



Presentation and access of audiovisual collections

TAPE expert meeting, Deutsche Kinemathek, Berlin, 24 January 2008

Digitization of collections is usually motivated from the need to increase access and use, but it is not easy to know what users want. Of audiovisual collections in particular, materials have been made accessible in digital format only very recently, and seldom in large quantities, so it is difficult to evaluate even current use – not to mention expectations and interests of the undefined mass of potential users at which institutions can only guess.

The proliferation of websites offering music, streaming video and film has driven technology over the past years, and for the cultural sector web delivery of sound and moving images has also become a familiar phenomenon. But there are in practice still considerable technical limitations in terms of available bandwidth, storage capacity, compression techniques etc, and the choices of the multimedia industry and social media networks are not necessarily those of cultural institutions. They have to establish their own strategies for delivering such materials for different target groups.

From a landscape dotted with individual institutional sites the web is developing into an open environment that offers services, information and experiences through which users move without paying much heed to where the information originates. Web 2.0 tools have opened the door for sites that are basically mash-ups of content presented by others and encourage the re-use of materials in a world where users are themselves also producers of content. Institutions can choose to make their content available through joint portals or for harvesting by others. How do they position themselves and their collections in this environment?

Will the web in the future be regarded as the place where information and (multimedia) productions can be found and consulted, massive, amorphous, disorganized as it may be? Or will traditional collections still be the place to go for (some) users? And how will the transition to the new environment be made? However attractive the vision of a bright new digital world may be, the hard reality in heritage institutions will be for a considerable period at least be largely analogue. How can the wealth of materials contained in collections be shown and shared in the present circumstances? Where should the work start: by making selected materials available somehow, by providing complete descriptions of the holdings, or by (mass-)digitization of obsolete carriers?

At this meeting we will be discussing issues relating to presentation of audiovisual materials, not only on the web, but also in offline products, exhibits etc. We will discuss the role and tasks of institutions in view of the possibilities the web offers for distributed projects, portals as well as specific contextualized presentations that integrate audiovisual recordings with other materials. The vision of the digital environment as a space for cultural production which re-uses content offered by heritage institutions will also be explored. The meeting will not focus on technical aspects, but on possibilities for cultural institutions to present audiovisual content and create services and products that meet requirements of users today and tomorrow.

The discussants will offer different perspectives, based on their experience with audiovisual materials, as collection managers, in education, or in their own creative work.

The meeting will take place at the Deutsche Kinemathek in Berlin (<http://www.deutsche-kinemathek.de/>) on Thursday, 24 January.

In the second half of the afternoon there will be a tour of the museum and a demonstration of the Programmalerie, which provides access to 700 programs of German TV history.

In the evening there will be a special showing of Film Ist (7-12) by Gustav Deutsch, with an introduction by the film maker.

Anyone who would like to join the discussion is welcome. Attendance is free but participants will have to register. If you like to participate, please send an email to mkoerber@deutsche-kinemathek.de so that we know how many to expect.

Preliminary programme (24 January, Morning)

9.30-9.45	Rainer Rother and Martin Koerber (Deutsche Kinemathek - Museum für Film und Fernsehen, Berlin), Welcome and introduction
9.45-10.15	Julia Noordegraaf (Department of Media Studies, University of Amsterdam) discusses use of digitized audiovisual collections in an educational setting, particularly in the form of compilation films made with amateur footage, showing how small-scale projects undertaken with, for instance, artists and educational institutions, can be a means to showcase the potential of one's collection.
10.15-10.45	Mark-Paul Meyer (Senior Curator Filmmuseum Amsterdam), about the museum's considerations on the eve of a huge digitization project: Beyond digitizing HOW? and WHAT?.
10.45-11.00	Coffee
11.00-11.30	Fabrizio Nahum (Regesta, Italy), about how Istituto Luce is adapting its web presentation after several years' experience serving users on the web.
11.30-12.00	Sarah Jones (Arts and Humanities Data Service – Performing Arts based at HATII, University of Glasgow) will discuss reuse of archives from the perspective of the creative and performing arts. She will question how the archive can be opened up to allow for a more creative reinterpretation of the records, and will consider the value of artist residencies as a way of encouraging reuse by looking specifically at the work of Ruth Maclennan.
12.00-12.30	Gaby Wijers (Institute of Media Art Montevideo, Amsterdam) presents examples of access and use of works by media artists in the digital environment
12.30-13.30	Lunch

Preliminary programme (24 January, Afternoon and Evening)

13.30-14.00	Gustav Deutsch (Vienna) presents his research for Film Ist, based entirely on analogue access and duplication
14.00-14.30	Tiina Sailavuo (Helsinki), on re-use of recordings of contemporary music in music archives
14.30-15.00	Michelangelo Staffolani (The British Library Sound Archive) speaks about experiences with the Archival Sound Recordings Project providing access to 12,000 sound recordings for educational use (www.bl.uk/sounds).
15.00-15.30	Jürgen Keiper (Deutsche Kinemathek - Museum für Film und Fernsehen, Berlin) speaks about explorative and intuitive strategies for accessing audiovisual material. This is to be illustrated by faceted queries, integration of georeferences and folksonomies.
15.30-16.00	Final discussion and wrap up
16.00-17.30	Rainer Rother and Peter Schwirkmann (Deutsche Kinemathek – Museum für Film und Fernsehen) Tour of the museum and a demonstration of the Programmalerie, which provides access to 700 programs of German TV history.
19.30-21.30	Special showing of Film Ist (7-12), by Gustav Deutsch (independent film maker, Vienna), with an introduction of the artist.
