
Global Certificate Course in Film Heritage

Film Archives and Cinematheques

Film Archives and Cinematheques Glossary

A

Accessioning: The process of formally acquiring a film or collection into a film archive or cinematheque's holdings. This involves documenting the materials, assigning unique identifiers, and ensuring proper storage and cataloging.

Acetate Film: A type of film that was commonly used for motion pictures before the introduction of polyester film. Acetate film is susceptible to degradation over time due to vinegar syndrome, which causes the film to become brittle and emit a vinegar-like smell.

Acquisition: The process of obtaining films or related materials for inclusion in a film archive or cinematheque's collection. This can involve purchasing, donation, or bequest of materials.

Archival Film: Film materials that are preserved for long-term storage and access in film archives and cinematheques. Archival films are typically stored in controlled environments to prevent deterioration.

Archivist: A professional responsible for managing, preserving, and providing access to film collections in archives and cinematheques. Archivists often have expertise in film preservation, cataloging, and restoration.

B

Bookmobile: A mobile library service that brings films and other materials to communities that may not have access to a physical film archive or cinematheque. Bookmobiles can help increase awareness of film heritage and provide educational opportunities.

C

Cataloging: The process of describing and classifying films and related materials in a film archive or cinematheque's collection. Cataloging helps researchers and users locate specific films and information within the archive.

Cinematheque: A film institution dedicated to the preservation, exhibition, and promotion of film heritage. Cinematheques often screen classic and contemporary films, organize film festivals, and offer educational programs.

Conservation: The process of protecting and preserving film materials to prevent deterioration and ensure long-term access. Conservation may involve stabilizing fragile films, repairing damage, and creating preservation copies.

Curator: A professional responsible for selecting, organizing, and presenting films for exhibition in a film archive or cinematheque. Curators play a key role in shaping the institution's programming and preserving film heritage.

D

Digitization: The process of converting analog film materials into digital formats for preservation and access. Digitization allows film archives and cinematheques to create digital surrogates of fragile or deteriorating films.

DVD: A digital video disc that can store audiovisual content, including feature films, documentaries, and educational materials. DVDs are commonly used for distributing films to audiences and for archival purposes.

E

Exhibition: The public screening of films in a film archive or cinematheque. Exhibitions can include regular film screenings, special events, retrospectives, and film festivals.

Exhibition Catalog: A publication that accompanies a film exhibition and provides information about the films, filmmakers, and themes featured in the program. Exhibition catalogs can serve as valuable resources for researchers and film enthusiasts.

F

Film Archive: An institution dedicated to the preservation, restoration, and access of film materials for future generations. Film archives collect, catalog, and store a wide range of films, including feature films, documentaries, and experimental works.

Film Preservation: The practice of safeguarding and maintaining film materials to prevent degradation and ensure long-term access. Film preservation involves storing films in controlled environments, creating preservation copies, and conducting conservation treatments.

Film Restoration: The process of repairing and enhancing films to improve their visual and audio quality. Film restoration can involve removing scratches, repairing damaged frames, and digitally remastering the film for projection.

G

Geneva Convention: An international treaty that outlines guidelines for the protection and preservation of cultural heritage during armed conflicts. The Geneva Convention helps safeguard film archives and cinematheques from damage or destruction during wartime.

H

Home Movie: A type of amateur film that captures personal events, family gatherings, and everyday life. Home movies provide valuable insights into social history and can be preserved in film archives and

cinematheques.

I

Inventory: A detailed list of films and related materials held in a film archive or cinematheque's collection. Inventories help archivists and curators track the location, condition, and accessibility of the materials.

L

Labelling: The process of assigning unique identifiers, catalog numbers, or metadata to films and related materials in a film archive or cinematheque. Labelling helps ensure proper identification and retrieval of materials.

Lending: The practice of loaning films from a film archive or cinematheque's collection to other institutions, researchers, or film festivals. Lending can help promote film heritage and expand access to archival materials.

M

Motion Picture: A series of images that create the illusion of movement when projected at a rapid pace. Motion pictures are a form of visual storytelling and have become a popular medium for entertainment, education, and artistic expression.

N

National Film Archive: A film institution that serves as the official repository for a country's film heritage. National film archives collect, preserve, and provide access to films that are culturally, historically, or artistically significant.

O

Orphan Film: A film that is no longer under copyright protection or whose rights holders are unknown or cannot be located. Orphan films pose challenges for preservation and access due to legal and ethical considerations.

P

Preservation Copy: A duplicate film created to protect the original master from damage or deterioration. Preservation copies are stored in secure environments and used for archival purposes to ensure the long-term survival of the film.

Projector: A device used to display films on a screen by projecting light through the film frames. Projectors are essential for screening films in cinemas, film archives, and cinematheques.

R

Reel: A cylindrical spool on which film is wound for projection or storage. Film reels come in various sizes

and can hold different lengths of film depending on the format and running time of the movie.

Repatriation: The process of returning films or cultural heritage materials to their country of origin. Repatriation can help promote cultural exchange, preserve national heritage, and strengthen international cooperation.

Restoration Lab: A specialized facility equipped with tools and technologies for repairing and restoring films. Restoration labs conduct preservation treatments, digitization, and color correction to enhance the visual and audio quality of films.

Retrospective: A curated program of films that highlights a particular theme, genre, director, or period in cinema history. Retrospectives are often organized by film archives and cinematheques to showcase the diversity and richness of film heritage.

S

Screening: The public display of films in a cinema, film archive, or cinematheque. Screenings can include premieres, retrospectives, festivals, and special events that showcase a wide range of cinematic works.

Storage: The physical housing and preservation of film materials in a film archive or cinematheque. Proper storage conditions, such as temperature, humidity, and light control, are essential for preventing deterioration and ensuring long-term access.

Subtitling: The process of adding translated text at the bottom of the screen to convey dialogue or narration in a foreign language film. Subtitling helps audiences understand the content of the film without altering the original audio track.

T

Technicolor: A color film process developed in the early 20th century that revolutionized the production of color movies. Technicolor films are known for their vibrant hues and distinctive look, which have contributed to the visual language of cinema.

U

Universal Film: A film that transcends cultural, linguistic, and temporal boundaries to resonate with audiences around the world. Universal films often address themes and emotions that are universally relatable and timeless in their appeal.

V

Vault: A secure storage facility designed to protect film materials from theft, damage, or environmental hazards. Vaults in film archives and cinematheques are equipped with climate control systems and security measures to ensure the safety of the collections.

Video Essay: A creative and analytical form of filmmaking that uses video footage, narration, music, and editing techniques to explore themes, ideas, and interpretations of films. Video essays are a popular format

for film criticism and analysis in the digital age.

Virtual Cinema: An online platform that allows audiences to watch films from the comfort of their homes. Virtual cinemas offer a curated selection of independent, classic, and art house films for streaming or rental.

W

World Cinema: The global film industry that encompasses a diverse range of cultures, languages, and cinematic traditions. World cinema includes films from different countries, regions, and genres that reflect the richness and diversity of global storytelling.