, which did not exist, but rather was the result of experimentation, *bricolage*, mistakes and correcting revisions.

And it's important to realize that our mentors of the forties and fifties, Langlois, Leyda, Jacobs, Eisner, Kracauer, didn't just discover the films of the twenties and thirties, they in a sense invented them for us, especially the "Weimar Cinema." Thomas Elsaesser argues that this history "from Caligari to Hitler," constructed by Kracauer, "is itself an expressionist drama...The films reflect German history, because this history has been narrated in terms and categories derived from the films.» While the revisionists among professors for cinema studies struggle with the heritage of Eisner and Kracauer, curators and restorators have to contend with that of Langlois - and Iris Barry, Jacques Ledoux, Gerhard Lamprecht and others - the curators who found, preserved and screened these films, preserved and manipulated them, commented on them, and left them to our generation which has learned to know and to love them as they have come down to us, shaped by the first great generation of cinema archivists.

I quote from Jacques Rivette's report on a visit - February 15, 1956 - to the Cinémathèque: "This evening, Fritz Lang's *Nibelungen*: after a very honorable print of *Siegfried's Death*, whose only fault was to be projected at twenty-four frames.... there was *Kriemhild's Revenge*, which I must admit never having seen until now, except those shattering Pathé-Baby reels. But now we can contemplate a very beautiful 35mm version, recently copied (probably from the original negative), but the fragments of which have not been restored to their logical order. This provoked some of the audience, who had undoubtedly come to adore the construction of Thea von Harbou's script...As if all of Lang's shots, whether in order or not. were not of an uncommon splendour. Here's a real 'story of sound and fury,» and the disorder [of montage] ultimately only contributes to it.» Rivettes's fixation on *mise-en-scène*, the disdain for narration, script construction, and montage are characteristic of a certain strain of French cinephilia in the fifties.

Three aspects connected with our restoration of films of the twenties (and not only the German ones) still require more theoretical elaboration, practical understanding and broader discussion and criticism: intertitles, colour and music.

Intertitles for a long time were regarded by the cinephiles as an uncinematic relic of literature in films. I'm glad to hear that a seminar on intertitles took place recently in Udine. As you know, German filmmakers like Carl Mayer, Lupu Pick, Robison and Murnau proclaimed: "the ideal film has no titles." But at the same time, these film-makers and others were trying to assimilate titles into the stream of moving pictures, to integrate them seamlessly with the narration, rhythm and style of their

films. They tried to distance themselves from traditional, bourgeois high culture, turning to popular, anonymous, collective forms of creation, and to free language and script from their cultural literary heritage. The captions of German films of the early twenties, the inflation period, the German Lubitsch films, early Langs and Murnaus, all bear witness to this in different ways. Through our restoration work, we have come to understand the creation of intertitles as a focus of specific aesthetic interest in the German cinema of the twenties. The original intertitles for *Caligari*, which had survived only in one 16mm print preserved by Gerhard Lamprecht, founder of the Berlin Kinemathek, had been designed by Hermann Warm, the ones for *Nosferatu* by Albin Grau, the ones for *Der Golem* by Hans Poelzig.

Langlois is said, perhaps unjustly, to have cut intertitles from his prints and have them replaced by crosses but it seems certain that he didn't devote any particular effort to finding and restoring them. However, Lotte Eisner did. Fritz Lang had told her about the very deliberate work of creating titles for his films and others, and she even provides some of the titles in verse and rhyme for *Der müde Tod* in her book on Lang. It was Lotte who asked me to look for the titles of *Nosferatu* as well as of *Der müde Tod*. The titles for *Der müde Tod* were believed to be lost, since already before the war the Reichsfilmarchiv had to ask MOMA for a print. Eventually, we were to find these titles (in the form of flash titles) in a print from Gosfilmofond, based it seems on a negative imported from Germany in the twenties. Beautifully written, the titles were in different graphic styles for the framing story and each of the three episodes - Gothic letters for the framing story, pseudo Arabian, Chinese and Renaissance titles for the respective episodes.

In East Berlin, I was able to see a print of *Nosferatu* that Manfred Lichtenstein referred to as their "bad print" and which he hesitated to show me. It certainly was a bad print, but it had many of the original intertitles and samples of all kinds of captions the film originally contained: dialogue titles, the vampire book, the ship's log book, the chronicle that comments the story of the film - signed with three crosses, like graveyard crosses (and not by a learned historian with name and surname as in the French version, freed of all typically German ambiguities).

As we tried to duplicate defective intertitles, like the scratchy ones in *Nosferatu* or those from the 16mm print of *Caligari*, we realized that, when we just stretch-printed a single frame, the titles looked static and lifeless. It was necessary to reproduce and reshoot the titles frame by frame, so that the grain would change and vibrate as it does in the original film. The captions became moving pictures.

We generally faked the graphic design of missing titles only, when we felt sure that we knew how they originally looked. Here I am only touching a problem that should become a subject for further discussion on film restoration in FIAF: what to do with missing captions and inserts? Are we allowed to try to imitate them "in the style of the time?" That is, if we know the design of a company's trademark from one film, are we

allowed to use it to fake the title's framework of another film produced by the same company? We too occasionally did that, but today I think it's a mistake, and that one should find methods for quoting a missing text or graphic, in a way that shows, by graphic means (not by adding words) that a letter, a page of a book or some other graphic insert was known to be present, and that the existing graphic is a stand-in, a latter day reconstruction which only approximates the original.

It is, I am convinced, an important task for future film restoration, to develop an "art of quoting", of citing, in order to deal with *lacunae*, to indicate what's missing and expose what we know about it, without doing harm to the stylistic integrity of a film or concealing the *lacuna*.

I am very much against introducing production stills to represent a missing sequence. This practice arrests the flow of the moving picture. Similarly I'm also against wordy descriptions of missing shots, as in the MoMA restoration of *Way Down East* - a few black frames to mark the spot, I think, would have worked better. Additional titles should describe, in abbreviated fashion, the content of missing sequences. I would not put a title into a film that was meant to be without titles. We have recently seen the results of such an interpolation in Bologna with a print of *Schatten* (*Warning Shadows*). I expect that further examination of these issues will lead FIAF into a debate over "visible" versus "invisible" restoration in film preservation, in much the same way that this antagonism has developed in the theory and practice in the restoration of paintings and sculptures.

The resistance among traditional cinephiles to recolourisation is at least as strong as resistance to the reintroduction of intertitles. Colour in silent films would have been just "un grelot qui accompagne le trot du cheval," the ringing of the bells that accompany a trotting horse, Jacques Ledoux told Eric de Kuyper. The great cinematic achievements of the thirties and the forties (the great era of black and white cinematography), occlude the memory of the widespread practice of tinting and toning in the teens and twenties. Film archives have generally conserved the black and white nitrate negatives or produced black and white safety negatives from tinted nitrate prints. There is a parallel in sculpture restoration, where, in the 19th century, colourful sculptures in churches were painted white. There is a strong bourgeois (and misogynist) prejudice behind this thinking, expressed by Charles Blanc in 1867, when he called black and white drawing "the male sex of the art" and colour "the female sex", and warned that if one day black and white drawing would no longer be dominant over colour painting, art would be lost, "comme l'humanité fut perdue par Eve".

One by one, colour versions of German silent films have shown up during the last two decades. *Caligari* twice in Montevideo, *Genuine* in Toulouse and Lausanne, *Schatten* in Paris and Milan, *Der Golem* in Milan, *Der brennende Acker* and *Finanzen des Grossherzogs*, early Langs in Amsterdam and Sao Paulo. Film by film we are rediscovering the chromatism of the German cinema of the twenties. Contemporary audiences first met cinema *bunt*, colourful; only gradually out of the coloured

prints, thanks to better developing and printing methods, emerged the graphic - photographic - nature of the film image emphatically cultivated by German film architects, costume and make-up designers, cameramen and directors. *Von Morgens bis Mitternachts*, in 1920, was praised for being "the first German black and white film". The second half of the twenties saw films more decently tinted (and not toned at all) and more black and white prints, but till the end of the decade black and white defined itself only in contradistinction to colour tinting.

Little we know about the contribution of filmmakers to the process of colouring their films. In Murnau's scenarios I only found one hint, in that for *Schloss Vogelöd*, he noted: "Dream sequences, leave them black and white". Generally, it seems, authors left the decision on colour to specialists. Colour belonged to the industrial aspect of cinema, connected films to mass culture, and also defined the artistically ambitious ones.

For some years, archives have produced safety negatives on colour stock from tinted and/or toned nitrate positives. The result in many cases was that, instead of a picture in shades of black-and-white, sepia or blue tones on a monochrome-tinted ground, the resulting images were many different shades of colour. Instead of (for example) a black-and-white image on a stable yellow ground, the photographic colour image wavers between bright yellow and dark brown with orange and reddish brown overtones. There is no stable black, no stable yellow ground. The overall result suggests the rich and complicated chromatism of a painting rather than the stark, stylized graphic values of a print that was the goal of tinting and toning in the early cinema, as cited by Urban Gad.

Only with the advent of the printing method developed by Noel Desmet in Brussels and practiced first there and in Bologna, has the problem been brought nearer to an acceptable solution. I must admit I am not very familiar with the few examples of German films recolourised in Prague using the old methods of tinting in a bath. So the Bologna *Nosferatu*, *Golem* and *Genuine* and the Brussels *Caligari* were the first safety prints of German twenties films that looked to me like the wood cut prints which inspired the expressionists, and they make evident why contemporaries, in spite of tinting, praised the black and white quality of their photography.

Understandably, some cinephiles of the post-war generation want to go on seeing *Caligari* and *Nosferatu* as they have learned to know and to love them, black and white, and the French *Nosferatu* with their titles like the one Breton raved about: «Et quand il fut de l'autre côté du pont, les fantômes vinrent à sa rencontre."

And, of course, without musical accompaniment. But our restored original titles of *Nibelungen* and *Metropolis* gave credit to the composer Gottfried Huppertz, those of *Nosferatu* to Hans Erdmann. And Eisenstein called *Potemkin* his first sound film, because of the music by Edmund Meisel. Bringing back music to silent films as a part of their restoration is another subject that deserves more reflection than it has until quite

recently received. I'm glad that Archimedia will dedicate another seminar, in July in Bologna, to that subject. I've come to regard Aljoscha Zimmermann, the composer and pianist with whom I have been working, as a collaborator in the restoration of films as important as Gerhard Ullmann and Klaus Volkmer, who for years worked with me at the Steenbeck.

On the other hand, musicians accompanying silent films, even when they referred to original scores, have often done more harm than good. For example, the accompanist for Nosferatu who mechanically repeated Erdmann's *Romantisch-phantastische Suite* twice - as it is only half as long as the film - instead of unfolding its motives, adapting them by a sensitive arrangement to the film. In a different version, exactly this has been done with the stunning effect, so that the music and tinting correspond with each other, and one gets a sense of the essential art of scoring silent film.

When we were asked, ten years ago, to provide a print of *Battleship Potemkin* for a tour of an orchestra, conducted by David Shallon (who wanted to perform Meisel's score), we ran into a couple of problems. Meisel had written his score for the German version of the film, which doesn't exist anymore. We had the censorship cards, and our beautiful Gosfilmofond print corresponded with the German version, as did a British release print, preserved in London (also based not on the Russian but on the German version), edited by Piel Jutzi. Thus, it is possible to restore the German version, and one day the German archives should do this. But then, the German version had been criticised severely and justly by Eisenstein himself, not only for the censorship cuts, but also because Jutzi had destroyed the rigorous five act construction of the film and changed it into six, reformulated credits and intertitles, and changed the order of shots and sequences. This was our problem: we only had authentic music which corresponded to the German version that Eisenstein repudiated, and we wanted to present his version of the film. Ultimately, we decided to look for the missing shots in order to recreate a version as close as possible to Eisenstein's original montage. We found some shots preserved in the London print and others in a print MOMA had received from Jay Leyda (who had brought it from Moscow); we reintegrated the missing shot and re-edited everything to conform to Eisenstein's version, and then we had the music re-arranged to accommodate the restored Russian *Potemkin* of 1925. The resulting print was screened with music for enthusiastic audiences in Frankfort, Cologne, Munich, and Strasbourg, who applauded frenetically the rising of the - hand-coloured! - red flag. The print and the performance did not reproduce any past event, but presented a new montage of different attractions, picture and sound, all of them, in one way or another, authentic, in accordance with the intentions of the author, but not a reproduction.

This event only reinforced my conviction that the process of presenting an old film to new audiences has a lot in common with the older curatorial activities such as restoration of art works and textual editing. Certainly, many of the same kinds of historical and technical attention

are required, from the 'philological' tracing of the origins of the different versions, to the understanding of the significance of these versions through examination of material in the paper archives, to the creative work necessary to recreate an appropriate if not 'authentic original' musical performance. But also, the process of restoration and presentation of a restored silent film bears comparison with textual editing and then theatrical performance of a literary work, which requires adjustments and a certain amount of latitude in presentation, always guided of course by a strong awareness of the elements of original presentation (technical form, historical context, directorial intention, etc). Which brings me back to one of my earlier points: we always have to think of the audience as a part of the process, and perhaps we should not think of any restoration as complete or successful until it has played to a real audience in a real theatre.

My recent readings in the literature about modern art restoration and textual critique and editing, inspired by the Paris Archimedia seminar, have been stimulating and encouraging. Art restorators, I understand, after a period in which they removed elements added through the centuries to an antique sculpture, are now putting them back, marking them as such, as interpretations of a later periods. You can read an old film, through its different versions, like a palimpsest, as Giorgio Bertellini has proposed (in the special issue of Richard Koszarski's *Film History* edited by Paolo Cherchi Usai) doing with *Metropolis*. And you can invite your audience to participate in the pleasure of reading that palimpsest, reading the traces of older texts under the surface.

The restoration of a film should always be an open process, leaving time and space for further 'versions' that will not necessarily make the earlier ones obsolete. The objects we are dealing with are copies, but each one is different from its model. Each print is a kind of 'original,' and each performance is unique. So each restoration is an interpretation, a translation, an explanation, a performance. If restorator and programmer act as historians, they can resurrect a film in a genuine, truthful way. If they don't, they may give the film a youthful 'make-up' ("new splendor to old movies" as last week's German tv broadcast on Photoplay's activities was called), so that it may dance like the old man in Le Masque (the first episode of Max Ophuls' *Le Plaisir*) before he breaks down.

Restoring a film often resembles the long ride in an classical western movie. You start with a well-defined aim: bringing the bandit to the prison beyond the desert, or bringing a film back to its "original version". But then you begin to like your prisoner, in spite or even because of his defects - so your intention, your ambition, your mission changes during your long ride home, and the happy ending may become very different from what you imagined in the beginning.