



# arts and culture

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Department:  
Arts and Culture  
**REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

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## **THE ACTING NATIONAL ARCHIVIST**

### **REPORT ON THE FEDERATION OF INTERNATIONAL FILM ARCHIVES (FIAF) SUMMER SCHOOL 27 MARCH TO 11 APRIL 2011**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

1. The purpose of this submission is to report on the FIAF Summer School that was hosted by the National Archives through the National Film, Video and Sound Archives in South Africa from 27 March to 10 April 2011

#### **DISCUSSION**

2. From its early times, FIAF was aware of the importance of developing educational and training programs for a recently born profession: the profession of moving image archivist. The establishment of archival education programs is based on the premise that there is an urgent need for developing the professional skills of the archivists who will preserve and keep alive our moving image heritage. One of the first problems FIAF archives had to face was to provide theoretical and practical education to senior employees and future key staff members without sending them out for very long periods. The FIAF Summer School, was organized for the first time at the Staatliche Filmarchiv der DDR, in Berlin-GDR (in 1973), matching the briefness, practicality and high scientific standards criteria,

and was successfully repeated four times in Berlin-GRD (in 1976, 1979, 1984 and 1987); one time at Det Danske Filmmuseum in Copenhagen (in 1977); twice at the National Film and Television Archive of the British Film Institute in London (1992 and 1996); and twice at the George Eastman House in Rochester (1998 and 2002). Future needs (general or specialized Summer Schools), venues (rotation principle) and periodicity (every 3 years) of the FIAF Summer Schools are currently being discussed within the FIAF Executive Committee. In Europe, practical training is offered by the Archimedia European Training Network for the Promotion of Cinema Heritage. The courses and seminars take place following a rotation (in Europe) principle. The program is developed by a group of Archives, Universities and Laboratories. In the USA, the George Eastman House in Rochester offers, since 1996, a high level yearly course program at The L. Jeffrey Selznick School of Film Preservation. On the West Coast of the USA, the University of California in Los Angeles is developing the UCLA Graduate University Training Program for International Archivists. In South America Audiovisual Archivists are trained through the FIAF-Ibermedia School on Wheels, where specialists in specific disciplines of Film preservation, are hosted by various Audiovisual Archives on that continent and move from one Archive to the other to supply hands on training in the various Archives in these countries.

3. The preamble for hosting the FIAF Summer School was that it would contribute to the deepening of our understanding and appreciation of the theory and practical challenges of collecting, preserving and accessibility of the African Audiovisual Heritage.
4. The following core task team has been assembled to address various issues relating to the Congress and Summer School. The key officials in this task team consist of the following officials:

Chairperson

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Ms. Mandy Gilder

Deputy Chairperson	-	Mr. Dennis Maake
Secretariat		Ms. Thobeka Zulu
Coordinator Congress	-	Ms. Melisia Shinnars
Liaison Summer School	-	Ms. Brenda Kotze
Event Management		Mr. Corney Wright
Communications	-	Mr. Mack Lewele

5. Other officials who worked tirelessly on the Summer School were Ntombi Mtshweni, Roline le Roux, Freddy Selomo, Mmathapelo Mataboge, Simon Namanyana, Lucas Thulare and Marie Phiri. Their contribution to the management of various activities relating to the Summer School was the key to its ultimate success.
6. As was agreed, the participants for the Summer School was selected from the African continent and students were subsidized in terms of their accommodation, transport and meals as many of the delegates will be from our own institution.
7. 45 Students from South Africa, Ghana, Malawi, Kenya, Namibia, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Mozambique and Tanzania attended the Summer School. Institutions such as the archives from Mayibuye centre, Freedom Park, SANparks, E-tv as well as participants from the Provincial Archives from the Eastern Cape, Limpopo and Mpumalanga attended. The National Archives and Film Archives were well represented with 14 participants.
8. The programme consisted of the following matters relating to the preservation of audio-visual material:
  - Students shot a small insert on film at AFDA film school, after which they followed the whole process of film production from the laboratory for processing at the FILM LAB up to the final edited stage and digitization thereof at the REFINERY.

- Telecine of film to other formats
- Digitisation of Film
- Metadata, Cataloguing And Documentation
- General overview of the issues of Archive Management Including ethical issues
- Different types of carriers, recording and reproduction techniques decay of carriers, obsolescence.
- Definition of moving images and what should be preserved. Basic tasks of a moving image archive: collection, preservation, cataloguing, accessibility.
- Additional functions of an archive for moving images: Collection of related materials, cultural activities (film showings, publications, exhibitions), archive theatre, museum.
- The responsibility of governments for the safeguarding of the moving image heritage
- Chemical and physical properties of film material - black and white, colour, nitrate, acetate. Elements endangering the permanent preservation of film material: Residual chemicals, temperature, humidity, light etc.
- Evaluation and description of the technical status of moving image material prior to archiving (nitrate, acetate, format, sound system , type of material., shrinkage, scratches, dust, perforation, format of tape/disc, decision on future treatment etc.)
- Storage environment for Film collections
- Treatment of moving image material prior to archiving : Rewinding, cleaning , measure of shrinkage, leader and its inscription , cans and inscription of cans; handling of tapes and discs, registration of technical and filmographic data.
- Introduction to Access Issues
- Rights (not only copyright but protection of the private sphere and other rights of the personality).

- Methods of building a collection: Legal deposit, voluntary deposit, purchase, gifts, exchange.
  - Sources of collections: Production companies, distributors, TV-stations, government units, private persons/collectors, foreign archives
  - Management of a moving image archive. Status - autonomous or integrated. Qualification of staff. Guidelines for management. Division of tasks. Public awareness and public relations.
  - Collection, handling and preservation of related materials from the production and distribution process.
  - Storage of paper and sound recordings.
  - The value of files from production/distribution units, government agencies (f.e. censorship board). The collection of artefacts, equipment and museum pieces.
  - A special book library as an additional task for a moving image archive
  - Unesco Recommendation for the safeguarding and preservation of moving images.
  - Legal problems of moving image archives
  - Digital Formats – Compression
  - Film Preservation Strategies and Practice
  - D-Cinema Effects On Film Preservation And Presentation
  - How can the principles of the Unesco recommendation be introduced in the countries of participants
9. Lectures were presented by Local and International experts in the field and we are grateful for people who gave so generously of their time and expertise, like Nancy Goldman (Head of FIAF Cataloguing, from Berkeley University and Head of the Pacific Film Archive in the USA), Thomas Christiansen (Head of the FIAF Technical Commission, Curator of the Danish Film Institute), David Walsh (Newly elected Head of the FIAF Technical Commission and the Manger of Digital Collections at the Imperial War Museum in the United Kingdom). From South Africa we drew on the

expertise from Thalita Fourie (Deputy director at DITSONG: Kruger Museum, also part time lecturer at UP Museum and Heritage studies), Michelle Boshoff (NAR Photographic section), Marc Eckstein (Digital solutions experts), Charl van der Merwe (MD of the Refinery), Dennis Maake (Head of the National Film, Video and Sound Archives (NVFSA)), Melisia Shinnars (Head of Film and Video preservation at NVFSA) and Trevor Moses (Senior Audiovisual Archivist).

10. The goodwill and cooperation from staff members at the National Library, where we continued our lectures (after being in Johannesburg from 27 March) on 2 April 2011 as well of the professional assistance from DAC events section contributed to the overall success of the Summer School.
11. Various suggestions were made in terms of the continuation of training on the African continent. The students formed a "Committee of 5" of which Nkwenkwezi Languza from NFVSA was elected as the chairperson, they presented a paper on the continuous need for training in audiovisual archiving on the continent to the FIAF Congress and Executive Committee. A copy of their presentation is attached as Annexure A.
12. The appointment of Dennis Maake in the EC, to represent the African Chapter of FIAF was one of the highlights for the students as he is the Head of the South African National Film Archives, and is held in high esteem by other Audiovisual Archives in Africa. South Africa is seen as the leading audiovisual archive on the continent.
13. Our thanks also goes to Wolfgang Klaue, Eva Orbanz and Christian Dimitriu who worked from as far back as 2008, to make the Summer School in Pretoria a reality. The support and inputs from our Acting National Archivist is highly appreciated and we want to reiterate FIAF's statement on their news website that states the following: "*The Spring*

*sessions of the FIAF Executive Committee (EC) and the FIAF General Assembly (GA) took place at the National Library of South Africa (NLSA) in Pretoria, April 8-10 and April 16, 2011, under the wise leadership of Mandy Gilder and with the efficient cooperation of her colleagues.”*

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 14 It is recommended that you:
- 14.1 Take note of the contents

**OFFICERS CONCERNED**

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**DECISION**

Contents noted

Paragraph 14.1 contents noted

Further discussion required / not required.

Proposed date for discussion: .....

ACTING NATIONAL ARCHIVIST

DATE: