



19 / 20 / 21 novembre 08

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

LES SITUATIONS EUROPÉENNES [L'EUROPE, LA NATION, LA RÉGION ?] – 2

Last news of the MIDAS project

Julia WELTER,

Deutsches Filminstitut - DIF.

Thank you for the invitation to talk. Before I speak about the Midas project, I want to say a few words about the organization that actually initiated the project, and many others before that - the Association des Cinémathèques Européennes (ACE). ACE was founded in 1991 with the aim to protect the European audiovisual heritage and to ensure this heritage survives to be viewed, enjoyed and studied for generations to come. There are thirty-eight member archives who contribute to this aim, and joint projects of the members are initiated on a regular basis. These projects are diverse - they range from classical analogue film restoration like in the early 1990s the "Projet Lumière", educational programs for young professionals in the film archival sector, to projects that are actually concerned with online publication of film archive data and holdings. The promotion of material held in European film archives via the Internet is currently in full swing.

The MIDAS project was initiated by ACE in 2005 and a respective proposal had been accepted by the Media Plus program the same year, and work was started in January 2006. The aim of the project was to simplify the often complex, expensive and time-consuming process of finding the diverse film material in European archives by giving access to catalogue information via a single web gateway.

The five initial partners in the first project year were the British Film Institute, the Cineteca del Comune di Bologna, the DEFA Foundation in Berlin, the Czech National Film Archive and the German Film Institute, the latter being also the co-ordinator of the project. Work in this first project year was mainly dedicated to developing a common database and a web interface which could give access to this database. In February 2007, filmarchives-online.eu was launched with a beta version giving access to information on parts of the partner institutions' holdings. A major concern while building up the web portal was that of multilingualism, of overcoming language barriers that in the past added to the already difficult process of locating moving images dispersed across the various countries. So, when filmarchives online was launched it did not only give access to catalogue information from five institutions but did so in different languages.

However, the effort of making available catalogue information via the single web portal filmarchives online is not a completely selfless act of the film archives, but it has to be regarded as an effective way of generating more interest in mostly under-used material, as well as generating more requests for re-use and licensing. The web portal is also designed to help reduce archives' work of answering

vague user requests. Since filmarchives online is currently available in eight languages, it will help promote national collections throughout the world.

In the second year of the MIDAS project we had eleven new partners from all over Europe, and two more partners in the third year of the project, when the German Federal Archives and the Lithuanian Central State Archive joined. Altogether now the Midas consortium consists of eighteen partners from twelve European countries and fourteen of these are ACE members. The partners are:

- British Film Institute (London)
- Bundesarchiv Filmarchiv (Berlin)
- Cinémathèque Royale de Belgique (Brussels)
- Cineteca del Comune di Bologna
- Cineteca del Friuli (Gemona)
- DEFA Stiftung (Berlin)
- Deutsche Kinemathek – Museum für Film und Fernsehen (Berlin)
- Deutsches Filminstitut – DIF e.V. (Frankfurt/Main)
- Fondazione Cineteca Italiana (Milano)
- IWF Knowledge and Media (Göttingen)
- LICHTSPIEL / Kinemathek Bern
- Lietuvos Centrinis Valstybės Archyvas (Vilnius)
- Magyar Nemzeti Filmarchívum (Budapest)
- Národní filmový archiv (Prague)
- Nasjonalbiblioteket (Oslo)
- Nederlands Filmmuseum (Amsterdam)
- Slovenska kinoteka (Ljubljana)
- Tainiothiki tis Ellados (Athens)

Functionalities of filmarchives online

Filmarchives online is available in eight languages: English, French, German, Italian, Czech, Lithuanian, Norwegian and Greek, the native languages of the content providers. We are expecting the website to be available in two further languages by the official end of the funding for this project in January 2009.

The focus on filmarchives online is on non-fictional material, this means documentaries and educational films, newsreels, travelogues, amateur film, commercial advertising, scientific, industrial, experimental, and sports films. There is some information available on feature films as well, but only a very small amount. The focus is definitely on non-fictional material. The decision to have information on non-fictional material available on the internet was obvious insofar as the amount of non-fiction films held in the European film archives outnumbers the amount of fiction films by far, and also non-fictional material is usually even more difficult to locate than feature films. Moreover, non-fiction material is far more under-used than feature films. The archives are interested in generating revenue and this can more easily be achieved by promoting the material the archives hold the rights to. Last but not least, we wanted to have a clear profile of the website available.

The web portal currently gives access to content from fourteen of the eighteen Midas partners and test uploads have already been carried out for the remaining partners' data, and so we are expecting all archives to be integrated by the end of this year. By then filmarchives online will give access to around 25,000 titles altogether with almost 40,000 copies.

We currently have around 30,000 content descriptions online and 13,000 of them in the English language. In most cases, content descriptions are provided in the native language with an English translation in order to allow the film works to be found internationally. Each film copy is linked to a sub page which provides contact information about where to retrieve the respective print.

Licensable films only

Details

« Retour aux résultats


Rapsodia [Original Title]
 Rapsodia Campari [Alternative Title]

Pays: **Italy**
 Année de production: **ca. 1960**
 Genre: **Advertisement**
 Lieu de tournage: **n/a**

Générique:
 Director: **Nino Pagot**
 Toni Pagot
 Production company: **Pagotfilm**

Mot-clés: **Milan, Advertisement, Campari, Cartoon, Pagot, Animazione, Milano, Pubblicità**

video



Résumé: eng ita

Movie theatre animated advertisement for the Campari industry. The movie, in brilliant Technicolor, shows the frantic urban life with special emphasis on the Milan symbols such as the dome (Duomo) and Alla Scala theatre.


FCI

Version 1

Langue: **ita**
 Couleur: **Colour**
 Format: **35 mm**
 Longueur originale: **60 m**

Son: **Sound film**
 Aspect: **1:1,37**
 Durée: **2 min**

» Complete Film

Longueur	60 m	 Request Copy
Type de copie	Positive	
Matériau	n/a	
Information Copyright	Fondazione Cineteca Italiana	

Screenshot: Detail result screen

Filmarchives online aims at user groups from the area of scientific research to the professional media and film production domain.

The website offers the possibility to search for entries via a simple search field which is always visible on the left-hand side, or otherwise via an advanced search which offers several options to narrow down the search. In both searches you have got the possibility to search for licensable films only, and the results list will then exclude all films whose rights cannot be directly clarified by the film copy's holding institution. The advanced search allows to search for film works via title, content description, persons, keywords, places and production companies, and users can also refine their search by physical characteristics of the copies such as sound, format, colour, carrier material and so on. Users can also narrow down their search by selecting institutions. The search results then provide information not only on filmographic data and physical characteristics of film copies but also on the location of materials and if available, copyright information. If you have found a film work you are interested in the search results list, you just click on it and you will then be directed to the detail results screen of the respected entry. It gives you some basic information on the country of origin, production company director and the content description is given in English and in the source language. At the bottom of the page you can see who has contributed the film work. Clicking on the request copy button on the right-hand side directs you to a sub page which gives you the contact information for the archive.



Screenshot: Advanced Search

For a few weeks now we have had the option to stream videos by embedding links to streaming videos that have been uploaded on the filmarchives online-YouTube channel we created. However, there are only very few entries which have streaming videos available at the moment because filmarchives online originally was not designed as a platform to provide digitized material. Nonetheless this feature was implemented as it will raise the attractiveness of the site. A feature has been integrated that allows the upload of screen shots. This is also used as a means to make the site more appealing and at the same time offer the contributing archives the possibility to promote their materials. The pictures can be enlarged by clicking on them. Underneath the picture is a space for a short description and copyright entries. Both, streaming videos as well as screen shots will give the user a better idea of what to expect from a film.

Search
Licensable films only

Details Retour aux résultats

Michelangelo. Das Leben eines Titanen [Original Title] 🇩🇪 🇫🇷 🇮🇹 🇸🇪 🇸🇮

Michelangelo - Life of a Titan [Title Translation]

Pays: **Germany**
Année de production: **1938-1940**
Genre: **Documentary Film**
Lieu de tournage: **n/a**

Générique:
Production company: **Pandora Film AG (Zürich + Berlin)**
Screenplay: **Curt Oertel**
Director: **Curt Oertel**
Director of photography: **Curt Oertel**
Music: **Alois Melichar**
Voice: **Mathias Wieman**




Résumé: **deu** **eng**

Documentary on the life of Michelangelo, illustrated with Italian landscapes, old engravings and Michelangelo's own works. The film begins with a sonnet by Vittoria Colonna, who dedicated this poem to her contemporary and friend Michelangelo. With his film, Curt Oertel has adapted this dedication to the screen. "Michelangelo" gained worldwide recognition, in particular because the realization of its topic was conceived as a new form of presenting history in film.

DIF

Version 1

Langue: **n/a**
Couleur: **Black and White** Son: **Sound film**
Format: **35 mm** Aspect: **n/a**
Longueur originale: **599 m** Durée: **n/a**

» Complete Film		 Request Copy
Longueur	599 m	
Type de copie	Positive	
Matériau	Acetate	

Detail result screen with screenshots

Search
Licensable films only


Details Retour aux résultats

Michelangelo. Das Leben eines Titanen [Original Title] 🇩🇪 🇫🇷 🇮🇹 🇸🇪 🇸🇮

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» Complete Film		 Request Copy
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Type de copie	Positive	
Matériau	Acetate	

Enlarged screenshot after clicking on it

The main effort of MIDAS was to bring together data from very heterogeneous databases into one single database. Traditionally databases in the film archival sector lack standards and often are locally self-constructed systems using very individual expressions.

To keep the threshold for the archives contributing to MIDAS as low as possible, it had been decided that film archives would only have to deliver their data in valid XML. They were also asked to provide a minimum set of standard elements like title, year of production, director or production company in order to make sure that there was at least a certain level of conformity between the contributing archives. Valid XML as well as the minimum set of standard elements were the only preconditions that archives had to fulfil and once the project management at Deutsches Filminstitut had been provided with the partners' local XML files, mapping rules to the Midas database could be defined. On the basis of these mappings, the external system developers implemented import filters which would allow an automatic integration of the archives' XML data over the Internet.

In the second project year, establishing import filters became one of the main tasks in the project and the mapping of the local databases to the MIDAS database often showed to be rather complex.

Within the framework of the project, a native "MIDAS XML" format has been established, which enables all partners to retrieve their contributed data back from the MIDAS database. The "MIDAS XML" is also available in common formats such as Dublin core and MARC. The goal is to provide a certain degree of interoperability which can potentially allow both the MIDAS system and the participating archives to disseminate catalogue data through platforms and gateways for other domains. "MIDAS XML" has only recently been used when several project partners and some further ACE members added filmographic data and streaming videos to filmarchives online from where it was exported and integrated into the Europeana prototype. You can find the "MIDAS XML" sample data and documentation on www.filmstandards.org.

One of the limitations in the MIDAS project is that we have to operate without controlled vocabularies and also without a thesaurus, so we are facing the problem of double entries and spelling variations in names. However, this was not possible to solve within the MIDAS project but it will have to be tackled in the follow-up project EFG – The European Film Gateway, which my colleague will give a speech about tomorrow.

Even though the project is nearing its end, the portal is still open for further archives to contribute their data to it. The preconditions for contributions are that the films provided are available for loan or local viewing and the portal's emphasis is on licensable content. This means archives should either hold the rights or are in the position to clear exploitation rights quickly. The material they plan to contribute should be suitable for re-use by the media industry. Contact persons should be available for user requests and content descriptions will have to be provided in English in order to guarantee the portal is international.

The archives that have already integrated their data can use the filters established for them to upload further data whenever they want to. Filmarchives online will grow even after EU funding has ceased.

Boris TODOROVITCH

Une petite précision. Vous avez remarqué que le CNC n'est pas dans les 18 contributeurs. Il faut que je m'en explique, puisqu'à l'époque nous avons été sollicités. Le projet a été lancé en 2005, majoritairement sous la responsabilité de Jean-Louis Cotte qui est avec nous ici. En 2005, nous développons notre base Lise, maintenant accessible sur Internet, mais qui a demandé plusieurs années de développement. Pour ceux qui la connaissent, c'est une base extrêmement complète, très lourde à développer. Je n'ai pas souhaité m'associer au projet, sans compter qu'il fallait fournir les *data* en anglais, etc. Grâce aux énormes efforts de Jean-Louis et de son équipe, Lise est maintenant totalement opérationnelle. Nous venons donc d'être rejoints par Laurent BISMUTH, ici présent, qui vient de l'Ina – donc excellente formation. Il a à cœur de se pencher sur tous ces projets européens, et éventuellement de les rejoindre à court ou moyen terme. Je voulais juste faire un point pour ceux qui auraient pu s'étonner que le CNC ne fasse pas partie des contributeurs.

Serge BROMBERG

Why did you choose to concentrate only on those themes such as documentaries, news reels and exclude animation and feature films? When you go to a database, using IMDB as an example, although it is completely inaccurate, it supposedly covers everything. So when someone wants to find a resource, they would want to know everything that exists on that topic. Why did you choose to select and reduce the scope?

Julia WELTER

We do have information on animated films available, too. We decided we would like to focus on material that is suitable for re-use, that may be asked for by production companies interested in historical footage material. It is a catalogue of holding information, it is not like IMDB for example, which covers information on all films. We only have those films available online that one of our partner archives holds a copy of so it is not a complete picture of animated film history or documentary film history.

Roei AMIT

What is the difference between FOCAL which is also a portal for footage online which covers news reels; it is a B2B portal?

Julia WELTER

FOCAL is more about digitized content whereas film archives online is more like a union catalogue, it is more comparable to what libraries have been offering for ten years. It is one reference point where you can go to find out about holding information on the contributing archives. FOCAL is more about footage sales points providing digitized material. Filmarchives online also provides digitized material, but as I said, it is done only to a very limited extent.

Georg ECKES

I was also involved in the MIDAS project and I wanted to add one thing. There is also a technical reason for reducing the scope of available material, which is because we already have some feature films in there and then you can see that many archives hold different versions and copies of the same film work. You flood the system with double entries and it becomes difficult to find your way through it if you don't have a proper authority file that matches different versions of film works. This was beyond the scope of Midas and has to be tackled in a different project.
