

**27th Journées Cinématographiques de Carthage (Carthage Film Festival)
50th anniversary (1966-2016)**

In partnership with

The Tunisian Academy of Science, Letters and the Arts "Beit al Hikma"

With the participation of

The Panafrican Federation of Filmmakers

CALL FOR PAPERS

International Symposium

On

"Film heritage at risk"

PRESENTATION NOTE

Developing and implementing a policy for safeguarding and preservation of the motion picture heritage in Africa and the Arab world has always been a problem. It is clear that solving this perennial problem remains, to date, confined to the sphere of wishful thinking without tomorrows and still is a major challenge to overcome. No doubts, numerous gatherings were devoted to this problem, which ended up in generous recommendations full of goodwill but which unfortunately never came to fruition and turned out to be de facto mere circumstance professions of faith. Meanwhile, the latest news about the state of degradation and risk of irremediable losses of Arab and African motion pictures are increasingly alarming and frustrating. An entire part of the Arab and African motion picture heritage may not be available to enrich the lives of the future generations.

Of course, there is no question that this, rather discouraging, observation makes us give up and renounce facing this challenge. On the contrary we need to speak up the urgency of the situation and the absolute need to update the diagnosis with the aim of developing, as quickly as possible, efficient and concrete strategies, likely to put a credible end to this memory "haemorrhage" we are facing, against a background of almost general indifference. These are the goals set for the planned symposium, which is planned as part of the 50th anniversary of the *Journées cinématographiques de Carthage*. Such goals may be reached through pooling not only the expertise of archivists and curators specialized in the preservation of film heritage, but also the expertise accumulated by filmmakers themselves who face, as part of their praxis, the immediate and practical problems raised by the conservation of their own film production.

Needless to point out that in our view safeguarding and preserving a heritage, whatever its nature, does not mean turning it into a "mummy" or a museum artefact. The primary objective of any heritage safeguarding operation, worthy of the name, is to give a second life to the safeguarded heritage, by securing the widest possible dissemination thereof.

To achieve these objectives, the planned symposium wishes to deepen the debate and develop discussion along the topics and themes raised by the following questions:

Symposium topics

Topic one

Assess the current situation:

1 / Where do we stand today? Case presentation: filmmakers (or film producers) will be invited to present their own experiences and the progress of their reflection in the field of motion pictures heritage preservation.

2 / What diagnosis can be established of the present state of conservation of African and Arab film heritage?

3 / what actions have been carried out in this connection so far? What are the public or private, national or international actions devoted to the preservation and conservation of African and Arab film heritage?

4 / What is the institutional situation? Review the deficit in institutions specializing in the preservation of film heritage (film libraries, film archives) in Africa and the Arab world.

a) Overview of existing institutions

b) Potential projects underway and what obstacles they face.

Topic two

What approach should be focused on to develop a safeguarding and restoration policy of African and Arab film heritage?

1 / Should we chose a national or a continental approach or a combination of both approaches?

2 / What restoration facilities should we develop?

a) Should we develop our own restoration facilities or subcontract restoration operations in the countries of the North.

b) If opt for national solutions, are the expertise and skills needed available locally?

c) If this is not the case, should we provide for the development of adequate training curriculum?

d) Should we think about setting up as soon as possible a structure that pools the skills that might already exist on the continent in the field of film heritage safeguarding?

3 / What are the "technical" solutions to advocate for solving specific problems of conservation of :

- Analog film medium and / or

- Digital film medium

Topic three:

What viable economic model to choose for African and Arab cinema heritage safeguarding and conservation institutions to be created in the future?



1 / The "impossible" choice:

- Public or private structure?

-State funding or private sector's patronage?

-What possible contribution of international institutions (UNESCO, IFFA, etc ...)

2/ Consider ways of prospecting in a serious way all the possibilities for collaboration and funding with a focus on South-South Cooperation (Africa, Asia and South America).

Topic four

1 / "Cultural and political" issues of safeguarding film heritage in the Arab world and Africa.

a) What about the dissemination of the heritage culture in Africa and the Arab world?

b) How shall use the safeguarded film heritage?

c) Which distribution channels to focus on especially in the current "all digital" and audiovisual document "dematerialization" era?

d) What are the emerging issues of copyright and intellectual property inherent in the new digital broadcast channels?

2 / Urgent action entitled: "Cinematographic Works at risk"

The crucial reflection, that we shall to carry out in the framework of this symposium, will necessarily have to be longstanding. Now, the situation of extreme degradation of certain films and the threat of irretrievable loss incites us to launch, on the occasion of the holding of this international symposium, a solemn appeal to set up a large-scale operation aimed at restoring five major endangered African and Arab film works.

For this action to succeed, a monitoring committee needs to set up as part of the recommendations of the symposium.

This committee will have the following missions:

1 / Establish the list of priority film works to be restored immediately

2 / Build the financial package of the operation

3 / Chalk out up a timeline

4 / Ensure follow-up of the operation

5 / Report progress to the National Film and Image Centre (Tunisia)

This operation will serve as basis for what could be done in the future at a larger scale. The resulting conclusions will prefigure and mark the path to follow to salvage our common film heritage.

Important Dates

Abstract submission deadline: August 31st 2016 (max. 900 words)

Notification of Acceptance: September 15th 2016

Symposium date: October 29 & 30th 2016

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