

Film Archives and Sharing

In April 2018 Národní filmový archiv, Prague welcomed delegates and guests of the 74th Congress of FIAF. Prague organizers chose “sharing” as a guiding principle for FIAF’s two-day Symposium with the aim of highlighting as many aspects of the term as possible. While all archives acknowledge the uniqueness of their collections, they try to come up with ways of sharing not only their “content” but also their related data, as well as the tools and methods they use to preserve and research them. In addition, as FIAF archives, part of an international community, they don’t operate as islands but must consider their efforts and tasks in line with other partners in the field, just like other cultural heritage institutions. At this Symposium, invited speakers examined and discussed what film archives share, with whom, and how, but also the possible limits of sharing, and what justifications they might have.

This issue of *Iluminace* develops the notion of sharing discussed at the symposium with the aim of better understanding what challenges lie before film archives today. The theme of sharing is spread out across different columns: peer-reviewed articles, reports, projects, and interviews.

In her text, Beatriz Tadeo Fuica opens an important topic about the influence of international exchange between archives and the organization of retrospectives on the creation of a film canon. In the forefront of her interests are France, Uruguay, and Argentina. Fuica analyses the relationship between archives and film clubs and highlights the key role of Henri Langlois in the early process of building foreign film collections. Alain Boillat and Frédéric Maire present a collaboration between the Cinema Department of the University of Lausanne and the Cinémathèque suisse. Their descriptive article highlights how academic researchers can contribute to the knowledge and interpretation of archival collections.

Marie Barešová interviewed Michael Loebenstein, FIAF’s Secretary General, but above all the current director of the Austrian Film Museum and former director of the National Film and Sound Archive of Australia. Many years of experience in managing archival institutions and collaborating on a number of international projects enables Loebenstein to

compare concrete institutional practices and articulate the current challenges of the field. One recent significant event of the film-archive world has been the publication of the FIAF Moving Image Cataloguing Manual (2016). Thelma Ross from the Museum of Modern Art Film Center and Head of the FIAF cataloguing committee spoke with Ladislav Cubr and Matěj Strnad, among others, about how archives can work with their data.

Two of the texts are devoted to the work of Czech film archivists with a collection of films by the Czech cinema pioneer Jan Kříženecký. Jaroslav Lopour describes the complicated identification of Jan Kříženecký's films using a broad range of press articles from the end of the 19th century. Jeanne Pommeau presents the procedures chosen for the digitization of Kříženecký's work. The digitization will make these unique films available to the general public in a form that would not have been achievable by photochemical procedures.

In their project Nadja Šičarov from Slovenian Cinematheque and Janneke van Dalen from the Austrian Film Museum point out that the archivist profession is not exclusively shaped by educational and training activities, such as special study programs, internships, workshops, summer schools and the like, but also by the exchange of experience and knowledge across generations of archivists. According to their findings, all innovations initiated by the advent of new technologies or new ways of thinking about archiving must be understood in continuity, as a continuation of the long-term work of earlier generations.

Petr Bednařík's review in the *Horizon* column is also related to the topic, even though we do not publish it in English. Bednařík reviews Jan Trnka's monograph on the history of the Czech film archive, which examines how the practice of the film archive have changed in long-term political, social and technological developments.