



*International Museum of
Photography and Film*

Report to UNESCO on

The 2002 FIAF Summer School

George Eastman House, Rochester

February 3, 2003

The 10th edition of the Fédération Internationale des Archives du Film (FIAF) Summer School was successfully held at George Eastman House from June 10 to 28, 2002. This convocation was the second one hosted by the Museum, which held the first FIAF Summer School in the United States from June 8 to 26, 1998. Once again, the Museum provided its Curtis and Dryden Theatres as the main lecture and demonstration areas for the attendees. In addition, classes were held at the Museum's Louis B. Mayer Conservation Center, with portions of the course held at the Library of Congress Conservation Center in Dayton, Ohio. The primary goals of this session were to provide those in attendance with the most recent innovations in the technical fields of film preservation; to promote discussion on problematic curatorial issues, and to foster international communication and cooperation among the delegates for the future, with special emphasis on moving image archiving in developing countries.

This session was attended by staff members of the following institutions and organizations: Nguyen Thuy Hoa (Vietnam Film Institute), Nguyen Van Duc (Vietnam Film Institute), Rebecca Payne Collins (National Film Preservation Foundation), Aboubacar Napon (Cinémathèque Africaine de Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso), Fernando Ortiz (Instituto Mexicano de Cinematografía, Mexico), Patrice Delavie (Centre National de la Cinématographie, France), Cristina D'Ossualdo (Cineteca Nazionale, Rome, now at the Cineteca del Friuli, Gemona, Italy), Kasandra O'Connell (Irish Film Archive,

ireland), Angeles Sanchez (Cineteca Nacional, Mexico), Angel Martinez (Filmoteca de la Unam, Mexico), Tommi Partanen (Finnish Film Archive, Helsinki), Elif Rongen-Kaynakci (Nederlands Filmmuseum, Amsterdam), Jon Shibata (Pacific Film Archives), Igor Stardelov (Cinematheque of Macedonia), Maria Assunta Pimpinelli (Cineteca Nazionale, Rome), George Willeman (Library of Congress, Washington D.C.), Stéphanie Côte (Cinémathèque Québécoise), Sun-Hee Lee (Korean Film Archive, Seoul), Luana Brewis (National Film, Video and Sound Archives, Pretoria, South Africa), as well as graduates of the L. Jeffrey Selznick School of Film Preservation Jared S. Case (US), Kelly Chisholm (US), Sonia Genaitay (France), Sungji Oh (South Korea), Christina Porterfield (US), Linda Shah (US), Heather Stilin (US), and John Woodard (US).

A select group of outstanding professionals in the field of preservation led the practicum and lecture courses for this event. Among the instructors invited to participate in the event were Peter Brothers, CEO, Specs Bros. LLC (a magnetic tape restoration facility); Ray Edmondson, Director of Archive Associates Pty, Ltd., and Curator Emeritus of the National Screen and Sound Archive, Canberra; Bob Heiber, Chace Productions, Inc.; John Kirk, Technical Operations, Worldwide Distribution Services, MGM; Paul Read, Paul Read Associates, London; Olwen Terris, Chief Cataloguer, National Film and Television Archive, London; Martin Koerber, Stiftung Deutsche Kinemathek – Filmmuseum Berlin; Mike Mashon, Curator of the Moving Image Section at the Library of Congress; Ken Weissman and the staff of the Library of Congress, Dayton; Paolo Cherchi Usai, Senior Curator, Motion Picture Department at George Eastman House, and Edward Stratmann, Assistant Curator, Motion Picture Department, George Eastman House. The students were provided with information and training on the newest preservation techniques, and discussions were held on topics confronting archivists such as selection and disposition of materials, donor rights, copyright, and determining preservation priorities.

By its very nature the FIAF Summer School creates a fertile atmosphere where ideas and information are passed more rapidly than in everyday professional life. The three weeks are a carefully paced intensive course in film preservation, packed with

seminars, practicum sessions, and after hours sightseeing excursions. Delegates to this session have indicated their unconditional approval of the classes and of their stay at George Eastman House with an enthusiastically positive response. Individual feedback shows that students felt they were able to greatly improve their professional knowledge and at the same time make valuable contacts with both colleagues from other archives and with the lecturers. Several felt that the single most important aspect of the Summer School was the opportunity to spend an extended period of time working closely with staff members from fellow FIAF archives. Many have also indicated that setting the Summer School at George Eastman House was an ideal choice: the session was held in the most professional manner, but at the same time students found it warm, friendly and informal; the best atmosphere to learn in. The guest speakers also expressed their gratitude for the opportunity to be able to share their viewpoints, theories and experiences in such an intimate and informal atmosphere. All agreed that the session was both memorable and profitable: one student remarked that now "I have friends all over the world."

George Eastman House has indicated that despite the somewhat hectic nature of the program, they were able to coordinate all aspects with little or no difficulty. Language did not seem to be a barrier either: most of the students, professors and some Eastman House staff members were bi- or multilingual.

The support and interest of UNESCO to the cause of moving image preservation was frequently mentioned during the course of classes and lectures for its resolve in fostering understanding of the issues involved in the field and promoting the cause of film preservation at an international level. The Summer School was organized by FIAF, but it also received major support from the South East Asia and Pacific Audio Visual Archive Association (SEAPAVAA), most directly through its representative Ray Edmondson. The general public was given the opportunity to attend selected sessions of general interest for a non-specialized audience. All in all, we experienced a high level of interest in the Summer School from the public opinion.

Funding for the 10th FIAF Summer School was provided by FIAF, George Eastman House, and The L. Jeffrey Selznick School of Film Preservation, with major additional support from the Louis B. Mayer Foundation and through the tuition fees provided by the member FIAF archives whose staff members attended the session. FIAF also contributed to the tuition fees and/or travel expenses for representatives of institutions with more modest financial resources.

The FIAF Summer School has proven to be a unique and popular forum for shared communication and training, and inquiries are already being made regarding the 11th edition. In accordance with UNESCO's stated mandate to encourage multi-national cooperation through cultural education, communication, and arts and science initiatives, the overwhelming response to the FIAF Summer School is an unequivocal endorsement of those aims. The mutual recognition that the moving image transcends cultural barriers is a fundamental building block of both FIAF's and UNESCO's goals of achieving understanding, acceptance, preservation of the world's cultures and ongoing exchange between them. Each student was able to return with a wealth of information and training to share with their colleagues at home. And they received what is perhaps the most valuable asset of all: a long list of new colleagues from the other archives, with whom they can continue to exchange information and to whom they can turn to for counsel and assistance.