

SOIMA 2007

Safeguarding Sound and Image Collections

6-31 August, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

COURSE INFORMATION DOCUMENT

Background

Audiovisual records are an integral part of our contemporary life and culture. Yet audiovisual materials around the world are at risk due to deterioration, technological obsolescence or damage from natural and other disasters. This is especially true of collections housed in institutions with mixed collections. Furthermore, preservation and conservation of audiovisual materials is complex, requiring specialized guidance, skills and infrastructure. While digitization offers new possibilities for wider access and preservation, many institutions lack expertise to assess the technological implications and to make informed choices that do not strain institutional resources and at the same time respect the authenticity and inherent values of this heritage.

Through an experts meeting organized at ICCROM in June 2006, three main priority needs were identified i.e., training of non-specialist professionals, increasing awareness about the fragility of audiovisual materials, and bridging knowledge and/or information gaps.

Responding to these needs, the four-year SOIMA (Sound and Image Collections Conservation) programme (2006-2009) of ICCROM aims to emphasize conservation training for non-specialists in charge of audiovisual collections of national or regional significance. The focus is on audiovisual collections that reside in institutions that primarily care for non-audiovisual materials (libraries, museums, archives).

Activities will include training of professional staff-encouraging collaboration between professionals in different countries, creation of instructional and reference materials, and an international awareness campaign to promote the preservation of audiovisual materials residing in heritage institutions.

The Course

Organized in partnership with National Archives, Brazil and a number of leading institutions specializing in preservation of audiovisual heritage, the international course, *SOIMA 2007: Safeguarding Sound and Image Collections* provides an overview of issues related to the preservation and access of audiovisual materials. It discusses the meaning, selection and use of audiovisual collections in various contexts, exploring the potential of audiovisual media in transmitting knowledge and cultural traditions. A special focus is on extending useful life of audiovisual materials through preventive conservation. To inform decision-making, the course promotes better understanding of the possibilities offered by new technologies within the framework of management of cultural heritage collections.

Objectives

At the end of the course, participants will be able: to recognize materials and media in their audiovisual collections, to identify risks and make informed choices for preservation and access. They will have improved their skills to communicate effectively across disciplines and to work in a team.

Participants

The 20 course participants come from Argentina, Barbados, Brazil, British Virgin Islands, Chile, Fiji, Georgia, the Netherlands, Norway, Philippines, Senegal, Trinidad & Tobago, Vanuatu, Venezuela, Zambia and Zimbabwe. They represent a broad range of conservation and heritage professionals in charge of audiovisual collections in museums, archives, libraries and other cultural institutions. The selection of the participants is based around both the impact they are likely to have in training others in their home country, and in the importance of the collections that they manage.

[Refer to Participants' list and profiles.](#)

Course Venue

The Brazilian National Archives, founded in 1838, is the central agency of the Archives Documentation Management System (SIGA) of the Federal Government. The mission of the National Archives is to implement and to follow the national archival policy defined by the National Council of Archives – Conarq, through management, collection, technical treatment, preservation, and dissemination of the country's documental heritage, ensuring full access to the information in order to support political and administrative governmental decisions, to support citizens in defending their rights, and to stimulate the generation of scientific and cultural knowledge.

The National Archives is also a very active and respected institution internationally and in the region of Latin America and the Caribbean. As an example of this esteem, the Director of the National Archives, Dr. Jaime Antunes is currently the President of the Latin American and Caribbean regional committee of UNESCO's Memory of the World initiative, as well as the President of ALA – the Association of Latin American Archives, a regional branch of the International Council of Archives ICA.

The National Archives has various sound and moving image archives. Among them are collections spanning from 1937 to 1990, coming from Radio Mayrink Veiga,

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Cooperating Institutions and Organizations

- School of Fine Arts, Federal University of Minas Gerais, Belo Horizonte (Graduate Programme in Arts, CECOR – Center for Conservation and Restoration of Cultural Movable Property), Brazil
- Cinemateca Brasileira, São Paulo, Brazil,
- Centre de Recherches sur la Conservation des Documents Graphiques (CRCDG), France,
- Coordinating Council of Audiovisual Archives Associations (CCAAA), UK
- European Commission on Preservation and Access (ECPA),
- Masters Degree Program in Moving Image Archiving and Preservation, New York University, USA,
- Office of Records Services, National Archives and Records Administration, USA,

the national news agency Agencia Nacional, the Public Entertainment Censorship Division, from the nationwide radio channel Radiobras, and TV station TV Tupi, as well as private collections such as that of former president of Brazil José Sarney. In 2002, the National Archives received from the Cinemateca of the Museum of Modern Art (MAM) in Rio de Janeiro a significant part of their valuable collection of master copies of contemporary Brazilian film .



National Archives, Brazil

Project Team

Recognized experts from Australia, Austria, Brazil, Mexico and USA form the international team of lecturers leading the course. Staff members from ICCROM and National Archives complete the project team. Refer to the Information on the Course Team Profiles

Working Language

The working language of the course is English.

Course Structure

Following an induction session, the course is structured into 5 units, presented below in a sequence. However, the various units are inter-related, as are the knowledge and skills they encompass. The structure is linear and progressive, with opportunities for participants and teachers, at various stages, and as the course develops, to refine and integrate the various concepts. A more detailed course schedule based on time units will be provided prior to the beginning of the course.

INDUCTION

The induction session will comprise formal introductions and an overview of the course explaining course objectives, methodology and key messages.

UNIT 1 AV Collections: History, Use and Meaning

Tracing the history of audiovisual media, this unit will establish the use and meaning of sound and image collections in various institutional contexts involving a range of professionals. It will provide theoretical framework for collecting, handling, documenting, and conserving such collections. In particular, topics such as Terms and Concepts; Why do we collect? Who are the users? Selection/ de selection; Ethics and Philosophy will be covered.

UNIT 2 Materials, Formats and Documentation

What are the properties of audiovisual carriers? What are they made of? Unit 2 will provide an examination of audiovisual materials. Topics covered within this unit will provide skills and knowledge for identification of AV carriers and for dealing with various issues related to documentation and cataloguing of audiovisual records. Topics will also cover collection management issues and current practices.

UNIT 3 Caring For Av Collections

How do audiovisual materials age? What are the risks and how can we mitigate them? Unit 3 will cover topics such as deterioration of audiovisual materials, assessing risks, current conservation practices and handling and storage of audiovisual collections. A special session within the unit will be dedicated to disaster preparedness for mixed media collections.

UNIT 4 Digital Preservation and Access

To promote better understanding of the opportunities provided by new technologies for managing heritage collections, this unit will cover topics such as carrier and format obsolescence, theoretical underpinnings of authenticity, signal extraction, data reduction, digital preservation and mass storage systems etc. Topics will also include planning for digitization and forms of access.

UNIT 5 Copyright, Legal Issues and Professional Networks

This unit will consider and discuss current practices with regard to copyright, ownership, licensing etc. Topics will cover some of the recent or anticipated changes in the legal arena that affect moving image/sound preservation or use; effects of copyright on preservation and programming ; Addressing of intellectual property issues ; Fair Use guidelines etc. Issues such as professional roles, existing professional networks and lack of awareness for the need to preserve audiovisual heritage will also be addressed.

Pre-course Reading

To familiarize participants with terms and concepts to be used in the course, we have selected some reading materials as pre-course reading. Referring to these will help in preparing for discussions on relevant topics throughout the course. See attached Pre-course Reading document.

Follow-up Projects

We encourage each participant to think in advance of an idea or a project related to the theme of the course, which they can initiate and possibly carry out within six months of their return. Results will be collected, reviewed and shared after this period.

During the course, the participants will also have the opportunity discuss with the resource-people and colleagues their ideas for improving the conservation conditions of audiovisual collections in their institutions and beyond.

Variety of Teaching and learning Activities

In order to draw upon and to develop the participants' learning and communicating skills, the course offers a variety of teaching and learning activities. It includes a balance of illustrated lectures, practical work, group works, seminars and discussions. Most sessions promote interactive learning. The course features in particular:

A "Mini conference": At the end of the first week, a mini-conference on *Sound and Image collections: current challenges and strategies for their conservation and use* will include presentations from participants and the teaching team.

A special session within the International Seminar: The first week of the course coincides with the international seminar on *Management, Preservation and Safety of Digital Records* to be organized by National Archives. Participants will have the unique opportunity to meet and interact with international experts through a panel discussion on issues related to preservation and access of sound and image collections in various institutional contexts.

Study Visits: During the course, study visits to institutions in Rio, School of Fine Arts, Federal University of Minas Gerais in Belo Horizonte and Cinemateca Brasileira in São Paulo will be organized. The aim is to review and assess the key course ideas and concepts within live institutional contexts.

An online SOIMA community: A limited access Web site is being created to facilitate communication, serving as an information and exchange platform for the course and as a support in the learning process during and after the course.

Participants' Contribution to the Course

The course will bring together a group of professionals from very diverse backgrounds. The past experience and the challenges they face in their work will be an important contribution to the course content, and the exchange of experience, concerns and ideas is a major aim of this project. A separate document "Participants' contribution to the course" describes a variety of items that participants are invited to collect or prepare in view of their contribution to the course.

Course Evaluation System

As for all ICCROM courses, a formal course evaluation system is in development. It will address course content and approach as well as the learning environment. It will involve the participants and their institutions, the coordinating and teaching team, as well as the partners. It will follow course impact and outcomes well after the end of the event.

In practical terms, the course evaluation will consist of questionnaires to participants and teaching team, during and after the course. Six months after the course, participants will be asked for feedback, and to report on their follow-up projects in their respective institutions.