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Cinéma et audiovisuel :
quelles mémoires numériques pour l'Europe ?

DES PROJETS EN EUROPE, DES PROJETS EUROPÉENS ?

As seen from the Netherlands

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The situation in the Netherlands

With this transition from analogue to digital there is a lot going on and the situation in the Netherlands is as follows:

New archive policies are needed, new archives infrastructures are needed and also a complete new film museum in many ways. We are not currently prepared for this digital future.

The old film museum is the film museum as we know. It's a cinémathèque, it has screening, there is a very small exhibition, there is a documentation facility with a library, we distribute films and of course we carry out conservation and restoration activities to try and improve our collection. This is what most film museums and cinémathèques are doing all over the world. We have a very nice old building, from the late nineteenth century and it is not adapted for the digital future in many ways.

We are also very much dislocated, we have many locations, some where people work and many other locations where no people are working, the films and paper collections are stored there. They are in many locations all over the Netherlands.

There are several reasons for us to move to another building. Until 2006 we had a big cinema in the centre of the city which attracted a lot of people; this cinema has now been demolished and we are now restricted to the two small cinemas we have in our building which have only about 80 seats per cinema. We also have a very small exhibition space and also the library is not in the same building, it is nearby but it gives a different idea of the film museum.

Not only is this building not equipped for the digital future but also our collections are not prepared. We do not have facilities for storage of digital files and when there is a lot of material already produced in a digital way, we store them somewhere but we know this is not the way to do it.

We are planning to move to two new buildings; one will be a new museum building where there will be cinemas, a big exhibition space with all kinds of digital facilities and there will be a new collection building not far from it where all the collections will be concentrated. For those who know Amsterdam it will be in the North part of the city, just behind central station, on the opposite of the river where the old centre is found. The developing company is now looking for a constructor to build it. It will include four cinemas and the cinémathèque we all wanted, with cinemas, cafés, a large exhibition space and so on.

To fulfil our requirements for the digital future there is a parallel project which is called "Images for the Future". This is a project which is not only for the film museum but also for other institutions such as the Institute for Sound and Vision which is in Hilversum and is a large archive mainly of television materials but also with some cinema journals and news reels. All in all there is a lot of material and we have been fighting with a backlog of registration, conservation and restoration for the last twenty years or so and there was never a real solution to it. Regular funding was never enough and now we are facing a digital revolution. We got a lot of money for the digital part and luckily we managed to shape the project in such a way that we are also able to preserve and restore the films in an analogue way. These are in many ways the reasons why we are doing this project:

- *The materials are in danger*
- *The accessibility of the collections was always a big problem and this should be improved in the future.*

Regular funding was not enough and also public funding was not enough, so it was only through the government that we could find enough money for big projects. In Holland there is a special fund with the government where all the money that they gain with selling gas goes into this which is meant for reinforcing all kinds of economical projects. We managed to shape this culture project in an economic way so that it became interesting for the government to contribute. The partners are some collections such as the Film Museum but also the Institute of Sound and Vision and the National Archive who brought in three million photographs, there are also the distribution networks like the public libraries and some institutions.

This project was approved two years ago, it was a total sum of 173 million Euros and we only got 35 million Euros of that. We started last year with this project. Part of the project is preserving the material in an analogue way but of course a large part in volume was digitizing those collections to make them accessible, to contextualize them and to make them accessible for all kinds of users. These users are foreseen as being educational users but there is also a cultural and economic value in the sense that people can buy these materials and re-use them for new productions or for the creative industry. There is a growing interest for these materials as we all know and there should be a large amount of revenues earning back a part of the 173 million. Other requirements from the projects are that it must be transparent, it must be accessible for everybody and that it should be a long-term project. The government said that the lump sum of money should be enough to deal with the backlogs and conservation for a long period of time. It should also be accessible through different systems.

The users will have maximum access to large collections but it will not always be free and copyrights are the source of problems for us. There has to be some return on investment. In this seven year project which started in 2007 and will be ready in 2014, it is expected that in the following years until 2025 a total of 64 million should be made through selling materials. The other returns are fairly important and this is one of the main reasons why the government gave this money; it should strengthen all kinds of cultural and social aspects. It will not only create labour, it will also strengthen democracy and so on.

What does this mean for the Filmmuseum? We have a large collection of materials and not everything is really relevant for us to digitize because we have a lot of foreign materials which are already digitized in other countries, so we focus very much on what we consider as being the core collection which is not only Dutch but we do have a lot of non-Dutch materials which we consider as part of our collection. These materials will be preserved and digitized and there is then a backlog in digitization because there is a lot of material that we have preserved and restored in the last twenty years which will now be part of the digitization project.

Contextualization means that there should be websites and all kinds of catalogues available, publications that put all those images into context.

This means about 5 million Euros extra per year for us, not only films but also part of the photographs collection will be preserved and all the photos we have will be digitized. We will have quite a number of extra jobs for the next seven years.

We follow our collection policy in what we preserve and digitize. There will be a broadened approach in the sense that we may also digitize materials that have an educational value or even a value that can be interesting for re-use or selling to our commercial partners. A lot of the work has to be done in-house, we have a few people working on the materials in the historical archives, a lot of material which has never been viewed properly, never been selected properly. Those people are watching films and giving advice on what to keep. We have a team of five restorers working continuously on our films and access for the digitized accessibility and contextualization. There is a team of legal specialists for all kinds of copyright issues and of course the logistics has increased quite a lot.

We outsourced the photochemical film preservation work, all this outsourcing is done via tenders which means that different companies could apply for these jobs. We ended up with Haghe Film for the chemical conservation. A company in New York carries out the technique of preserving colour films in three black and white separates. And for digitizing and coding the work, this is done by a company in Denver in the United States, Thought Equity, they are doing part of the work in Amsterdam and part of the work in the United States. Then there will be an invitation to tender early next year for the photo preservation.

It is important that you see the change in what is happening. Five years ago the largest part of film preservation was analogue, it was photochemical. Now, there is already a considerable part which is digital, maybe 5%-10%, but we see that this digital part is getting very important as a restoration tool that more and more digital work will be done. In a way the digital and analogue are communicating vessels. Let's say we now have 90% photochemical and 10% digital, it is foreseen that in 4-5 years time this balance will shift to 70/30 or 60/40%.

The work flows for the different institutions are not all the same. Sound and Vision is mainly in television archives so they are satisfied when they have a digital file in a high television format. We however, want larger formats, we are now digitizing at 2K format and these files should be also adapted for creating packages for digital projection in the future.

Infrastructure is something that is completely new and we are working very hard on this. There will be solutions for storage and server facilities in the Filmmuseum but the lower resolutions will probably go to what is called Immix, a database that is at Sound and Vision and gives a central access to all materials. There are all the other initiatives such as Filmotech which is a Spanish initiative, but where the Dutch feature films will also become accessible. There are all kinds of advantages to this project and it will allow us to create new presentation formats, create new ways of learning and education and new ways to appreciate cinema. It creates an easy access to our collections and at the same time the collections will be better preserved and better restored than before. There will be better access formats for researchers and everybody who wants to work with the collections.

It also considerably changes the whole idea of a film museum. The film museum where you go to see films you could not see at home and the film museum where you could see exhibitions, presenting opinions and visions on cinema heritage that you could not think about yourself. In the future, a lot of that will be able to be accessed at home through the Internet, and so this makes is necessary for us especially when we are making a new building for cinemas and a large exhibition space, what this all means for a film museum in the future. This is the future for us and we are thinking about where we are going and what the Filmmuseum will be, not only in the sense that it will be a spectacular building, but also that we will have new spectacular ways of presenting our films and our collections.

Joël DAIRE

Les problématiques que vous avez soulevées au départ, tous les responsables de cinémathèque présents ici y ont été confrontés, y sont peut-être encore confrontés. Nous avons tous essayé de résoudre, au moins, une partie de ces problèmes, c'est rare que nous ayons réussi à tout résoudre à la fois. Sur cette présentation de votre projet d'images pour le futur, tous les responsables de cinémathèques se posent ces questions. Pour l'avenir, je m'interroge sur la viabilité d'un modèle économique unique pour ce type de projet, autant pour les gestionnaires du dépôt légal que pour des institutions comme les nôtres. Il est vrai que le rôle de l'État a été central. On le voit bien, en France, à travers le travail considérable et remarquable fait sur la numérisation du dépôt légal à la Bibliothèque nationale, à l'Ina etc. Nos institutions ne sont pas gestionnaires du dépôt légal, où l'État a eu un rôle moteur incontestable pour le lancement, l'initiation, de ces campagnes de numérisation plus ou moins de masse. Prévisions budgétaires à l'appui, je m'interroge, pour les trois ou quatre années qui viennent, sur la possibilité qu'on aura de continuer à un haut niveau avec les seules ressources de l'État.

Une intervenante de la salle

Bonjour, j'aurai une question un peu générale pour les deux intervenants de ce matin, qui rejoint vos interrogations, sur le pourquoi de tout cela. Hier soir, je relisais Paolo Cherchi Usai un historien italien du cinéma qui rappelle que dans ce jeu de tout conserver, on oublie souvent le fait que les spectateurs sont les plus conservateurs en la matière. Conservateurs au sens politique du terme, ils savent quels sont les 100 titres que tout le monde devrait avoir vus, les 100 pièces de musée qu'il faut avoir vues. J'ai l'impression que l'on se retrouve un peu en porte à faux avec, d'un côté les archives disant de tout garder, tout numériser, avec les coûts que cela implique, et de l'autre côté le public est peut-être moins tourné vers l'exhaustivité. Paolo Cherchi Usai rappelle notamment que dans les cinémathèques moins de 5 % des fonds sortent, les 95 % restants ne quittant pratiquement jamais les étagères des rayonnages. Cela coûte très cher.

Joël DAIRE

Il arrive que nos tutelles se posent cette question.

Claude MUSSOU

Cela paraît difficile de réduire un patrimoine national à 5 % des collections qui existent aujourd'hui. La mission patrimoniale des institutions qui en ont la charge est de constituer une mémoire quasi exhaustive et de la valoriser le mieux possible. Pourquoi n'y a-t-il seulement que 5 % ? Dans cette fameuse révolution numérique et théorie de la longue traîne, on peut imaginer que des éléments des collections patrimoniales remontent et fassent qu'il en soit autrement.

Mark-Paul MEYER

It is good to know that in the Netherlands there is no legal deposit for films, our collections are already restricted in many ways. It creates problems to get materials in, but it also eliminates a lot of material that we do not want in our collection.

Joël DAIRE

Pour ajouter un mot sur ce qui vient d'être dit et sur la question que vous posez, nous avons tous conscience que notre offre excède très largement la demande. La demande va d'abord à ce qui est connu, c'est une loi bien connue en marketing. On ne demande pas ce que l'on ne connaît pas. Notre

travail n'est pas simplement de conserver, il est aussi de diffuser la connaissance sur les collections. Aujourd'hui, l'une de nos missions essentielles est précisément de diffuser la connaissance sur les collections. Internet a été pour nous, de ce point de vue, une opportunité extraordinaire de diffuser cette connaissance, bien plus largement qu'on ne pouvait le faire dans la seule enceinte de nos institutions, aussi dynamiques soient-elles.

Thomas CHRISTENSEN

I am the curator at a national film archive which is slightly different. Mark-Paul is as well but as he says they are very much involved in creating a collection as a film museum whereas we have a collection policy much like the CNC here in France which means we take in everything at [break in recording]. We don't want to have a selection policy as such, we want to have a very broad selection or intake policy because you know, a lot of the greatest artists through history were not known or appreciated in the time they lived. In that sense we do not want to be the judges of what should survive for future generations. Rather, we want to be the judges that things should be allowed to survive to be enjoyed in the future, despite the fact that it is not popular right now.

Serge BROMBERG

I would like to comment on both questions. Anyone can live without a memory but it is so much better when you have the experience and when you know what happened in the past, it brightens the future. Because we cannot change anything it will always be the same; 10% or 5% or whatever has been produced will get the big money and the big audience, and the 95% will have small money, small audience and will vanish and be forgotten, without us this would happen. We have the feeling that state money is so scarce today and because there is less and less publicity money and that money always goes to those 5% that everyone wants to see. Maybe the only way would be some kind of legal move from the government to say "1% of the income of those 5% of valuable assets can bring enough money to preserve everything". Maybe to pass a law or make some kind of regulation, maybe in Europe, just to say that would make enough money to pay for all these wonderful preservation plans throughout Europe.

Mari Sol PEREZ GUEVARA

I think your ideas are very good on a European level. If there is a proposal it would require unanimity between member states, so every one of the 27 member states has to agree with such a proposal. The idea is very good.

Serge BROMBERG

I would be very cautious about basing this on an income model. I think that in a sense any nation has the politicians it deserves. As a consequence of that, we also have the culture we deserve because it is in a sense the ruling power that allocates the funding for producing and maintaining the culture. I think that France has done very well in that respect and we are trying to do well as well. I think Europe is not the worse off in the world but I'm very cautious with the percentage of the ticket income. We can see that it doesn't work for the Swedes because their national cinema is not successful right now, but it used to be. But I think we do a good job and it is impressive with Mark-Paul's presentation that in Holland they actually managed to convince the politicians that there is money in culture, basically saying that there is money in fresh air. It has a value.

Suivi éditorial : Loraine Pereira – chargée de mission pour le patrimoine cinématographique / INP.