BREGT LAMERIS

FILM MUSEUM PRACTICE AND FILM HISTORIOGRAPHY

The Case of the Nederlands Filmmuseum (1946-2000)

FRAMING FILM

EYE FILMMUSEUM

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TO GWIN

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This book began in 1999, on the terrace of a small café in Amsterdam, just around the corner of the Vondelpark, where the Nederlands Filmmuseum was located at the time. I was working there as a cataloguer. Frank Kessler, who supervised my MA thesis at the Radboud University in Nijmegen, came to the library for some research. We went for coffee and the first thing he said when we sat down was: 'OK, so what will your PhD project be about?' I thought quickly, and responded: 'the Filmmuseum', which was basically the first thing that came to my mind. He thought it was a great idea, and the research project on the interrelationship between film historiography and film museum practice was born.

After a period during which I combined work at the Filmmuseum with formulating a research project, I got the opportunity to embed my work into a larger research group at Utrecht University called 'Scenarios for the Humanities', with Frank Kessler, William Uricchio, and Nanna Verhoeff as my supervising team. I dug deep into all kinds of archives containing correspondence between the institute in its infancy and its partners. It was a most curious quest, following the traces of the institute's first directing manager Jan de Vaal into the Stedelijk Museum, to chance upon his private mail that was sometimes intermingled with his professional correspondences. Simultaneously, all the work done by the people who were directly working with the films in Castricum and later Overveen also stole my heart because of the dedication and perseverance shown to build a safe house for these treasures at a time when only a few people were interested in these unknown (early) films.

Of course, I would like to thank all the people at the Filmmuseum with whom I collaborated during my short time there. In addition, I am highly thankful for their support during my research period in Utrecht. Thank you to Rommy Albers, Giovanna Fossati, Soeluh van den Berg, Nico de Klerk, Mark-

Introduction

In the archive of the Nederlands Filmmuseum there is a photograph that shows a number of people gathered together on a podium: the wall behind them is dominated by a large film screen, and a woman with long curly hair is speaking into a microphone (Image 3, page 60). All those present look slightly overwhelmed, shy but proud – perhaps of the speaker, perhaps of themselves. It was taken in 1991, at the Teatro Verdi in Pordenone, during Le Giornate del Cinema Muto (Days of Silent Cinema), and the people on stage were employees of the Nederlands Filmmuseum (now EYE Filmmuseum). Along with their director Hoos Blotkamp, they were about to receive the most prestigious award for film history and archiving, the Premio Jean Mitry, established in 1986 to reward individuals or institutions for their 'contribution to the reclamation and appreciation of silent cinema'.[1] The Nederlands Filmmuseum was the first institution to be recognised in this way. To emphasise the fact that the institution and not just the director had received the accolade, Blotkamp asked all the Filmmuseum employees to come up on stage to celebrate their achievement together. The photo is a record of the high esteem in which the Filmmuseum was held by the film archive and film historical world in 1991 as a result of the institute's pioneering work in the preservation and presentation of silent films.

Early silent cinema had been in vogue in the broader field of film studies and archiving since the early 1970s, reaching a high point with the famous Brighton FIAF (the Fédération Internationale des Archives du Film) conference in 1978. FIAF brought together film scholars and archivists, programmed early British films that had remained below the radar, and created an environment that promoted discovery and debate. From that moment on, early films became *the* films to preserve and to study.

A few years after receiving the Jean Mitry award, the Nederlands Filmmu-

seum organised two workshops: 'Non-fiction from the 1910s' (in 1994) and 'Disorderly Order: Colours in Silent Film' (in 1995), events that once again brought scholars and archivists together and revealed a corpus of under-studied early films. The workshops represented another important moment in the development of early film studies: they not only opened up the archives but also the discussion on recently preserved unknown films. The impact these workshops had is remembered to this day by members of the film community. Film programmer Mariann Lewinski, for example, declares that they were a seminal experience; film historian Martin Loiperdinger that they were real 'eye-openers'; and Martin Koerber, director of the film archive at the Deutsche Kinemathek in Berlin, adds:

> I think one of the key events was the Amsterdam workshop in 1995, 'Disorderly Order: Colours in Silent Film'. [...] [N]obody who is working in film history or film archiving will ever again say that silent cinema was only black and white. (Koerber, 2015: 104)

All in all, the Nederlands Filmmuseum had an excellent reputation in the fields of film archiving and film historiography during the 1990s. This was remarkable because, until the 1980s, it had been considered a rather small institution with a collection of non-canonical film titles deemed of little importance from a film historical perspective. As Frank Roumen (1996: 155-59) explains in his article, 'Die Neue Kinemathek – Ein anderer Ort, ein anderes Publikum, eine andere Zeit', however, these apparently unimportant films were transformed during the 1980s and 1990s into valuable film-historical source materials. The emergence of new perspectives focused film historiography on the discovery and appreciation of these previously disregarded non-canonical films.

The Filmmuseum's archive is particularly special in the sense that it contains only a small number of the 'big' canonical titles and a far larger collection of such lesser-known films. Placing it under a historical microscope enables us to conduct a detailed investigation into the various aspects of film museum practice, especially as the nature of its archive has forced the institute to exercise its creativity in its attempts to access films from the canon, on the one hand, and its presentation of the unknown titles in its own collection, on the other. The history of an institute with this sort of 'difficult' collection is one that charts the struggle between finding a place within the broader field of film museums and mounting a challenge to the mainstream ethos. Indeed, the story of EYE highlights the nature of the 'normal' processes and principles of collection, preservation, and presentation, and helps to trace the relationship of these practices in developments in film historiography. As such, it contrasts with the histories of other, bigger institutions, in which such

traces are usually hidden from view by virtue of the very 'normality' of their procedures. Added to this is the fact that EYE, as a long-standing member of FIAF, has always been a player at both national and international levels, and so its historical development is inextricably linked to the wider international practice of film archiving.[2]

Of course, as I show in the first two chapters of this book, this collection of unknown films was the result of dogged hard work, particularly during the earlier period when such films were dismissed as having minor importance. However, the collection was not formed in a vacuum: collections and archives are neither gathered nor presented without reason or motive. As Caroline Frick (2011: 23) states in her book, *Saving Cinema*, the preservation and presentation activities of film archives and museums should be considered socially constructed practices. Every act of archiving or presentation that a museum undertakes is heavily influenced by the prevailing discourses of the time. During the 1990s, the Nederlands Filmmuseum's activities were strongly rooted in contemporary film historiographical discourse, but not much is known about its relationship to film historiography at other moments in its past. The interrelationship between the film museum as a socially constructed practice and film historiographical discourses will form the main focus of this investigation. It raises the question of how the Filmmuseum's policies, choices, and activities were interrelated with the film historical debates – that is, when and how did its policies towards preserving and showing unknown films change film historiographical opinions and perspectives, and vice versa?

MUSEUM, ARCHIVE, COLLECTION: UNRAVELLING DEFINITIONS AND CONCEPTS

Clearly, what characterises every film archival institute is the use of visual reproduction techniques to render the objects in their collections accessible again. This is a practice born of necessity: historical film material is very vulnerable and hazardous, and this has forced museums to project duplicates rather than the old nitrate prints. This more practical side of film museum practice means that such institutions have a rather particular way of handling films as historical objects. The processes of selection, preservation, and presentation all present problems that are connected to the fact that it is necessary to duplicate films in order to render them visible.

Apart from this common ground, however, the field of film museum practice and archiving is wide and diverse. Audio-visual archives often have very different aims and traditions, and their collection, preservation, and presentation practices are shaped in various ways, depending on their backgrounds. Some institutes, for instance, tended to keep the audio-visual material they

produced according to its potential for commercial exploitation. One example I got to know from the inside, is the former Pathé Télévision, which held the Pathé archive before its merger with the Gaumont archive in 2004 and the establishment of the Fondation Jérôme Seydoux in 2006. Pathé Télévision was a commercial institute, which mainly collected documentary material because this usually sold better than fiction films, and its commercial attitude naturally shaped its archive in a particular way. Other institutes, such as the former Stichting Film en Wetenschap (the Foundation of Film and Science), now part of the collection of the Netherlands Institute for Sound and Vision, gathered audio-visual material as a source of information on the history of a region or country.[3] Its remit positioned the institute within the tradition of national archives that collect paintings, books, manuscripts, and other objects primarily for their historical value; the potential aesthetic value of these artefacts is accorded secondary importance. In the cultural field, such institutes are often presented in opposition to museums. A similar division can be traced in the film field: in contrast to the more archival institutes described above, film museums or *cinémathèques* can be placed within the art museum tradition.[4] As such, this third category of institute takes the complex interrelationship between aesthetics and history into account. The Nederlands Filmmuseum, the main subject of this investigation, belongs to this category.

This double focus, combining the historical with the aesthetic, is not entirely unproblematic, however, since not everything the history of film has produced could be called aesthetically interesting and, depending on the remit of the research, not everything that is supposedly aesthetically interesting is historically valuable. Interestingly, this combination of perspectives is not unique to film museum practice. Debates on the history of film have, for a long time, revolved around the importance of aesthetics to film – either championing and defending the idea, or rejecting it. The question not only concerns the way film museum practice has defined film as both an historical and an aesthetic object, but also how this discourse relates to similar debates in film historiography. The way the interactions, and the occasional friction, between these two positions are played out in an institution such as EYE Filmmuseum, which espouses an aesthetic, historical perspective on film, forms the focus of this book.

Finally, an obvious difference between film museums and archives is revealed in the material appearance and daily practice of an institute: film museums, as opposed to archives, exhibit their films in a theatrical setting. Giovanna Fossati explains this clearly in her book, *From Grain to Pixel*:

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> Most film museums and *cinémathèques* are usually characterized by an
> active exhibition policy. This is typically realized in one or more public
> screening theatres run by the institution itself: here films from the col-
> lection are shown regularly, alongside films from other archives and con-
> temporary distribution titles. (Fossati, 2007: 23)

Film archives do not usually present their films in a theatrical setting, whereas
the number of screening rooms at EYE Filmmuseum and the care taken in
their design, as well as its daily programme of films, shows that the institute
falls into the category of film museum/*cinémathèque*.[5]

Due to the fundamental differences between film archival and film muse-
um institutes, I will use the term 'film museum' throughout the book, even
though the institutes defined here as museums are often called film archives
in everyday parlance.[6] In relation to this, it is interesting to see how EYE has
translated the concept of the film museum in various ways. For example,
when it was still called the 'Filmmuseum' (with the double 'm' written as a
single, four-legged letter), during the period when it was part of the Stedelijk
Museum (Amsterdam's museum of modern art), it projected a film-museum
identity that was very different from the one it adopted after it became a more
independent institution.[7] I will discuss this phenomenon in more detail in
Chapter 7.

So far, I have explained how a film museum differs from a film archive.
However, since the term 'archive' does not simply define an institute but also
functions on many other levels, it still occurs in the book on various occa-
sions. The concept can indeed be traced in different guises throughout the
history of the Nederlands Filmmuseum. In the first place, the institutes that
formed the basis of the Filmmuseum were called the Nederlandsch Historisch
Film Archief (Dutch Historical Film *Archive*) and the Uitkijk-Archief (Uitkijk
Archive). Both were archives according to the definition outlined above: they
were institutes that archived films for collection and distribution purposes.
In 1952, these two archives merged to become the Nederlands Filmmuseum,
located at the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam, where the new Filmmuse-
um began to screen the films it had collected, and its status shifted from an
archive to a museum.

Secondly, the term is also used by the Nederlands Filmmuseum to describe
the films and other objects the institute has collected and preserved over the
years. In this case, the description does not refer to the type of institution but
to the objects it has in its possession or care. Interestingly, on this level, an
'archive' can be confused with a 'collection', which also refers to a selected
series of objects; both terms appear to refer to the same thing. In the interests
of clarity, therefore, I use Eric De Kuyper's distinction between the two, at least

on the level of the collected films. He defines an 'archive' as the total amount of films an institute possesses and a 'collection' as a series of films found within the constellation of the larger archive.[8] However, these particular concepts have been used in different ways throughout the history of the Filmmuseum, and I will return to the concepts and their possible definitions and usage at various times in the book. For now, though, I simply wish to point out that, unless otherwise stated, whenever I use the term 'film collection' I am writing about a selection from the entirety of the 'film archive'.

This definition deviates from the conception of the archive as it has been defined and studied in the larger sense since Michel Foucault's (1971) theoretical problematisation of the term. In her book, *The Past is a Moving Picture*, Janna Jones (2012: 15) explains how, since Foucault, scholars have viewed archives as sites of construction where histories are created. Over the last decades, a large amount of literature has been published theorising the archive as a constructed and a discursive site.[9] Of course, this book is strongly linked to this school of thought, particularly as it analyses an institution that functions as a site where histories were (and are) created.

COLLECTIONS AND CASE STUDIES

The musealisation of films, and the interaction between their film historical and aesthetic aspects, is a process that occurs both on a macro- and micro-historical level. However, in order to give a nuanced view of this process, it is important to investigate historical events at the 'coalface'. Obviously, broader international events are of importance, but these can only be fully understood if contextualised by their micro-level history (Ricoeur, 2004: 210). Downscaling the historical research is especially important in this investigation as it not only enables the historical detail to surface, but also allows us to make connections that answer some of the questions that arise. It does this by focusing on the role played by historical and aesthetic approaches in archival mechanisms and processes at the level of the individual films.[10] Indeed, Michael Lynch (cited in Jones, 2012: 17) advises us to 'climb into the archival trenches so to better understand the archive as a site with its own specific histories of alliance, resistance, and contingency'. I followed this advice for several years, digging in the trenches of the Filmmuseum's history, exploring and analysing its collection and its preservation and presentation policies, and the way these were (or were not) intertwined with film historiography before the 'digital turn'. The result is a micro-perspective on this *pas-de-deux* that shows in a very detailed way the points at which film historiography took the lead and the times when the Filmmuseum led the way, as well as those

instances when the institute launched into a solo turn, and the reasons why it did so.

When looking at the history of EYE, I zoom in on the collection of silent films in its archive, making an occasional exception for an early sound film.[11] There are three reasons why I came to this decision, all related to the role of museum films in film historiography. First and foremost, since the mid-1970s (say, from the time of the FIAF Brighton conference), both film museum practice and film historiography have been strongly preoccupied with silent cinema. As a result, the interrelationship between the Filmmuseum and film historiography can be seen most clearly in the domain of silent films. These were subject to changes in the way they were described and perceived as historical and aesthetic objects during the period under review. In order to better understand these mechanisms, my investigation is limited to this corpus. Secondly, the Nederlandsch Historisch Filmarchief (NHFA), a predecessor of the Filmmuseum, was established in 1946, so all silent films had finished their commercial cycle and were already regarded as historical objects, of no further practical use, when the Filmmuseum acquired them. Finally, the bulk of this corpus was released on fragile, self-destructive nitrate film material. Not only do these films supposedly have a relatively short lifespan, but also they cannot be projected because nitrate material is highly flammable: the hot lamp of the projector could easily ignite the film, with disastrous consequences for the film, film theatre, and audience alike. In addition to this, nitrate films have gained a special status and are now considered unique objects, closer in nature to paintings or other museum artefacts than the acetate or polyester prints. For example, the Desmet Collection at EYE consists of more than 900 unique nitrate prints from the 1910s, and was consequently inscribed in the UNESCO Memory of the World Register in 2011.[12] This carries the implication that the utmost care should be taken in the films' passive and active preservation. It is interesting to note, however, that, since the digital turn, even acetate prints and their projection equipment are increasingly regarded as valuable museum objects as well.[13]

A further sharpening of the focus of this investigation led to the decision to restrict it to the study of the silent material in four particular collections found in EYE archive: the Collectie Nederland (films produced in the Netherlands); the Uitkijk Collectie (films that formed part of the Uitkijk Archive); the Desmet Collectie (films that came to the Filmmuseum as part of Jean Desmet's legacy); and the collection of film fragments. Each collection raises issues that are particularly relevant to this study. The Netherlands Collection is an example of the fact that film production in the Netherlands always played an important role in the policies of the Filmmuseum (and later, EYE) as a result of the FIAF idea that each archive should be responsible for its national

film production heritage (Borde, 1983: 120). However, the task of collecting and preserving Dutch film ran counter to the institute's aesthetic aims, creating tensions between these objectives. This duty also caused problems in the Filmmuseum's collaboration with the other major film-collecting institution in the Netherlands, the Institute for Sound and Image, in Hilversum.

Meanwhile, the second case study, the Uitkijk Collection, allows for an analysis of the institute's attitude towards 'art films'. The collection originated in the Nederlandsche Filmliga (Dutch Film League), which was founded in 1927 by a number of cinephiles in order to screen art films. In some cases, these films had not been distributed, so the Filmliga had to purchase them first before screening them, resulting in the emergence of a collection of films that initially served as a distribution collection administered by the Centraal Bureau voor Ligafilms (Central Bureau for League Films) or CBLF. As the collection, which later found its way into the Filmmuseum archive, consisted of films that were already considered part of the canon to a large extent, its history demonstrates how the Filmmuseum handled films that had already achieved canonical status before it acquired them.

The third case study, the Desmet Collection, contains the films collected by Jean Desmet, a Dutch showman, distributor and owner of the Cinema Parisien, in the early years of the twentieth century. The collection mainly consists of commercial films from the 1910s and holds great interest for film historians: it provides an historical perspective on the interaction between film museum practice and contemporary theoretical arguments around the history of film.

Finally, the fourth group under investigation is the collection of film fragments. These also play a central role in this study as they demonstrate a number of key problems for the collection, preservation, and presentation of museum films, especially when this not only involves fragments that derive from clearly recognisable films, but also some that are largely unidentified and labelled in the archive as 'Bits & Pieces'.

The period under investigation spans around fifty years, from 1946 to the mid-1990s; 1946 was the founding year of the NHFA, the predecessor of the Filmmuseum and EYE, and the period after 1996 witnessed the transition from analogue to digital reproduction technologies. The new technologies gave the Filmmuseum a fresh momentum, starting in 1997, the year in which the plans for a Centrum voor Beeldcultuur (Institute of Visual Culture) were developed, which clearly anticipated that the advent of technological transformations heralded a revolution in film museum practice. That year also saw the first fully digital restorations, causing a shift in the debate on film archiving and restoration (Fossati, 2009: 25). These changes have been extensively discussed in Fossati's *From Grain to Pixel*, a book that has undergone several reprints since its first publication in 2009.

With all these changes happening, it is important not to forget that new ways of collecting, preserving, and presenting film always build on the earlier work that went into shaping film archives and film history. By focusing on the period before the digital turn, the present investigation demonstrates how such activities formed both the institute's archives and ideology. Furthermore, looking at the present through the lens of the past allows us to make some hypothetical predictions about the course of the future.

Another reason to investigate the period before 2000 is the fact that new, larger film museums have emerged in recent decades – not only EYE, but also the Deutsche Kinemathek in Berlin, the new building of the Cinémathèque française in Paris, and the Museo del Cinema in Turin. Interestingly, in addition to their stance on film history, these museums either consciously or unconsciously also present their own history as institutions – consciously, for example, by projecting a replica of the old Cinema Parisien screening room in the new EYE building on the banks of the IJ; unconsciously, because all the choices, activities, and acts of the past have left their traces in the archives, and as a consequence, in the memories of these film museums. Their current activities thus automatically reflect that past.

STRUCTURE OF THE BOOK

This book follows the workflow of the Filmmuseum, which consists of a combination of collection, preservation, and presentation. The musealisation of film is based on these three main pillars. Collection or acquisition is a process of choice and selection, and hence of inclusion and exclusion, and constitutes the first necessary activity, but further selections among the already acquired films are also part of the process that shapes a collection. Aside from gathering new titles and original prints, acquisition also entails the production of new prints by duplicating film titles that are already part of the archive. The issues and problems involved in these acts of collection are central to the first part of the book. The second part, meanwhile, discusses the historical and aesthetic standards that played a role in the preservation and specific kinds of restoration of nitrate films. Again, choices are made: should we add this particular piece of film in order to reconstruct its narrative, or not? Should we remove this particularly damaged part, or not? All such decisions are guided by film historical and aesthetic ideas. Finally, the third part of the book analyses the ways in which the Filmmuseum renders the results of these processes and activities visual in its screening programmes. These presentations construct new meanings for – and tell new stories about – the same material and the same images. An analysis of these themes and topics will clarify how film

was constructed as an historical and an aesthetic object through film museum practice and the writing of film history.

The first two parts of the book are strongly inspired by archival and museum studies, as well as by theories on the acts of collection and restoration. Due to the nature of the topic, the third part of the book on the presentation of museum films is closest to what could be considered 'traditional' cinema studies. I further introduce theoretical frameworks that are necessary to explain complex practices and their interrelationships with film historiography. All these theories are embedded within a specific understanding of film museums as socially and discursively constructed entities. Overall, the book gives an account of the *pas-de-deux* between film museum practice and film historical discourse, using the Filmmuseum as a case study, with the added intention of opening up the archival material on the history of the Nederlands Filmmuseum to the international community of film scholars and archivists. It is up to the reader to imagine similar cases, or to compare the structures and patterns it reveals with his or her surroundings or professional context.

In this sense, this book is also a contribution to the broader research project – ongoing for several decades now – that maps the history of international film museum and archival practice. A number of books have emerged from this project over the last thirty years, including Penelope Houston's *Keepers of the Frame* (1994), a history of FIAF; Paolo Cherchi Usai's *Silent Cinema* (2000); Caroline Frick's investigation of the influence of national identity on film archiving in *Saving Cinema* (2011); and Janna Jones' *The Past is a Moving Picture* (2012), a study of the moving image archive in relation to the construction of social, political, and cinematic pasts in the twentieth century. Additionally, Éric Le Roy (2013) has produced an overview of the history of film archiving; Mark-Paul Meyer and Paul Read (2000), and Leo Enticknap (2013) and Anna Bohn (2013) have written detailed handbooks on the technology of film archiving, preservation, and restoration. Alongside these more general books, a series of monographs on single institutes or collectors was written: for example, monographs on the Cinémathèque française one by François Olmeta (2000) and one by Laurent Mannoni (2006); Gerd Aurich's book on Gerhard Lamprecht, the founder of Deutsche Kinemathek (2013); and Haidee Wasson's *Museum Movies* on how MoMa helped define film art (2005). With its focus on EYE Filmmuseum, the present book adds a new layer to the history of the collection, preservation, and presentation of film in the era before the introduction of digital visual technologies enriched and transformed the field.

THE TIMELINE OF THE *PAS-DE-DEUX*

During the 1930s, Europe saw the foundation of the first national film museums, such as the Cinémathèque française in Paris, the National Film Archive (BFI) in London, and the Cinémathèque Royale in Brussels (Houston, 1994; Hagener, 2007; Bordwell, 1997).[14] These institutions emerged out of the avant-garde film culture formed by film critics and filmmakers in the 1920s, who were often active members of ciné-clubs and film societies devoted to the defense of film as an art form. As film scholar Malte Hagener explains in his book, *Moving Forward, Looking Back* (2007), the avant-garde movement was very conscious of the history of the cinema, and, as a result, its members began to produce collections of films that were screened and discussed at the ciné-clubs. Some, such as Jean Mitry, Léon Moussinac, and Georges Charensol, also started to write film histories (Hagener, 2007: 113).[15] Jean Mitry, who would become one of the best-known film historians in France, was also one of the founding fathers of the Cinémathèque française, illustrating the close connection film museums and film historiography enjoyed from the start. These newly formed national institutions, devoted to collecting and screening films, were thus strongly rooted in a film historical discourse that defined film as an art form.

A similar process occurred in the United States. In 1935, the Film Library, headed by Iris Barry, was created as part of the Museum of Modern Art in New York.[16] Barry had also been active in avant-garde film culture – before moving to New York in 1930, she was an important member of the Film Society in London (Hagener, 2007: 114) –; MoMA and Barry are considered important players in the construction of film history and the accompanying canon. It was during this early period that Barry helped organise a film course at Columbia University, which she later claimed to be the first of its kind (Polan, 2007: 16-18).[17] She also supported Siegfried Kracauer in writing his book, *From Caligari to Hitler* (1947), which, according to Hagener (2007: 115), he would not have been able to complete without her help. In addition, MoMA provided a rental collection of historical films that it deemed to possess canonical status. Dana Polan describes the impact of this distribution collection:

> Virtually overnight there was a proliferation of scattered courses in film appreciation or film history that were based on the MoMA collection and that regularized the study of film in standard patterns that would still be in place when universities came more systematically to introduce film curricula in the 1960s. (Polan, 2007: 16)

During this period (the 1920s and 1930s), a written history of so-called 'classical film' began to assert its influence. The historical narrative that emerged traced the evolution of film from a recording device into an art form (Bordwell, 1997: 22-21).[18] According to this view, film could not be considered an art until around 1914; although this period saw the emergence of a number of filmmakers whose 'inventions' allowed film to take a step in this direction,[19] it was not until after that date that film increasingly began to develop into what could be called a 'true art form'. Film historians claimed that this transformation was linked to the birth of a series of important art-film movements, such as German Expressionism and French Impressionism, each characterised by its own emblematic directors,[20] whose 'masterpieces' were duly listed and described, and ultimately became the canon of silent film.[21] As a consequence, the classical perception of film history depended on a hierarchical classification of films, whereby those films produced in the 'primitive' phase of 'discovery' were distinguished from those produced in the more 'mature' phase, when cinema was 'perfected'. Following this chronological division, historians defined what they perceived as filmic highlights, designating certain works and filmmakers as canonical, and positioning these films well above all the others (Hommel, 1991; Christie, 2006: 68).

Because this historical discourse focused on the development of film as an art form, it automatically legitimised film as art. The structure of classical film history, which showed striking similarities with contemporary studies on the history of art and literature, reinforced this effect (Elsaesser, 1986: 247; Lagny, 1992: 130-131).[22] The positioning of film history as part of this discourse helped the newly proclaimed art form to gain a place within the realm of the established arts (Lagny, 1992: 142).[23] The legitimation of film as an art form obviously called for an aesthetics of film, which was said to comprise the true 'essence' of cinema. According to these first film critics, this essence could be discovered in the creative treatment of moving images.[24]

The history of the Nederlands Filmmuseum begins in 1946. Although the Netherlands had witnessed calls for an archival institution that could preserve and show the country's film heritage from as early as the 1930s, such an institution was not established until after the end of Second World War.[25] In 1946, Paul Kijzer, Piet Meerburg, and David van Staveren founded the NHFA. Jan de Vaal subsequently became involved in the archive's activities, and soon shouldered responsibility for it. Shortly afterwards, in 1948, the Stichting Uitkijk-Archief (Uitkijk Archive Foundation) was established, also managed by de Vaal. In 1952, both film archives merged into the Dutch Filmmuseum and moved to the Stedelijk Museum, headed at the time by Willem Sandberg, and the tradition of weekly screenings began.[26] The new institution's designation as a museum, and its presence among historically legitimised art forms

in the Stedelijk Museum, were clear indications of film's trajectory towards its consecration as an art.

However, the definition of what made a film 'art' was in constant flux. For example, in the 1950s, film critic André Bazin (1958) stated that the essence of cinema was to be found not in its potential for manipulating reality, but rather in its ability to capture that reality. At the same time as Bazin's essays made their appearance, a French movement arose that became known as the '*politique des auteurs*' ('auteur politics'). This emerged from the activities of a number of young film critics, associated with the *Cahiers du Cinéma*, who frequented the Cinémathèque française. They called for a re-evaluation of Hollywood's commercial films and directors, and a redefinition of the term 'auteur', which, in the 1930s, was usually associated with the writer of the screenplay. According to the *politique des auteurs* theorists, the term by rights should be applied to the film director, whom they considered to hold the final responsibility for a film's artistic value.[27] Although these radical young critics canonised contemporary American sound films in particular, they also showed a strong preference for older American films – for example, they praised F. W. Murnau more for SUNRISE (1927) than for NOSFERATU (1922), and they showed great appreciation for the work of Buster Keaton.[28] They also reassessed commercial silent filmmakers such as Louis Feuillade.[29] What the advocates of the *politique des auteurs* did not do, however, was formulate a new aesthetics; instead, they simply upgraded a number of films into the art-film canon. They considered these films to be timeless masterpieces, disconnected from their historical context. As David Bordwell (1997: 76-81) points out: 'The auteurist canon [...] is a timeless collection of great films, hovering in aesthetic space, to be augmented whenever directors create more masterworks.'

Despite the various perspectives on film as art, the canon of silent cinema established during the 1920s and 1930s remained stable for some time. The notion that film developed from a recording technique into an art form, and the division of silent film into a primitive and an artistic phase, continued to hold sway. This structure, with its corresponding mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion, dominated film historical discourse until the 1970s, and was often connected to the programming of film museums/*cinémathèques*. For example, Bordwell (1997: 42) comments that, even for the most diligent film historians, writing film history consisted of little more than listing the classics, which they probably saw as 16mm prints at MoMA or on the screen of the Cinémathèque française.[30]

By the early 1960s, the Filmmuseum's ambitions outgrew the Stedelijk Museum: the auditorium where the Stedelijk Museum showed the films was not always available and the museum's technical facilities were too limited. After ten years of lobbying, the Filmmuseum finally found a place of its own at

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the Vondelpark Pavilion, and, in the early 1970s, the institute moved into the Pavilion, bit by bit. The last milestone was achieved when it opened its own cinema in 1974. With its own location, the Filmmuseum had the potential to develop into an independent institute dedicated to the history of film and film art. This decade also saw a shift in archival policy: with the completion of proper nitrate film vaults in Overveen, attention increasingly focused on the preservation of films. This resulted in the first major public subsidy for film preservation, granted by the Dutch government in 1980.[31]

The 1960s was also the period in which an interest in film started to grow among academics, who set up specialised journals, organised conferences, and developed university curricula. As these academic experts were mostly trained in philosophy, the history of art, and literary criticism, they integrated the analytical models of linguistics, formalism, and structuralism into the study of film (Sklar, 1990: 14). The French theorists found a route into English academia, for example, thanks to translations of their work published by the well-known film journal, *Screen* (Rosen, 2008: 266-267). At the same time, a fascination with formalism, abstraction and form, similar to that seen in the 1920s, re-emerged: *Screen* reprinted ideas on editing, theatre, and the audience developed by Sergei Eisenstein, Bertolt Brecht, and Lev Kuleshov.

These developments occurred simultaneously with a shift in ideas and perspectives on film history. British and American film archives and universities witnessed an upsurge of interest in early film, leading to the appearance of a number of filmographies, dissertations, and other publications focusing on early cinema (Christie, 2006: 69). The FIAF conference in Brighton in May 1978 is considered to have been especially instrumental in these developments. During the conference, FIAF showed approximately 600 feature films from the period 1900 to 1906, which had been previously ignored by most archives and film historians. The display of so many unknown silent films fundamentally changed the status of this period of film history. Following the conference, early film – which had until then been almost completely sidelined – became one of the most important and most studied periods in film history. Film historians and archivists declared the Brighton conference to be the high point of this transformation (Holman, 1982; Gartenberg, 1984; Gunning, 1991b).

Because early films were fundamentally different from the canon that had been the main subject of film history up to that time, they called forth new film historical methods and models (Horak, Lacasse and Cherchi Usai, 1991: 280). As in the 1920s, there was a strong focus on the visual power of film, and the new film historians used this to debunk the argument that film was primarily a narrative art. It resulted in new forms of writing about film history, focusing on multiple subjects, as opposed to the classical history that mainly rehashed the canon.[32] This new film history called itself 'revisionist' because

its aim was to amend the discourse of film history. Due to the idea that this constituted a new form of film history, revisionism is also referred to as 'new film history'.[33] New film history aspired to be radically different from classical film history – for example, in relation to its use of historical sources. Classical film historians appeared to rely predominantly on secondary sources and their own memory for their historical research, and this inevitably led to misconceptions and errors; the new film historians, by contrast, decided to return to the primary sources.

This new attitude towards historical sources coincided with a move by film museums and archives to make their collections more accessible. In the 1980s and 1990s, the new policy of openness led to the establishment of Le Giornate del Cinema Muto (mentioned at the beginning of this chapter), an annual festival of silent films held in Pordenone in northern Italy, as well as the annual film festival of Bologna, dedicated to showing newly restored prints of rare and little-known films from the archives. Both initiatives were clear examples of a growing interest in the preservation and presentation of unknown archival films. Aside from these festivals, film museums themselves became more accessible. A broader preservation and programming policy, which included unknown films, allowed for an extended knowledge of film and greater possibilities for using such films as direct sources in historical research. The Filmmuseum also started to preserve large amounts of unknown early films, a policy whose benefits were enhanced by the fact that video technology began to make the archival material far more widely accessible, eliminating the need to visit the film vault or screening room.[34]

The re-evaluation of early film material also led to a denunciation of the teleological model that comprised the main structural support of classical film history. The classical story had positioned early film as a primitive stage in the evolution of cinema, while the new film historians were at pains to show that these early films were products of their own paradigm.[35] Early film was defined as fundamentally different from everything that followed and, as a consequence, it should not and could not be considered as simply a step along the road towards the narrative feature films of the 1920s.[36] New film history jettisoned the 'big story' or metanarrative explaining the development of film; instead, smaller research projects sprang up, focusing on shorter periods, which allowed for in-depth investigations of source materials and, as a result, clear and detailed mappings of the issue or theme under investigation. The deployment of a multitude of theoretical models also made the discipline of film history increasingly scientific. This was accompanied by the abandonment of aesthetic considerations in the writing of film history: in contrast to classical film history, the new historians refused to enter into a continuous debate over the establishment of aesthetic standards in film (Lagny, 1992: 128, 133).[37]

With the re-evaluation of previously unknown films, revisionism signalled its departure from the canon that had developed over the preceding decades. This did not mean that the revisionists demoted the canonical filmmakers and their films; they simply put them in a more historical context, analysing and demystifying them (Hommel, 1991a: 151).[38] Michèle Lagny (1992: 144) in fact notes that film historians, despite all the new historiographical insights, continued to regard these once-consecrated films as exemplars of the art of film.

The Filmmuseum also went through numerous changes during the 1980s. De Vaal left in 1984, to be replaced by Frans Maks, and Maks was succeeded in turn by Hoos Blotkamp in 1987, who appointed filmmaker, writer, scholar and cinephile Eric De Kuyper as deputy director. A minor revolution ensued, with the complete makeover of the Vondelpark Pavilion, and a shift in its approach to films as historical artefacts, which took the form of a new focus on the unknown films in the collection and the introduction of quality restoration and presentation of these 'new discoveries'. These changes were in line with the new developments in film history. The selection and preservation practices of the Filmmuseum during these years significantly enhanced the institute's international standing, culminating in its reception of the Jean Mitry prize in 1991 at Le Giornate del Cinema Muto, and it continues to garner praise to this day for its efforts to make early film history accessible.[39]

PART I
COLLECTIONS

> Interpretation is indeed operating as early as the stage of the consulta-
> tion of archives, and even before that, at the stage of their formation.
> (Ricoeur, 2004: 337)

Paul Ricoeur explains in *Memory, History, Forgetting* that the interpretation of history does not begin with the historian but with the archivist. The decisions made by archivists on what should and should not be included in a collection are the first step in the process of interpreting historical facts; all the succeeding choices the historian makes depend on the composition and structure of the archive. As a consequence, the archive is not only the 'starting point' of historical research, it is also part of the historiographical discourse.[1]

Furthermore, the act of collecting documents and objects always implies a change in the meaning and function of these objects.[2] The process of musealisation involves depriving objects of their original user functions and giving them new meanings, the nature of which depends on the institute concerned. Cultural analyst Mieke Bal (1994: 111) pithily summarises the process, noting that the status of the object that is musealised changes from 'object-ive to semiotic, from thing to sign'.[3] Similarly, in his text, *The Origin of Museums*, historian and philosopher Krzysztov Pomian (1988: 50) introduces the term 'semiophor' to describe objects with this new referential function.

However, it is not only the act of collecting that constructs new meanings; other archiving activities, such as the acquisition, identification, and classification (or labelling) of acquired objects, form and guide these new interpretations. French philosopher Jacques Derrida (1996: 1-3) has called this activity, 'consigning', emphasising that the term should be taken literally: '*con*-signing' or the bringing together of signs. This also implies that changing the series or classification of collected objects also alters their meaning.

Likewise, the historical discourses generated by museums spring from the material in their archives. In a film museum context, film historical discourse starts with the archive and the act of collecting and structuring (or con-signing) the collection. Notable in this context, is the important role film historians and archivists ascribe to chance when discussing the musealisation of audio-visual heritage. The vulnerability of the film material and its commercial and, therefore, ephemeral nature are thought to have caused the loss of large quantities of film, particularly silent film (Cherchi Usai, 2000b: 161; Jones, 2012: 138-141). Indeed, films were generally not made to be kept; rather, they were expected to generate as much money as possible within a relatively short period of time. In addition, the Filmmuseum tended to accept every silent film that was offered, an act described as 'passive acquisition' as opposed to so-called 'active acquisition', in which a museum makes an informed choice about whether to acquire a particular print.[4] Because of the important role played by passive acquisition in film archiving, it could appear that silent film collections were formed randomly, and, for this reason, many researchers consider the archives of these institutes to represent more or less truthful cross-sections of film history. However, this is a misconception: most of these passively acquired films were actively selected or acquired at an earlier moment in time.

Another activity that shapes a collection is the production of 'preservation prints'. From very early on, film museums used the reproducibility of the collected material to preserve their films. Film museums and archives always tried to save film titles by duplicating nitrate prints onto new acetate negatives. Of course, the purchase of these new prints of old films implied additional costs. As a consequence, the decision to duplicate a film print onto new material could, arguably, be considered an acquisition activity, as only a limited number of films could be selected due to the costs of the procedure. This resulted in a division between those film titles that were considered worthy of duplication and those that were not. Such decisions reveal the preferences of a film museum or archive by revealing which titles the museum favoured. Archives were thus shaped not only by the acquisition of new film prints and titles, but also by further structuring activities that prioritised some titles over others.

The history of collections and archives helps us understand the various layers and hierarchies in the archives that co-produced film history, or, as Jones (2012: 15) puts it, '[t]he archive disciplines its materials in such a way that any knowledge derived from the archive is necessarily sanctioned'. In order to analyse these layers, I differentiate between what I term 'private collections', the 'archive', and 'museum collections'. Private collections are series of objects or films gathered together by amateur collectors outside the

official film archiving institutions; an archive contains all the film prints possessed by an official museum or archival institute; and the archive is organised into a series of museum collections. These collections can have an historical background – for example, a collection that contains all the films that originally belonged to the same private collector – or the museum itself defines them; for example, national collections that aim to contain all the films produced in a specific country.[5]

CHAPTER 1

Private Collectors

The acquisition of silent films has been beset by a particular problem: by the time the first film archives were established in the 1930s, a large part of the entire corpus of silent films had already perished or been destroyed (Meyer and Read, 2000: 2). This was also the period when the 'talkies' replaced silent cinema, which meant it was no longer possible to acquire silent films from distributors after they were withdrawn from circulation. As a consequence, the NHFA – as EYE was called at the time – was dependent on the resources of private individuals who had built up collections of silent films in the past (Mallon, 2006).

In 1956, Jan de Vaal, the institute's director, declared that the task of the Filmmuseum was to rescue as much as possible of this old film material from its storage places in basements, sheds, and attics throughout the Netherlands (Hendriks and Blotkamp, 1996: 12-13).[6] As a result, the impression developed that the archive was a direct reflection of silent film culture in the Netherlands. The museum's own annual report in 1989 tells us that the material in the archive was considered to be a 'faithful reflection' of the division between Dutch and foreign films shown in the Netherlands before 1930.[7] However, EYE's archive of silent film comprises all kinds of smaller, private collections, and this raises the question of whether this selection of films does indeed 'faithfully' represent Dutch film culture of the silent period. Private collectors, for the most part, selected films according to their own insights, goals, and passions. I would argue that the EYE archive cannot lay claim to being a direct reflection of Dutch screening culture; rather, it is a patchwork of silent films from that period. To illustrate this, I will analyse some of these private collections using the categories outlined by museum historian and theoretician Susan Pearce in her book, *On Collecting* (1995), to demonstrate how they relate to one another.

THREE COLLECTION STRATEGIES

In order to better understand the diversity of these private collections and the motives that lie behind their assembly, I will take a closer look at a series of fragments that can be found in the film museum archives. For example, some groups of fragments came to the archives in clearly defined sets, already arranged by topic or some other defining feature.[8] Pearce (1995: 32) calls this 'systematic collection' – a process that follows a clear rationale, with the intention of producing sets of contiguous objects. Systematic collection fits within the tradition of classification and arrangement that emerged in the eighteenth century and became paradigmatic for the practice of collecting (Heesen te and Spary, 2001: 17).

The cinema employees who kept pieces from the films they worked with also contributed to the shape of these collections. In these cases, the fragments became personal memorabilia, 'con-signing' an interrelationship between films and collector. Pearce (1995: 32) calls this, 'souvenir collecting', and its result, an 'object autobiography': the items form a sort of diary, which reveals traces of the life and ideas of the individual collector.

Many fragments, however, were the result of coincidence: for example, they happened to be used as a beginning or end of a film, or the rest of the film had subsequently been lost or had deteriorated. The way collectors labelled such fragments as 'old film fragments',[9] 'fragments of unknown films',[10] or 'unknown piece of an animation film'[11] indicates that they collected such unidentified fragments simply because it was film material. These vague descriptions also show that collectors often did not know their origin, so the footage cannot possibly have been collected because it represented a particular film title. In any event, the labels the collectors gave these fragments were not based on the footage, which indicates that they were not particularly interested in the content. Pearce (1995: 32) calls this, 'fetishistic collection', which she describes as the obsessive urge to possess as many objects of a particular sort as possible; in this case, the object of obsession happened to be film material. The variety of fragments in the archives illustrates the diversity of reasons that lay behind their collection, and these different motivations formed the grounds for the choices the collectors made, and to a large extent determined the final form the collections took. As film historiography is shaped by those films that survived, these motivations can still be traced in the film historical discourse.

1: Amsterdam 1957: Dirk Huizinga (left) makes a
first check of the films in the Desmet Collection
(Collection EYE Film Institute Netherlands)

THE DESMET COLLECTION: A DIORAMA IN TIME

One of the more important private collections in the former Filmmuseum's
archive is the collection of Jean Desmet, which it acquired in 1957.

Desmet worked as a showman and distributor from 1907 to 1916, and his
collection was the result of his professional activities. As a consequence, his
acquisition of films was primarily guided by what was available on the mar-
ket at the time: any potential acquisitions were subject to the mechanisms
of inclusion and exclusion dictated by market forces, and this influenced the
creation of his collection. For example, it does not include the films of cer-
tain production companies or those featuring certain movie stars because
other exhibitors and distributors held monopoly rights over them. As a result,
cultural, social, and economic criteria all played a part in determining the
creation of the collection of films that later became known as the Desmet Col-
lection (Blom, 2003: 22-23).

Despite this, the Filmmuseum concluded – on the basis of the collection's
history – that it was representative of the screening culture of the early dec-

ades of the twentieth century: its 1989 annual report announced its intention to inventory and describe the collection as a whole, due to its importance to the history of film culture in the Netherlands during this period.[12] The Filmmuseum's initial ambition was to create a proper inventory, and this led to the active preservation by duplication of all the films in the collection a year later.

Film historian Ivo Blom relates the story of Desmet and his distribution activities in his book, *Jean Desmet and the Early Dutch Film Trade* (2003). This extensive study of Desmet is framed by an analysis of the creation of his collection. Blom appears to be aware of the fact that a collection is often coloured by its collector, and he even refers to the following quote from Jean Baudrillard (1994: 12): '[A] given collection is made up of a succession of terms, but the final word must always be the person of the collector.' However, Blom (2003: 23) concludes that this does not apply to the Desmet Collection because it was created by accident – Desmet bought his films for distribution and exhibition purposes, letting the market make his choices for him. Consequently, he does not consider it important to investigate Desmet's personal influence on the structure of the collection. He is only correct up to a point, however, because Desmet, as a collector, did have an impact on its final composition.

After Desmet retired from his distribution activities in 1916, the purchase of new films for his collection stagnated. However, unlike so many other distributors, he did not discard his old films. According to his daughter, E. Hughan-Desmet, her father never threw anything away,[13] and this clearly applied to the films he had purchased for his distribution company. Desmet kept these films because he thought he might use them at a later date – and he did use them, in various ways. In the first place, he continued to rent out his old films until 1922, and he blanked old newsreels in order to re-use them as starting and ending strips for other films – in this way, he did not have to buy so-called 'black film'. He also sold old film material to Hoffmans, a chemical factory in Waalwijk, for four guilders a kilo; and he sent it to Germany, where the combustible nitrate material was probably used to make ammunition (Blom, 2003: 327-328). Finally, he sold some of the films from his collection because they could still be screened. Remarkably, some genres were cheaper than others: Desmet offered 'variety, comical film (slapstick), comedies (bourgeois comedies), nature films, scientific films and dramas' for 20 to 40 cents a metre, and colour films and a few feature films for 50 cents (Blom, 2003: 303). The higher price that he placed on colour films and some features indicates that he literally valued these the most, or as Blom (2000: 300) says, Desmet regarded some of his films as 'monumental pieces'. By contrast, the fact that he cannibalised newsreels to make starting and ending strips indicates his lack of appreciation for these particular filmic images.

All this indicates that Desmet did evaluate and assess the films in his col-

lection, and that it kept changing as a result of the way he recycled and disposed of material until well after 1916. As a consequence, Desmet's activities cannot help but have had a distorting effect on the collection. If a researcher wants to conclude anything from the collection about distribution and exhibition practices between 1907 and 1916, he or she will have to take this inherent distortion into account. For example, about eighty percent of the current Desmet Collection consists of colour films.[14] Of course, the presence of these films shows that he had an interest in colour; however, the extremely high percentage of these films in the collection also appears to be the result of the higher price this material commanded. It is also unlikely that Desmet would have disposed of films he valued highly by sending them off to Germany or to Hoffmans. It therefore seems logical that a disproportionately large number of colour films were preserved as opposed to newsreels, which had less chance of survival.

By 1925, Desmet had stopped insuring his films and renting them out,[15] and stored them instead in the attic of his cinema on the Nieuwendijk in Amsterdam. Following a fire in 1938, he moved them to a garage in Amstelveen that he rented for 240 guilders a year. The act of storage divested the films of their original commercial function; Desmet stopped using them in any way that could earn money. What used to be a distribution collection turned into a private collection, and the films changed from commercial objects into pure collectibles (Blom, 2003: 333-334; Pomian, 1988: 14). The fact that the films, stripped of their original function, had become objects without financial value did not mean that Desmet considered them worthless[16] – he continued to pay rent in order to ensure they were stored safely; it did mean, however, that they began to acquire new functions and meanings. My hypothesis is that they served as tokens of memory for Desmet, as souvenirs, and the collection as a whole had turned into Pearce's 'object autobiography' referred to earlier.

After 1925, Desmet no longer made use of the films in his collection. This 'non-use' of collected objects is characteristic of collectors. Walter Benjamin describes the phenomenon in his 1931 essay, 'Unpacking my Library':

> And the non-reading of books, you will object, should be characteristic of collectors? This is news to me, you may now say. It is not news at all. Experts will bear me out when I say that it is the oldest thing in the world. (Benjamin, 1977: 64)

In this respect, Desmet displayed the characteristics of a typical collector. As soon as the distribution collection turned into a private collection, it froze: nothing was disposed of anymore, nothing was used. He closed his collection like a diary with a lock and key.

The history of the Desmet Collection, therefore, reveals that it cannot be truly representative of Dutch film culture between 1907 and 1916 because it was altered in too many ways at a later stage. However, the Filmmuseum (as well as other experts) at the time did interpret the collection in this way, and drew conclusions about the history of film culture in the Netherlands based on its composition. One example was the idea, arising from the number of colour films in the collection, that eighty percent of the films Desmet showed in the 1910s were colour (Blom, 2003: 20).[17] Further suppositions about Desmet as an exhibitor and distributor were then based on these conclusions – for example, due to the fact that he supposedly distributed such a high percentage of colour films, he was then defined as dealing in luxury entertainment. In this way, Desmet (accidentally) inserted his autobiography into film history through his collection of films, without even putting pen to paper.

When researching such collections, we must follow Baudrillard's example and always take into consideration the motives of the person who has put the objects together, and, in the case of distribution collections, we have to remember that these collectors were largely constrained by the market. But the history of a collection, of course, goes beyond the moment of its emergence. A closer investigation of private collections provides an understanding of the various phases they may have gone through – from distribution collection, via a recycling phase, to autobiographical private collection. Every transformation a collection undergoes places a filter over the previous period. The collection becomes a diorama in time, distilling various stories from different periods, and it can in turn be analysed and defined with the help of these stories. However, the price that comes with an understanding of this role is the awareness that we cannot simply use a collection as a source for the investigation or description of one period of its history in isolation.

THE UITKIJK COLLECTION: FILM AS ART

A final interesting example of such a collection is the Uitkijk Collection. The Filmmuseum has always considered it as one of its main pillars.[18] In 1976, the museum described the collection as deriving from the activities of the Nederlandsche Filmliga, which was active between 1927 and 1931 as part of the tradition of *cercles du cinéma*, ciné-clubs, and other groups interested in avant-garde cinema in Europe and America. Remarkably, however, this collection was not only considered important for historians of classical film, but was also regarded as a significant historical source for the study of wider cultural developments in the Netherlands in the 1930s.[19] The fact that the Filmmuseum associated Vsevolod Pudovkin's 1926 film, MAT (MOTHER), with the Film-

liga explains why the institute added it to the collection at a later stage. Yet, despite the seminal role the film played in the birth of the Dutch Filmliga (the league came into being because MAT was banned in the Netherlands), it was never part of the Uitkijk Collection. The fact that it later ended up on the list of titles included in the collection could be considered a form of 'hyper-correction', springing from the assumption that the collection was more closely intertwined with the history of the Filmliga than it actually was. This could also explain why the Filmmuseum decided to preserve and restore the entire collection as part of a project that focused exclusively on the history of the Filmliga.[20]

Originally, the Uitkijk Collection functioned as the distribution collection of the CBLF, the company that provided other film leagues in the Netherlands with films. The CBLF, alongside film leagues throughout the country, was part of the Nederlandsche Filmliga, that aimed at screening those films that could not be seen in commercial cinemas. This basically referred to the results of what 'had been experimented and achieved in the workshops of French, German and Russian avant-garde [cinema]' (Filmliga, 1982: 34). Menno ter Braak was the critic and writer who most influenced the Filmliga's ideas and its acquisition policy in its early days. Ter Braak's take on cinematography was fairly rigid, and, in the beginning, the Filmliga's programming was character-ised by a tendency towards experimental and abstract film.[21] These sorts of films consequently form a large part of the Uitkijk Collection.

However, although it is true that the Filmliga showed a relatively large amount of avant-garde films from the 1920s and 1930s, it did show other types of film. For example, it exhibited feature films such as NOSFERATU (Murnau, 1921), THE CROWD (Vidor, 1928), UNDERWORLD (Von Sternberg, 1927), and THÉRÈSE RAQUIN (Feyder, 1928), as well as a variety of features by or starring Charlie Chaplin, and some famous Soviet films such as STAROYE I NOVOYE (Eisenstein, 1929) and STACHKA (Eisenstein, 1924). However, although the Filmliga showed all these titles, they never made it into the Uitkijk Collec-tion. This leads to the conclusion that the decision over whether to purchase a film or not was probably based on practical considerations: the lesser-known, smaller, more experimental films, which were difficult to show in a 'normal' movie theatre, were often not for rent, and the only way the Filmliga would have been able to access these films was by purchasing them. After acquiring the films that it could, the league turned this more-or-less accidental series of films into a distribution collection, and, in 1928, it officially became part of the newly established CBLF.[22] It also found a new manager for its collection in Ed Pelster, a professional who was also involved in film distribution outside of the Filmliga.

Overall, we can state with a fair degree of confidence that the origins of the

collection lie in the acquisition of European avant-garde films from the 1920s. However, the collection also contains other kinds of films,[23] many of which originated from the collection of the Dutch production department for independent filmmakers, established in 1931. Both this production company and the CBLF were part of an umbrella company, the Maatschappij voor Cinegrafie NV (Society for Cinematography), in Amsterdam.[24]

Furthermore, the Filmliga not only aimed to show (foreign and Dutch) avant-garde films, but also to present what it described as 'old, good films that unfortunately were forgotten too soon' (Filmliga, 1982: 34). In this, it seems the league set out to imitate similar initiatives in other countries. When Pelster purchased a number of older silent films from people such as Desmet, it was probably with this purpose in mind (Blom, 2003: 330). In reality, these films were presented very differently than was initially envisaged: instead of creating an appreciation for these forgotten films, the Filmliga noted that they clearly showed the contrast between films made in 1906/7 and 'modern' films (Linssen, 1999: 65). The Filmliga baptised these films as '*cinéma d'avantguerre*' ('pre-war cinema'), following the tradition of the Cinéma des Ursulines in Paris, and presented them as ridiculous and outdated failures (Linssen, 1999: 65). Over time, this term was given a broader meaning and included films that were made after the war, such as AU SECOURS! (Gance, 1923), starring Max Linder, which was also designated as a 'pre-war' film.[25] In 1928, Henrik Scholte (1982: 122) even claimed that all past films would eventually become *cinéma d'avantguerre*, simply because films were rapidly improving. The term ended up referring to the inferior quality of a film, rather than the fact that it was made in a certain period; it connoted a negative assessment of a group of 'outdated' films, which the Filmliga presented as a contrast to contemporary cinema.[26] Hence, it lost its descriptive essence and became synonymous with an aesthetic judgment.

In 1931, the Dutch Filmliga officially closed, but the CBLF continued to exist. From that moment on, Pelster's influence over its acquisition policy grew exponentially, resulting in a new direction. Since Pelster personally preferred the genre of *Cultuurfilm* (the German *Kulturfilm*), the focus shifted away from the absolute and experimental to documentary film,[27] and, as a result, a large number of these so-called *Cultuurfilms* also ended up in the collection. This shows that, although the fundamental *raison d'être* of the collection had always been to provide audiences with quality films, the choice and purchase of such films very much depended on the personal ideas and preferences of those who bore final responsibility for their acquisition. This again confirms Baudrillard's statement that, in the end, it is the collector who determines the collection.

To recap, as film archival and museum institutes were mostly created after

the war, they almost always had to rely on private collectors to acquire silent films. Consequently, the largest part of the entire collection of silent films was formed for a variety of purposes. The collections of silent films in the different archives refer to various periods and processes in the history of film collecting, and this has had repercussions on the film historical discourse based on these collections. After all, the objects that enable this discourse have been pre-selected in more ways than one, which means that all potential historical hypotheses or statements will be partly predetermined. Thus, contemporary perspectives on the value of film and cinema had already largely determined the history of a number of these collections at a very early stage.

This raises the question of what implications this has had for the (film historical) referential function of private collections in particular, and silent film collections more generally, in the presentation strategies of film museums.

Blind Choices: Parameters and Repetitions

As with private collectors, film museums and institutes held specific views on which film material they preferred to collect. These preferences had the following three broad parameters: first, film museums showed a preference for the well-known canonical titles from the silent period (Bordwell, 1997: 24); second, they tended to favour films that were old or rare, even if they were less well-known – although when it comes to the collection of unidentified film material, this begs the question as to why film institutes were interested in these unknown titles if they could not screen them in their theatres; third, all the institutes affiliated to FIAF agreed to collect the films produced by their national film industries. In this way, FIAF hoped that a near-complete, over-arching archive would emerge, enabling the retrieval of any film made anywhere in the world. These parameters, therefore, can be summarised by the categories: filmmaker and/or title, year, production country. However, questions remain concerning their wider background, as well as how the archives manifest nuances in their appreciation of the various categories of films they collected, and the way all this was intertwined with the inclusion or exclusion of films from the archives and, consequently, with the writing of film history.

FILM TITLES AND FILMMAKERS: THE FILM CANON

The act of bringing objects together in a collection often serves to materialise a collector's ideal identity (Hooper-Greenhill, 2000: 9). This is particularly the case with private collections, since they also function within a wider social system. The collected objects become possessions that enhance the collector's prestige (Pomian, 1988: 18). Similarly, institutes and companies persistently construct and reconstruct their cultural identity through collections and col-

lected objects.[28] The idea that collections can bestow an identity upon the collector forces institutions to be very conscious of their acquisition policies and the nature of the objects they collect and exhibit.

Sociologist and philosopher Pierre Bourdieu has analysed these processes using a theoretical construct he calls 'field theory', in which he developed the idea of 'social fields'. He describes these as 'structured spaces of positions (or posts) whose properties depend on their place in those areas' (Bourdieu, 1992: 171). Examples of such social fields are the worlds of sport, shipping, and, of course, culture, which includes the arts (Pels, 1992: 12). In her book, *Film Preservation: Competing Definitions of Value, Use and Practice* (2007), Karen Gracy explains that since film archives and museums have to deal with a popular cultural form that includes both commercial and non-commercial interests, there is no clarity about the value of the collected films:

> Whereas many cultural institutions have traditionally been associated with the high arts, film archives [and museums] deal with a popular cultural form and thus confound the status hierarchy found within what Pierre Bourdieu characterized as the 'field of cultural production'. (Gracy, 2007: 5)

Indeed, Bourdieu provides a clear theoretical system as a basis for analysing the dynamics and processes in this field of cultural production. Actors and institutions are involved in a constant hierarchical battle to occupy positions that will give them the power to structure their field. According to Bourdieu, the cultural field is further divided into the '*champ de production restreinte*' ('the field of artistically motivated or limited cultural production') and the '*champ de grande production*' ('the field of commercially motivated or mass production'). The *champ de production restreinte* includes that part of the cultural field in which potential artworks are produced, distributed and consumed, which automatically implies that Bourdieu assumes that art is always produced in limited editions for small audiences. This field complements the *champ de grande production*, which encompasses the creation of popular, commercial culture – in terms of film, this might include a Hollywood blockbuster, but also the more commercially produced European films such as those of Dutch filmmaker Johan Nijenhuis or films featuring Bud Spencer and Terence Hill.

Those film archives that wanted to join FIAF had to show that they worked within the *champ de production restreinte* – a non-commercial attitude was a strict membership requirement (Houston, 1994: 60). This rule guaranteed that the films would no longer be deployed commercially, making it easier for distributors and producers to transfer them to the archives and museums.[29] Underlying this very practical purpose, FIAF's aim was to position these institutions firmly within the *champ de production restreinte*.

Even if an institution acts non-commercially, this does not automatically mean that it will secure a good position within this field. Bourdieu (1992: 172) explains that an institution that aims at a position of importance first needs to gain so-called 'specific capital' – that is, particular knowledge or certain possessions that will bring it respect and high esteem in its field. For example, in the literary field, specific capital can be gained through a wide knowledge of literature and the possession of works that belong or refer to the literary canon. Specific capital brings with it what Bourdieu (1992: 144) calls 'symbolic capital', which he basically refers to as prestige, reputation, or fame.

For film museums and archives, symbolic capital was related to 'art cinema'. The CBLF's collection enhanced the status of the Filmmuseum, for example, because it contained films that were recognised as mainly belonging to this category. The importance accorded to the collection is also illustrated by the fact that it was highly praised by the Dutch Federation of Film Circles, one of the more important institutions active within the Dutch film industry's *champ de production restreinte*.[30] When the Uitkijk Theatre donated its films to the new archive, it was with the understanding that the collection would retain its connection to the film theatre by means of its name. Thus, in 1949, de Vaal created a new foundation called the Uitkijk Archive to hold the sixty-seven films it donated.[31] He later spoke of the acquisition of this collection as one of the most important steps in the Filmmuseum's genesis,[32] and used its prestige to convince the government to subsidise his institute.[33]

As one of the smaller FIAF archives, the acquisition of such a collection was very important to the Filmmuseum – all the more so because such archives initially encountered the problem that they did not possess enough titles to programme screenings; their film collections were simply too limited to be able to render the history of cinema visible – at least in the way this history was envisaged at the time. To solve this problem, FIAF initiated a system of exchange by which smaller institutes could screen this historical heritage by borrowing films from other (larger) FIAF archives. As a result, FIAF membership gave smaller institutes the potential to extend their resources and enrich their programmes with films from the canon established by classical film history.[34] However, since this system did not operate on an entirely altruistic basis but was based on the idea of exchange, when it received a print, the institution was expected to send another film in return. For this reason, it was important to own at least a few titles regarded as part of the art-film canon, such as those in the Uitkijk Archive. These sixty-seven films did indeed become very popular items of trade,[35] and their ownership facilitated exchanges with similar FIAF archives and helped the Filmmuseum increase its access to other canonical films.[36]

The system did not function quite so well for everyone. The implicit under-

2: FIAF members at the 1952 conference pose in
front of the Stedelijk Museum (Collection EYE
Film Institute Netherlands)

standing that there must be a like-for-like exchange caused serious problems
for smaller institutes with few 'big' titles in their collections. To address this
situation, the 1952 FIAF conference, held in Amsterdam, agreed to launch
a so-called 'film pool' – a central hub from which 16mm prints of canonical
films could be dispatched to the smaller archives.

The initial proposal envisaged that this activity would be coordinated
from Paris, but the whole idea fell by the wayside (Borde, 1983: 134). The ini-
tiative was subsequently resurrected in 1960 as the FIAF Members Film Ser-
vice (FMF), based in Castricum in the Netherlands.[37] Five years later, about
a hundred FMF films were stored in the vaults, ready for dispatch.[38] Yet the
idea of providing the smaller FIAF archives with canonical films through the
FMF failed once again, partly because the larger archives that held most of
the 'big' titles donated hardly any films. An exception was the Russian Gos-
filmofond, which submitted some Russian 'classics', such as BRONENOSETS
POTYOMKIN (Eisenstein, 1925), ZEMLYA (Dovsjenko, 1930), OBLOMOK IMPERII
(Ermler, 1929), IVAN GROSNII I (Eisenstein, 1944), MAT (Pudovkin, 1926), and

Potomok Chingis-Khana (Pudovkin, 1928). In comparison, MoMA, like the Cinémathèque Royale in Brussels, donated just one film from the classical canon – Intolerance (Griffith, 1916).[39] It was predominantly the smaller film archives that donated films to the FMF collection. The majority of the titles the service supplied, therefore, were art films produced in these archives' countries during the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s.

The larger FIAF archives helped their smaller counterparts in other ways, however. For example, when a FIAF archive possessed multiple prints of the same title, the inferior-quality prints were sometimes transferred to other archives. This was a (mild) form of disposal or, as it is now called, 'de-collectionising', which simultaneously enabled these smaller archives, which were often of more recent origin, to acquire prints of canonical films. In addition, FIAF members also duplicated films for each other. A good example of this is Menschen am Sonntag (Siodmak et al., 1929-1930): the Filmmuseum acquired this film through the Uitkijk Archive, and duplicated the print onto negative material in 1949 and sent it to the Danske Film Institutet; the Danish institute then struck several projection prints and sent them on to various other FIAF members (Koerber, 2000: 233). In addition, the Filmmuseum received duplicates of famous titles from fellow archives, such as an acetate print of Erdgeist (Jessner, 1923), which was sent to the Netherlands by the Danish film archive in 1973.[40] Such exchange and duplication activities allowed the same film to be screened at various places simultaneously, increasing a particular title's chances of survival. As Raymond Borde (1983: 167) says, 'as many prints in as many places as possible maximises the number of rescued films'.[41] However, it also had the effect of strengthening the dominance of the canon, since it extended the possibility of displaying these already more-famous films.

The Filmmuseum's preservation activities again demonstrated this preference for the canon of art films. A perusal of its lists of titles from the 1950s and 1960s shows that, during this period, it mainly selected art films for duplication. Its 1956 annual report states:

> Furthermore, a number of classic films such as 'The Bridge', 'Inflation', 'Market in Berlin', 'Drifters', 'Ueberfall', 'Zero de Conduite', 'La passion de Jeanne d'Arc', 'Berlin, Symphonie einer Groszstadt' [*sic*], were preserved.[42]

To this day, these films are still considered canonical: five of the eight titles mentioned derive from the Uitkijk Archive, and the other two films, De Brug (Ivens, 1928) and Berlin, die Sinfonie der Grossstadt (Ruttmann, 1927), were screened by the Nederlandsche Filmliga. The only film that had no con-

nection with either the Filmliga or the Uitkijk was DRIFTERS (Grierson, 1929); however, this was the first film made by John Grierson, who played an important role in the history of documentary film. According to Georges Sadoul:

> John Grierson, a brilliant critic and essayist from Scotland, made his film debut in 1929 with *Drifters*, a film about the herring fishing industry. This documentary is edited in the 'symphonic' style, in imitation of Dziga Vertov. The success of this film attracted a number of young enthusiasts, who rallied around Grierson. (Sadoul, 1962: 311)[43]

The Nieuwe Filmliga (New Film League), founded in 1936 as a successor to the Nederlandsche Filmliga, held Grierson in high esteem.[44]

Aside from duplicating its entire stock of films from the canon, the Filmmuseum also duplicated fragments from canonical films onto safer material.[45] In some cases, the duplication of a fragment was necessary because it was the only film material that remained of a particular title. In other cases, the Filmmuseum deliberately chose to isolate specific fragments from the rest of the film because they considered them to hold specific importance for the discourse on the history of cinema. For example, the Filmmuseum possesses excerpts from the films BRONENOSETS POTYOMKIN (1925) and STAROYE I NOVOYE (1929), both directed by Eisenstein. The selected fragment from POTYOMKIN contains the Odessa Steps sequence, which gained an iconic status in the film historical narrative from an early stage; Robert Bardèche and Maurice Brasillach (1945: 272), for example, declared, in *L'Histoire du cinema*, that there were only a few scenes that were more famous. More recently, Georges Sadoul (1962: 187) has reiterated that the peak moment in POTYOMKIN is the famous shoot-out on the steps, backing up this claim with a full description of the scene. This fragment was frequently highlighted in the Dutch literature on film history: Menno ter Braak (1929: 75-76) describes it in detail in his *Cinema Militans* (1929), affirming that the sequence functioned as a stand-alone because it had 'the meaning of an episode in the history of film'. Bob Bertina (1950: 91) also uses this specific fragment in his book, *Film in Opspraak*, to describe the editing process, claiming this sequence served as a synecdoche for Soviet montage and, as such, for art-film editing in general.

In 1974, the Filmmuseum created a selection committee to determine which films in its collection were eligible for preservation.[46] However, the committee did not watch most of the films; instead, it based its decisions on the results of the museum's so-called 'pre-cataloguing' process, which was responsible for the identification of and access to the film material in the archive. Only in cases of doubt did the selection committee choose to view a film before reaching a decision.[47] The result was that the silent films selected

for preservation bore a striking resemblance to the existing canon. Examples of this tendency were the choice to preserve the early films of Joris Ivens and the frequency with which the Filmmuseum selected films from the Uitkijk Collection for preservation.[48]

In summary, the popularity of films from the canon of classical film history continued unabated for a long time, and this was related to the fact that these titles represented the cultural capital of the archival institutions, but these canonical films were not the only items to interest collectors. In the following section, I turn to the second category of films that claimed their attention – namely, early film.

PRODUCTION YEAR: EARLY FILM

As mentioned earlier, those institutions founded after the Second World War mostly acquired silent films by way of private collections. These collections had been amassed for various reasons, not all of which fit within the museum's main objective to collect the canon of film art; they often encompassed films other than the much-desired art films or other famous titles. Remarkably, however, studies of the time point to the fact that film archives, such as the Filmmuseum, nevertheless spent a lot of time, money, and energy on the acquisition of such (often unknown) films. This begs the question why they were so interested in actively acquiring this category of film.

The acquisition of silent film was not easy, especially after the Second World War. First, much of the material had been disposed of over time; very few production companies or distributors had not destroyed their silent film stock. Some of these companies, however, donated their collections to the film institutions' archives. For example, in the Netherlands, Haghefilm sent about a hundred film cans to de Vaal in 1960, which included a collection of 68mm films produced by the Mutoscope & Biograph company between 1898 and 1903, as well as a copy of the early Dutch film, DE MÉSAVENTURE VAN EEN FRANSCH HEERTJE ZONDER PANTALON AAN HET STRAND TE ZANDVOORT (Albert and Willy Mullens, 1905).[49]

Secondly, the film museums and archives depended on private collectors. This made acquisition quite complicated, as collectors were often afraid to relinquish control of their collections to others and were reluctant to provide information about the objects that lie in their cellars, barns, or attics (Pomian, 1988: 87). As Baudrillard (1994: 9) says: '[Collectors] will maintain about their collection an aura of the clandestine, of confinement, secrecy and dissimulation.' The archives had to be very pro-active if they were to persuade these collectors to make themselves known and to donate their collections. For

example, the Dutch film institute advertised the advantages offered by official archival institutions in newspapers and magazines, emphasising the fact that nitrate films were better stored in an official archive than at home, because an institute possessed the means to preserve films and prevent serious decay.[50] Sometimes these activities were rewarded: for example, in 1948, the Filmmuseum discovered a collection of films in a hotel in the province of Zeeland,[51] and another was found stashed behind the motorcycle of a diamond processor in Amsterdam – a collection that contained a print of Murnau's FAUST (1926).[52]

Most donations, however, took place after the death of the collector.[53] Susan Pearce explains that collectors often perceive the objects they gather as a substitute for the mortal 'I', which implies that they find it difficult to separate themselves from these objects. However, in anticipation of their death, most collectors seek a good 'treasurer' to 'safeguard' their collection. Pearce illustrates this by referring to an example Rigby and Rigby mention in their book, *Lock, Stock and Barrel: The Story of Collecting* (1944), in which they compare collections to a strong, seaworthy vessel, in which the spirit of the collector can survive even after his or her body is buried. Museums and archival institutions can guarantee a high level of care for these collections, which increases the chances that the 'spirit' that animated them will also survive (Pearce, 1995: 248). Thus, the acquisition of silent films has always largely depended on the mortality of collectors, and this implies that the amount of such films in the official institutes will only continue to increase. It also means that the silent film collections in the archives never were, and never will be, directly representative of all the films that have managed to survive.

It is generally accepted that most silent material came into the archives through passive acquisition; however, the acquisition activities mentioned above lead to the conclusion that this assertion is only partly true. Official documents from the EYE archive also point to some cases in which money changed hands; for example, with the Willigers Collection, which contains film materials from the former fairground showman Riozzi. The Filmmuseum bought this collection unseen for 1250 guilders in 1959.[54] The fact that it paid for the collection without knowing what films it contained shows just how much the museum sought to acquire early film material. These episodes show that the idea that acquisition was purely passive is incorrect. Of course, the fact that the Filmmuseum often accepted old films without knowing what they were might seem to illustrate a rather passive attitude; moreover, films were almost never declined. However, in my opinion, this is a characteristic of fetishistic collecting: the obsessive desire to acquire as many objects of a particular class or category as possible – in this case, silent nitrate films. This is a form of collecting that is far more passionate than the term 'passive' would suggest.

The passion with which this material was collected also surfaces in an interview de Vaal gave in 1996, in which he explains that the films he collected in earlier times were often considered 'trash' by other figures in the film world (Hendriks and Blotkamp, 1996: 12), who displayed mixed feelings about the choices he made. This is understandable, since the films he collected were mostly worthless as far as the film industry was concerned – after all, they had lost their commercial value, and since their sole purpose had been to make money, they had never possessed artistic value. When they lost their commercial value, these films often fell in between Bourdieu's *champ de grande production* from which they derived and the *champ de production restreinte* to which they had never aspired. As a consequence, they were often recycled into other products, ended up in the garbage bin or, rather, were destroyed *en masse*. So, if it was not its artistic value that prompted de Vaal to collect this material, what was the reason for his attraction to it?

An explanation can be found in the interrelationship between the value of objects and their scarcity. Because mass-produced, utilitarian objects – such as books, furniture or vases – are often considered not worthy of preservation, they naturally become scarce over the course of time and turn into valuable collectibles.[55] Similarly, the destruction of film prints turned commercial films produced in large quantities in the silent period into rarities and gave them scarcity value in the collecting world. Although the films themselves were not produced in limited editions, they increasingly became part of the *champ de production restreinte*.

Additionally, interest in objects often grows as they become older because age increases their value (Clifford, 1988: 222; Baudrillard, 1968: 117). Maurice Rheims explains this phenomenon by referring to our craving to understand the origin of things:

> The older an object, the closer man can feel to the unknown, the origins of the world, to the primal truth and knowledge about himself and his creation, which has been lost in spite of its importance (Rheims, 1961: 211).[56]

Similarly, old film materials allowed the collector to approach the furthest imaginable – and most elusive – part of cinema history. Screening these films transmitted the past into the present.[57] Benjamin (1977: 62) describes this phenomenon in his essay on book collection (referred to in Chapter 1): real collectors, he writes, consider the history of a collector's item to be the pedestal on or framework within which it can be placed. This reason – which lies behind the collection of the oldest films in its archive – occurs throughout the course of the Filmmuseum's existence. In its 1990 annual report, for example,

the institute shows great enthusiasm for the 'discovery' of the so-called '68mm Collection' (mentioned above) because it includes films made between 1898 and 1903.[58] Nico de Klerk says that this enthusiasm can be explained by the age of the 'found' material; he explains that the criteria usually applied to acquisitions are regarded as no longer relevant when it comes to the 'first' or 'earliest' film material (Visschedijk and Klerk de, 2004: 137).

This attitude consequently played an important role in the development of film historical discourse, illustrating how the activity of collecting not only gathers certain objects together, but also produces meaning, turning these objects into 'semiophores', and perhaps even provides them with a referential function in terms of their own past. The collection or archive that contains such an object has a co-signifying function. For example, Desmet's commercially produced films were transformed into collectibles that functioned as personal memorabilia, and later, when the collection was moved to the Filmmuseum archive in 1957, the films were attributed further meaning as historically significant films – semiophores that referred back to the early days of cinema.

However, old lists of titles recommended for preservation rarely contain unknown film material. This might indicate that even though archives considered these films worth collecting, spending money on their duplication was a bridge too far. Another important reason for the lack of old films on these lists was of course that a large part of this material was in such a bad state that the film laboratories were unable to duplicate it. For instance, the Filmmuseum had, for a long time, expressed the desire to preserve the Desmet Collection. The visit film historian and archivist Jay Leyda made to the archive in 1968, where he lavished praise on Desmet's collection of films, had prompted the institute to decide that it should be preserved in its entirety. The material, however, was of such poor quality that its preservation proved impossible: the film laboratories at the time could not handle it. This leads to the conclusion that the reason the Filmmuseum did not preserve this old material was the absence of the necessary technology and equipment, rather than a lack of interest.[59]

PRODUCTION COUNTRY: NATIONAL FILMS

The last criterion the Filmmuseum based its acquisition decisions on was the production country. The third FIAF conference, held in Paris in 1946, agreed to create a common catalogue of all the films in its members' archives, with each archive compiling a list of those titles produced in their country that had subsequently been lost. The conference also suggested the production of a

cartothèque ('map library'), containing all the titles the archives did possess or had managed to save, which would then be distributed among all FIAF members (Borde, 1983: 101). These decisions were in line with the larger project of preserving as many films as possible on an international scale. The most effective way to accomplish this was for each archive to secure the titles produced by its own national film industry.[60] Jerzy Toeplitz, then-director of FIAF, even declared in 1959 that this activity should comprise the main task of every *cinémathèque* (Borde, 1983: 120).

This division of film heritage according to national origin found a parallel in the creation of contemporary film historical narrative. Film historians frequently worked by country, researching the specific characteristics of each national film industry.[61] Due to this structure, books about film history produced at this time often had the appearance of exhaustive country-by-country descriptions of the history of film. National classification was therefore prevalent in both archival activities and in historical research. This desire for completeness was a legacy of nineteenth-century modernist thinking, which privileged the pursuit of a universal encyclopaedic knowledge (Visschedijk and Klerk de, 2004: 115). It appears that both FIAF and the contemporary film historians aspired to such an encyclopaedic totality.

FIAF's idea was to set up a process of trade and exchange, enabling the various national film collections to be neatly stored in their corresponding archives: in other words, all French films would go to the French institutes, all Belgian films to the Cinémathèque Royale, and all Dutch films to the Filmmuseum in Amsterdam. In practice, this ambition proved hard to accomplish. The problem most archives encountered was that most of the material was still unidentified. In order to start on the work of identification, Leyda travelled to a number of archives on FIAF's behalf during the 1960s. During his tour, he visited the Filmmuseum in 1967-1968, where he specifically viewed the earliest films in the archive, including those in the Desmet Collection. He then attempted to identify as many production countries as possible, so the films could be 'returned' to the national archive of their country of origin. Leyda sent the results of his inquiry to the corresponding archives to inform them where the vintage prints of their national production could be located, after which the Dutch institute was obliged to send them duplicates. It seems that the purpose of Leyda's tour was less to map a world-film collection than to ensure the physical completion of individual national collections. In some cases, FIAF members exchanged nitrate prints instead of duplicates, partly resulting in the disposal of foreign film titles that had been collected over the course of time, and further restructuring their archive collections. In this way, collections such as the Desmet lost their original structure – one more reason to be cautious when reading such a collection as a reflection of one

particular moment in film history. This mechanism functioned in many FIAF archives.[62]

In practice, the archives were not very ambitious when it came to acquiring the products of their own national film industries, and they did not necessarily prioritise their national film production in their acquisition policies (Borde, 1983: 117). Initially, the Filmmuseum did not take this task very seriously either. In 1947, de Vaal wrote to FIAF in answer to a number of questions concerning the archive's activities. FIAF wanted to know what Dutch films the archive possessed and which ones it thought were lost, and de Vaal responded as follows: 'As far as we know, there are no national films missing.'[63] However, he stated in the same letter that the NHFA had only thirty-five Dutch films in its possession, which indicates that its collection of national films was far from complete. In fact, the Filmmuseum did not start to establish a serious Dutch filmography until the 1990s; until then, nobody really knew how many films had been made in the Netherlands, nor which Dutch titles were considered lost because they were not (yet) stored in any archive.

In its first annual report in 1948, the institute did state, however, that footage showing important events in Dutch history should be acquired.[64] Yet this section seems to have been written with another purpose in mind: it exhibits many similarities with the aims of the former Nederlandsch Centraal Film Archief (Dutch Central Film Archive) or NCF, which collected footage representing the culture of the Netherlands from 1919 to the early 1930s,[65] and which also happened to be one of the few known larger collections of old silent films.[66] The goal of collecting footage of Dutch events had thus already been partially established with the potential acquisition of this collection of old films,[67] and, indeed, the NCF's collection can now be found in EYE archive. However, the reason why this collection was considered so interesting might have been based more on the age of the material than the nationality of the films. Either way, we can recognise two motives behind its acquisition: first, because it contained old films, and secondly, because these old films were made in the Netherlands and showed typical Dutch scenes.

We see a similar phenomenon when we look at the institute's decisions about preservation in which the material selected was mainly related to early Dutch films. For example, in 1961, the Filmmuseum decided to preserve De mésaventure van een Fransch Heertje zonder pantalon op het strand van Zandvoort (Albert and Willy Mullens, 1905). The film was perceived to hold historical importance, not only because Willy Mullens played the main character, but because it also showed images of Zandvoort before the First World War.[68] Unfortunately, it was so shrunken that it seemed impossible to make a good quality duplicate. Another technical problem that often inhibited the easy preservation of early films was the differing sizes of the old-

est film material – the 68mm films that Haghefilm donated in 1960 are a good example.[69] To solve these problems, the Filmmuseum ordered the creation of a hand printer, which made it possible to duplicate severely damaged films frame by frame, as well as in various formats. In this way, the Filmmuseum managed to duplicate MÉSAVENTURES onto negative material, as well as some of the 68mm films.[70]

After early Dutch films, the acquisition of Dutch art films clearly took precedence. This is indicated by the acquisition of films made by 'artistic' directors such as Joris Ivens, Mannus Franken, J.C. Mol, Andor van Barsy, Jan Teunissen, and Max de Haas. Most of these filmmakers had been part of the Nederlandsche Filmliga, the Dutch ciné-club movement, and were influenced by the ideas on film art developed during the 1920s and 1930s. For example, the first films by Ivens emerged out of the experimental vision of the Filmliga – he could be said to have put its principles into practice (Gunning, 1999: 254). After the Second World War, de Vaal maintained a good relationship with Ivens, and greatly prized his films.[71] Another filmmaker who won the plaudits of the members of the Filmliga was J.C. Mol; the Filmmuseum also acquired many of his films (Filmmuseum, 1982: 221).[72] In order to secure the acquisition of such films, the institute approached film production companies active in the *champ de production restreinte*, such as Multifilm, Visiefilm, and Forumfilm.[73] In addition to the producers, it also maintained contact with distributors active in this field, such as the CBLF, the origin of its collection of silent films.[74]

These activities show that active acquisition of Dutch films was, to a great extent, limited to those that were considered artistic, as well as to early silent film material. Because of this focus on the classical film canon and silent film production, the acquisition of commercial films lagged behind, resulting in many omissions in the collection of Dutch films. This was exactly what FIAF had tried to avoid. The reason why the individual institutes acted differently in practice to what FIAF had decided in theory, however, was mostly due to the fact that archives wished to secure specific cultural capital by the acquisition of either early or artistic films.

During the 1970s, the film historical debate shifted, and films that had been neglected by film history now became the main object of research for film historians, and a priority for film archives. The creation of national filmographies revealed how many and which film titles had been omitted from the collections, leading to awareness among the archives that it was time to act. There was a growing desire to fill these gaps, mirroring the desire of the new film historians to map those films that had previously been ignored by their discipline. This change in attitude was slowly transformed into a series of activities, not only in the Netherlands but also in other countries, during

the late 1980s and the early 1990s.[75] First, institutes such as the Filmmuseum started to construct filmographies, mapping their national film production.[76] In 1993, for example, the Dutch filmography project set out to map every film that had been produced in the Netherlands (feature and documentary), in collaboration with the collector and film historian, Geoffrey Donaldson. This resulted in a book entitled *Of Joy and Sorrow* (1997), in which Donaldson describes every Dutch feature film produced between 1898 and 1933. In order to track down Dutch films that were not in the archive, the Filmmuseum relied on its fellow FIAF members: Donaldson submitted lists of titles, including silent films, to FIAF archives abroad, and, with the help of these lists, they were able to trace whether they had Dutch films in their vaults.[77] Meanwhile, the Filmmuseum instigated a large-scale search in the Netherlands itself, coordinated by Herman Greven, for films produced by the Dutch film industry after 1950. Greven was successful in managing to convince many Dutch producers to deposit their films in the Filmmuseum archive.[78]

In conclusion, the history of Dutch film collection shows very clearly the synchronicity between shifts in the historical debate and changes in film archival practice. These two players were engaged in a (rather refined) *pas de deux*.

CHAPTER 3

Eyes Wide Open: Duplicates

The change in archival priorities more or less paralleled developments in film historiography, causing film museums to re-evaluate what they considered to be, in Bourdieu's words, re-evaluating their 'specific capital'. This consisted of old film titles that were at risk of perishing or already listed as 'lost films'. The focus on endangered and lost films was clearly in tune with the new ideas that had started to dominate film historiography: the aim appeared to be to acquire as many unknown films as possible and rehabilitate them by including them in the museums' programming and in the new film historiography. These shifts in priority, however, introduced a number of new problems. The first was practical: from the 1970s, institutes gradually ceased to project nitrate material; instead, they began showing newly made acetate duplicates, giving these acetate prints a new status – namely, that of a presentational museum artefact.[79] However, because there was not enough money to duplicate the entire stock of nitrate prints, the institutes had to make choices and thus consciously think about their selection criteria. In the case of the Dutch institute, this led to a new collection policy in 1989, the essence of which was recorded in the so-called Conserveringsplan 1989-1992 (Preservation Plan 1989-1992). The plan, which was quite revolutionary, was the first statement of the new director Hoos Blotkamp and her deputy director Eric De Kuyper, whom she appointed in the same year.[80]

The Conserveringsplan records the Filmmuseum's resolution to view all the nitrate films in its possession in order to decide whether or not they were eligible for duplication. Since the production of nitrate stopped in the 1950s, this automatically meant the older films in the archive were given priority. An argument for starting with the early nitrate films was that the oldest films were in the worst condition, and needed to be saved first;[81] however, the mechanisms referred to in the last chapter also seem to have played a role

3: The Nederlands Filmmuseum receives the Jean Mitry Award at Le Giornate del Cinema Muto in Pordenone, 1991 (Collection EYE Film Institute Netherlands)

in the selection process: the older and scarcer the material, the more it was valued.

The institute's new policy led to a phase that was characterised by a re-classification of its archive. First of all, the entire collection of duplicates became the 'museum collection'. In this way, the films to be preserved were distinguished from those that were not, because the Filmmuseum assumed that the footage of those nitrate films not selected for preservation would disappear within ten years or so.[82] As a consequence, the choice for or against duplication held much greater significance than during the preceding period. However, this did not mean that the Filmmuseum, nor other film institutes for that matter, literally divested themselves of all their nitrate material; most of these rejected nitrate films remained in the archives. Put bluntly, the institutes created huge internal garbage bins. Since this part of the archive was excluded from the museum collection, I will call it the 'non-collection'. The remaining part of the archive consisted of the museum collection (already duplicated films) and potential candidates for the museum collection (films that had not yet been viewed and assessed).

AESTHETIC VALUE

In 1989, the Filmmuseum indicated in its new collection policy that it wanted to make clear that 'film culture and film history is more than just the sum of the highlights on which everyone agrees'.[83] As a result, the collection was intended as the main reservoir for the institute's programming, which also included the screening of previously unknown films.[84] Nevertheless, this did not mean that the Filmmuseum acquired and preserved every film ever made in an indiscriminate fashion: there was still a selection process, based on the viewing experience of a number of Filmmuseum staff. In this way, the institute aimed to compose a museum collection with a 'distinct identity', formed by 'the choices of those who [are] responsible for the content of the collection'.[85] This meant that the only possible reason for the institute to select certain unknown films was the confidence it invested in the visual discrimination of its employees,[86] despite the fact that there were as yet no official parameters by which to assess their discriminatory powers. The Filmmuseum therefore decided to define new selection criteria, declaring that the aesthetic value of a film should be paramount. Unknown foreign film material qualified for the collection if it stood out as 'the particular, the [...] surprising and intriguing or simply the beautiful'.[87] The advantage was that the Filmmuseum selected unknown films because of the way they moved or fascinated its employees.

It is noteworthy, however, that even though these criteria appear rather arbitrary, they did seem to function. This was probably due to the fact that they were at one with the broader cultural tradition of museum presentation, which Stephen Greenblatt describes as the attempt to capture and project a sense of 'wonder'. He defines this concept in his 1991 article 'Resonance and Wonder':[88]

> By *wonder* I mean the power of the displayed object to stop the viewer in his or her tracks, to convey an arresting sense of uniqueness, to evoke an exalted attention. (Greenblatt, 1991: 42)

'Wonder' here indicates the possession of a force that draws the attention of the viewer to an object in such a way that he/she will think of nothing else: as you look at the object, it pulls you in, as if into a bubble, and all contextual images that could provoke additional thoughts become meaningless to your evaluation of it (Greenblatt, 1991: 49).

The most extreme example of the films the Filmmuseum selected for its museum collection in this way were the unidentified fragments it presented as 'Bits & Pieces' during the late 1980s and early 1990s. The institute detected some gems among the objects in the archive that were ultimately destined for

the waste bin – the unidentified film fragments – that it thought needed to be preserved and shown. For this reason, it stressed the need not to skip a single film image in the archive. In fact, this meant the Filmmuseum was implicitly criticising its former way of treating films, implying that, by following the canon, the institute had deprived audiences and film historiography of these beautiful images for years. The new policy was synchronous with the upsurge in revisionist thought in film historical discourse, which similarly emphasised the importance of previously unknown films.[89] The origin of the images in the Bits & Pieces collection was indeed unknown in almost every case: the fragments bore no recognisable references to filmmakers or artistic movements. Their appreciation derived accordingly from no other source than the formal and aesthetic qualities of the image – those who looked with attention would recognise the power of these fragments, which, the Filmmuseum (1991: 64) claimed, possessed intrinsic value.

According to writer, filmmaker, and former deputy director of the Filmmuseum, Peter Delpeut, these fragments emerged as a result of the ravages of time.[90] Various forms of destruction and the loss of film material caused many films to only survive in fragments. In his 1990 article, 'Bits & Pieces – De grenzen van het filmarchief', Delpeut writes that it became clear that many hitherto undiscovered treasures lay hidden among all these unidentified film fragments. Soon, the surprises were the rule rather than the exception (Delpeut, 1990: 78). It is worth noting that these fragments were, indeed, often of exceptional beauty, even though they were supposed to have emerged as a result of coincidence. However, my research into the creation of the Filmmuseum archive has made clear that a large amount of these fragments did not occur accidentally, because they often arrived as parts of larger personal collections. Compilations of loose newsreel items, documentaries, or feature films edited by exhibitors, collectors, or distributors were an additional source of images. The Filmmuseum removed the fragments from these existing compilations in order to add them to its new Bits & Pieces collection.[91] As mentioned earlier, collectors, distributors, and exhibitors all had their own reasons for collecting films and film clips, and no doubt these images also astonished, surprised, or perhaps touched them. Because the Bits & Pieces compilation partly derived from these pre-selected sets of fragments, the choices and motivations of these personal collectors continued to resonate throughout the new series.

The Filmmuseum (1991: 64) has explained why, after 70 years, a large number of these fragments still makes such an impression: it believes that what it calls the 'power of the images', or their inherent beauty, transcends space and time. This means that these images evoke wonder, and, according to Greenblatt (1991: 52), an object that is wondrous possesses intrinsic and lasting

value. However, others state that this apparently lasting aesthetic effect is not necessarily intrinsic to the images but is due to the survival of certain categories and conceptions of beauty. For example, Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (1998: 25), professor of performance studies at New York University's Tisch School of Arts, writes: 'The ability to stand alone [says] less about the nature of the object than about our categories and attitudes.' The (re-)evaluation of these fragments, years after they were put in a can by a collector, tells us more about our aesthetic concepts and categories than about the 'inherent aesthetic strength' of the footage, leading to the conclusion that beliefs about the aesthetics of the filmic image remained quite similar over a period of 70 years. This is very probable, especially in the Netherlands, if we take into account the fact that a modernist conception of cinema, as formulated by the Filmliga in the 1920s, certainly remained active well into the 1980s (Schoots, 1999: 202-214). Nevertheless, without this new policy, which included unknown films in the selection process, the beauty of these fragments could easily have been overlooked. During the period of classical film history, the museums were almost exclusively interested in canonical films made by established filmmakers; in this new period, existing film historical frameworks were renounced and an opportunity was created to declare other films masterpieces too.

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Besides the criterion of 'beauty', the Filmmuseum also selected fragments that it considered 'surprising' or 'intriguing', categories that also fit with the tradition of wonder. Greenblatt explains that the 'wonder cabinets' of the early modern period were the starting point of the presentation mode, 'in-wonder'.[92] This exhibition tradition allowed visitors to behold objects that explorers had brought back from distant lands. It was not only the beauty of the objects that evoked wonder, but also, and perhaps especially, the knowledge that they had never before been seen in the West (Greenblatt, 1991: 50). In this sense, the term perfectly describes the sweep of discoveries that were housed in film archival institutes and documented by film historians at the time. If the Filmmuseum staff had not dug up these unknown film snippets or developed the Bits & Pieces collection, such 'visual treasures' would probably have remained invisible. By putting these unknown and unidentified fragments on display as museum artefacts, the institute stilled the hunger for new historical film material, and, by comparing their 'discovery' with an expeditionary venture full of astonishing surprises, it implicitly linked its Bits & Pieces collection to the tradition of wonder cabinets (Filmmuseum, 1991: 64). In the same way as these evoked the experience of travel to 'exotic' parts of the world, still little-known to the West, the Bits & Pieces collection reflected the Filmmuseum's explorations in the archive, with the difference being that the film fragments represented treasures from a distant past, while the early modern objects of curiosity came from afar.

FROM WONDER TO RESONANCE

The Filmmuseum not only selected unknown film material for its collection according to whether it possessed this element of wonder, but it also emphasised that these miraculous films should be recognised as such by the film historical discourse.[93] However, without any clarity as to how to rewrite film history, it was of course difficult to decide on what constitutes historical interest. The Filmmuseum accordingly formulated a set of historical questions based on its archive. This desire to ask new questions was in line with new film history, and it resulted in the Filmmuseum's decision to make '"exemplary" choices from film history, enabling further discussion of types, genres, techniques, et cetera'.[94] The selected films were to function as examples of new perspectives on specific aspects of film history. Nevertheless, these new historical questions mostly emerged after the films had already been selected for the museum collection based on their power to evoke a sense of wonder. The musealisation of early colour films is a good example of this. These tinted, toned, or coloured films had received little or no attention in classical film history; when film historians discussed these films, they often did so with a degree of disdain or even contempt. For example, in 1936, Adrianus van Domburg wrote the following about the colour films produced by Georges Méliès:

> They were more or less ridiculous things that could be construed as exemplary samples of patient labour. Méliès did not pretend to use colour as an aesthetic factor but, rather, as an extra curiosity in this so curious complex of film. (Domburg van, 1936: 59)[95]

Besides, the impossibility of preserving and screening the Desmet Collection, which contained a large part of these early colour films, also meant that they remained largely invisible.

As soon as the Filmmuseum staff started to watch the unknown films in its archive, however, they were riveted by the films' beauty. This was a pleasant surprise for the Filmmuseum, and it began to select these films for its museum collection on a frequent basis. During his presentation, 'Colour in the 1920s', at the *The Colour Fantastic* conference, organised by EYE in 2015, Peter Delpeut testified to the fact that the invisibility of these early colours had so angered him at the time that it further fuelled his desire to select them for preservation and presentation.[96] Due to the large proportion of colour films that subsequently became part of its collection, questions about the history of the films forced themselves onto the Filmmuseum. Its decision to preserve and then screen masses of these colour films brought the museum's early techniques into the spotlight in the 1980s and 1990s, and impelled film his-

torians to start investigating them.[97] In this way, film museum practice introduced these films into film historical discourse as serious objects of research, supplanting the previous conception of them as examples of faintly ridiculous, failed attempts at using colour techniques in the early days of cinema.[98]

Another example is early documentary film. Classical film history held that documentary film only emerged in the 1920s with Nanook of the North (Flaherty, 1922). Film historians and critics defined all previous such films as simple attempts to record reality, lacking the sort of creative intervention that turns a documentary film into art. The discovery that much special, surprising, intriguing, and often gorgeous documentary film material was made before Flaherty again came as a surprise, and stimulated the Filmmuseum staff to preserve large amounts of this material and to add it to the museum collection.[99] Initially, these films were also selected because of their 'wonder' effect. However, the way such films contradicted the classical historical discourse also raised further film historical questions.

Accordingly, the Filmmuseum initiated a number of activities and research projects based on these films, helping bring them to the attention of film historians. The best-known initiative was the so-called Amsterdam Workshop, which the institute first organised in 1994 (as mentioned in Chapter 1), with the first two workshops including early documentaries and colour films in their programmes. The Filmmuseum then published a series of books containing transcripts of the discussions (Hertogs and Klerk de, 1994 and 1996). As the experience was so positive, the institute decided to continue organising regular workshops.

> The Amsterdam Workshop will be fed by the, often very practical, questions and problems that arise in the preservation and programming activities of the Filmmuseum. These concerns [...] make the Workshop an ideal refuge for 'impossible' research topics and topics that film history has not yet begun, or is only just beginning, to tackle. (Hertogs and Klerk de, 1994: 6)

The Filmmuseum used the workshops to show these 'foreign objects' from the archive to an audience of specialists, who were then able to discuss the historical importance of the material. In this way, it successfully stimulated historical research into films that had initially been ignored. The results of this research provided the institute with important knowledge about the films' cultural context,[100] which ensured that the films it had selected because of their 'wonder' effect were also provided with historical meaning or 'resonance'. The latter term also derives from Greenblatt, who defines it as follows:

> By resonance I mean the power of the displayed object to reach out
> beyond its formal boundaries to a larger world, to evoke in the viewer
> the complex, dynamic cultural forces from which it has emerged and for
> which it may be taken by a viewer to stand. (Greenblatt, 1991: 42)[101]

As a result of the workshops, many archival films were transformed from
meaningless pieces of nitrate into objects of historical importance.[102] Where-
as the film historical field seemed to have been leading the *pas de deux* up to
this point, the Filmmuseum now took over and made the film historians turn
some quite demanding mental pirouettes.

Another way in which the Filmmuseum encouraged film historians to
investigate the films in the collection was by making them easily accessible. In
1991, it began to transfer these films to video,[103] and to provide access to this
video (and later DVD) collection at its library, encouraging film historians to
use them as an historical resource.[104] In addition, it described and catalogued
the museum collection more accurately than the films from the non-collec-
tion, making them easier to find. All this affected the research corpus of film
historians and, as a result, the Filmmuseum initiated the development of a
new film historical canon. However, because it selected the unknown foreign
films first and foremost for their aesthetic value before looking for possible
historical significance (resonance), revisionist film history based on this col-
lection investigated those films that the institute considered beautiful. The
aesthetically less-esteemed films were not preserved and consequently did not
become new sources of historical understanding.

The tendency to work with films deemed beautiful, and only then move
on to films of historical significance, is something Greenblatt (1991: 54) notes
when he says it is always easier to shift from wonder to resonance than vice
versa. The fact is, objects that do not evoke a sense of wonder in some way hold
little value for an institution like the Filmmuseum, which places itself in the
category of art museums: if art museums do not prefer beauty to historical rel-
evance, they simply become archival institutes, as its director Blotkamp made
clear in 1998 (Blotkamp, 1998).

CANONICAL SELECTION

In 1989, the Filmmuseum decided that it wanted to show more than just the
highlights of films that were known to everyone, but it also felt that its old
repertoire, or the (classical and new) canon, still had to be present in the col-
lection. This enduring interest in already-known films was analogous to devel-
opments in the film historical debate. Despite new film history, the canon

remained sacrosanct and the directors of these films maintained their status as artists (Lagny, 1992: 139-144). By choosing to maintain the classical repertoire in the collection, the Filmmuseum also continued, in part, its earlier collection policy. This is consistent with the idea that, in the case of a so-called 'paradigm shift', old traditions and ideas will continue to exist alongside new ones for a long period of time, a phenomenon that philosopher of science Thomas Kuhn discussed in his seminal work, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (1962). In Kuhn's (1962: 149) opinion, the sciences move from paradigm to paradigm, and new scientific paradigms are always strongly linked to preceding ones. Bourdieu takes this further, stating that a 'revolutionary' scientist should always take cognisance of the preceding scientific discourse:

> A true revolutionary in the scientific field is someone who knows the tradition very well (and not someone who makes [a] *tabula rasa* [of] the past, or who simply ignores the past). (Bourdieu, 2001: 38)

Bourdieu concurs with Kuhn in concluding that it is impossible to overthrow or 'correct' a tradition without proper knowledge of what it is one wants to overthrow. By extension, a scientific revolution never takes place from one day to the next (Kuhn 1962: 150-151); such a fundamental change always requires time, and as long as the new paradigm is not yet fully crystallised, the previous one will continue to re-emerge. Foucault also writes about this phenomenon, stating that, as soon as a new discourse is introduced, the rules of the old discourse 'go underground'. Developing Foucault's insight, Gilles Deleuze remarks that a new discourse never appears in one bound, but is a process that occurs in stages, and, therefore, elements of the old discourse will live on within the new one – although they will probably function in new ways, if only because they operate under new discursive rules (Lambrechts, 1982: 32).

In the same way as a new scientific paradigm, film museum practice can also only define the 'other' on the basis of what is 'normal'. By selecting the old canon for the museum collection, the Filmmuseum preserved what it perceived as 'normal'. As a consequence, it could not be separated from the new selection of films; instead, the films from the old repertoire received a new position in relation to the rest of the collection, and they simultaneously positioned and contextualised the previously unknown films. This meant that, in the period after 1989, the function of the canonical films was considerably different from that of the previous period: these films, which used to represent the symbolic capital of the institute, now became the historical context for its new source of cultural capital, the newly 'discovered' films. In accordance with Deleuze's theory, because they were now set within new discursive rules, these films changed in value and meaning.[105]

The Uitkijk Collection is a prime example of a series of canonical films that the Filmmuseum has explored and presented within several different contextual frames. After its changes in policy, the Filmmuseum spent a long time searching for a new approach to this collection of art films. This eventually led to the creation of a large preservation and research project in 1999, resulting in a book and an extensive film programme on the history of the Nederlandsche Filmliga. What is remarkable about this case is that, whereas the Filmmuseum originally used these films to illustrate the development of film art, it now approached them from another angle, using them as historical sources for a literary and filmic history of the Filmliga. In this way, as well as promoting innovative film historical research into previously unknown films from its collection, the institute presented its already well-known films in a new perspective.

However, the Filmmuseum also had a more institutional reason for the integral preservation of the Uitkijk Collection. As Robert Muis (1999: 1) says, the institute considered it to be 'one of the pillars supporting the entire collection of the [...] Filmmuseum. As a part of the history of the institute this collection should be cherished.' This argument corresponded to a broader movement taking place in the museum world: museums were increasingly engaging with their own histories, beginning to investigate themes such as the history of acquisition and the uses of collections.[106] Following an increase in flexibility in the handling and presentation of collected objects, and the promotion of their significance, museums started to use their collections to present their own histories. Anke te Heesen and E.C. Spary (2001: 8) comment that, within such exhibitions, 'not only [were] larger thematic structures [...] discussed, but also the (re)discovery of older collections and museums [on] the margins'.[107] The decision to preserve the Uitkijk Collection as an integral whole and to investigate its history followed this trend. The Filmmuseum accordingly drew parallels between the Filmliga's programming strategies and its own,[108] particularly as it also distributed contemporary experimental and other artistic films in a similar fashion to the Filmliga. According to this perspective, the Filmmuseum functioned as a distributor within the *champ de production restreinte*, a role emphasised by its presentation of the Uitkijk Collection as the historical connection between the Filmmuseum and the Filmliga.

In addition to preserving the existing canon, film museums also maintained the auteur as a valuable category. As mentioned earlier, the idea of the artist as genius was prevalent in classical film historical discourse, and art films were almost always associated with such an auteur. However, the valuation of artworks based on the identity of the maker is a pattern that reaches much further back than the period of classical film history. Since the begin-

ning of the modern era – that is, the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries – Western culture has considered the artist as the singular creator without whom a work of art cannot possibly come into being (Vattimo, 1998: 17-18). This legacy became so well-established that the artist/auteur figure has continued to re-emerge, even though this concept has been declared dead several times.[109] Even at a time when classical film history was no longer dominant, the strongly established premise that an artwork emerges out of the genius of its creator remained remarkably stable. Foucault (1979: 19) contests that an artist is more than a person who has happened to make a work of art; rather, an artist is an entity that groups a series of works together and, as such, differentiates them from other works. This is probably the most interesting function of the artist, especially with regard to the fact that certain auteurs or artists bestow these works with a high artistic value.

Nonetheless, a change can be observed in the way that these artists were addressed. Whereas classical film historians usually foregrounded a couple of masterpieces, which they ascribed to an auteur, the interest of film historians and film archives shifted in the 1970s towards the lesser-known films of these 'masters'. In this way, they killed two birds with one stone: they satisfied the wishes of the audience to see films made by famous filmmakers, and, at the same time, managed to assuage the film historians' appetite for new discoveries. The works grouped under the name of an auteur – viewed as a 'grouping entity' – define said auteur; once this group shifts, the meaning of the auteur's name also changes (Foucault, 1979: 18). This is also the case for the groups of auteur films in film museums and archives. Whereas a film museum might previously have held a more or less complete oeuvre but considered only two or three of these films as 'masterpieces'; according to the new paradigm, all the films made by one auteur were of equal importance. As a result, the series suddenly proved far from complete, reinforcing the idea that the archive itself was incomplete.

Aside from unknown films by well-known auteurs, film museums also introduced 'new' auteurs of unknown early films. Yevgeny Bauer and Alfred Machin are two fine examples. Film museums rediscovered and preserved the films of these directors as they started to investigate their oeuvres (Kuyper De, 1993; 1995). To justify why these unknown films were selected for preservation, the film museums turned to the well-known parameter of the 'auteur'. As a result, these filmmakers were given the status of artists and elevated to the canon, together with the films they made.

Despite all the new features attributed to these films, film historians and museums also continued to consider those films already declared canonical by the classical film historical discourse as works of art. This is consistent with the hypothesis that even though the historical discourse changed drastically,

classical ideas about film aesthetics and film art remained partially intact. This implies that, in addition to their new role of contextualising newly discovered treasures from the archives, these canonical films kept their status as part of the cultural capital of film museums, in line with the ethos of other institutions such as art museums, where the canon also stands to this day. By continuing to champion the canon, the Filmmuseum adapted itself to its broader cultural field.

ECLECTIC CONSEQUENCES

The collection that contains the preservation and restoration prints in the Filmmuseum's archives is characterised by its diversity. This diversity came about, first of all, because of shifts in selection priorities that occurred over the course of the period under review. The changes in criteria reveal interesting parallels with shifts that took place in the film historical debate. On the one hand, the previous emphasis on canonical titles was transformed into an interest in the lesser-known films re-discovered in the archive; on the other hand, after 1989, the Filmmuseum's selection policy was characterised by an emphasis on the preservation of as much material as possible. This inclusive attitude was also the basis for the diversity of the final film museum collection. Its eclecticism was analogous to the new ideas emerging in the film historical debate, which turned to focus on all these previously unknown films as they became increasingly available.

The films that were excluded from the museum collection due to financial limitations were still kept in the archive – the unpreserved nitrate records were kept in the form of a 'non-collection'. Because the Filmmuseum decided not to throw these nitrate prints away, this group of films remained as a tangible entity. This policy has four distinct advantages. First of all, it is always possible to reconsider an earlier decision: as long as the nitrate still exists, it can be duplicated.[110] If, in ten years' time, the Filmmuseum should develop a very different perspective on this material, it will always be possible to change its policy and still preserve the films that were relegated to the non-collection during an earlier period.[111] This consideration of future alternative perspectives is, again, analogous to the idea that arose within new film history.[112] Secondly, the non-collection remains accessible, provided the researcher meets certain requirements. Thirdly, due to the new digital technologies, the Filmmuseum has the potential to provide access to the films in the non-collection.[113] Finally, the material in the non-collection discloses which films the institute did not consider valuable enough to become part of the museum collection during this period. As a matter of fact, the history of the Filmmuseum archive, and

the personal collections it contains, can be traced in the museum collection in several ways. For example, the films that were part of Desmet's personal collection are still considered as a whole; they remain as a sub-collection that continues to bear his name. The preference for canonical works is also still visible in the museum collection, since the Uitkijk Collection has been attributed a similar status as the Desmet Collection. The history of both the private collectors and the Filmmuseum's acquisition policy thus remains visible in the way its archive, museum collection, and sub-collections are structured.

Acquisition and collection histories are never solely the product of chance and coincidence. In the case of the Filmmuseum, for example, all the situations described above are effective cases of 'con-signing'. Silent films mostly came to the institute via personal collectors who, through their activities, had already structured and labelled the collected objects. In addition, the blind adoption of individual films was often based on existing categories (title, director, date). All these cases demonstrate how the existence of structuring, labelling, classifying, and other such operations produced certain kinds of meaning. Furthermore, the follow-up activities of a collecting institution such as the Filmmuseum also re-structured the collected objects in many different ways: by defining them as new (sub-)collections, for example, it awarded these silent films a new position within the archive's greater whole, and they were given a new function and different meaning.

Interestingly, these structures – which are constantly subject to change – are essential to the continuous activities of a film museum or institution. By making choices, re-structuring, and reassembling, the practice of 'con-signing' continues to re-appear at the levels of restoration and presentation. Even more interesting is the fact that this process of transformation not only affects museum activities, but also the writing of film history. In fact, the historical work exhibits strong parallels with the work taking place in the archives: it also consists of mapping, structuring, and re-combining sources, and it is indisputable that these sources have been granted new functions and meanings. For this reason, the *pas de deux* between film museums and film historiography was and is an inevitable, perpetual dance in which the new steps and insights of one partner have obvious effects on the steps of the other.

PART II
PRESERVATIONS

Museums and archives share an inherent objective: to keep memories alive for the future by preserving objects from the past (Pearce, 1995: 249). To realise this goal, they endeavour to prevent the decay – or further decay – of their artefacts by, first, treating these objects with extreme caution and trying, as much as possible, to limit the destructive impact of environmental factors (Pomian, 1988: 14); and, second, cleaning and restoring them, repairing the damage that inevitably accrues over time. Both of these activities can be categorised as part of the 'preservation process'.

Film museums handle the films in their collections with equivalent care, ensuring that the material is stored under the most favourable conditions – a practice known as 'passive preservation'. During the period under investigation, however, opinions as to the relative importance of passive preservation changed several times, mirroring concurrent changes in perspectives on the value and function of nitrate prints.

Whereas film museum practice until the 1970s was mainly preoccupied with perfecting the passive preservation process, the years that followed saw the focus shift towards duplication, an activity known as 'active preservation' (Meyer and Read, 2000). This was partly due to the fact that, although proper storage can slow the decay of nitrate films, it does not entirely prevent the material from deteriorating and eventually perishing. Nitrate is very unstable: it gradually changes from a flexible plastic material into a sticky, powdery substance that can no longer be used as film. Consequently, film museums duplicate the films in their archives so that the images can at least be retained. Until the 1990s, they used cellulose triacetate film material for this process because they assumed it to be more sustainable than cellulose nitrate (Bowser and Kuiper, 1991: 17). By the end of the 20th century, however, the acetate material proved to be about as unstable and transitory (if not more so) as nitrate (Gamma

Group, [2000]: 7); thus, film-preservation laboratories switched to polyester, which, in its turn, was thought to possess more durable qualities – although it was not known exactly how long this type of material would prove tenable. In response to this uncertainty, the first decade of the 21st century witnessed a definitive move towards storing images on digital media. One example of this development was the seven-year project, 'Images for the Future', a huge collaborative venture set up by the Filmmuseum and the Institute for Sound and Image to digitise early film material (Fossati, 2009). Nevertheless, whether analogue or digital, the problem of sustainability was, is, and will remain a crucial one for film museums and archives. Indeed, institutions appear to be re-evaluating passive preservation: they are building new storage facilities and sometimes even freezing their nitrate prints (Walsh, 2008: 38-41).

Besides securing the prints, museums have also undertaken the task of restoring the films if they have suffered damage, but these restoration practices pose ethical questions about how far museums should be allowed to change an object through restoration and whether interventions should or should not be visible. Cesare Brandi's collection of essays, *Teoria del Restauro* (1977), which deals with the subject of the restoration of artworks, has played a particularly influential role in the debate (Busche, 2006: 7):[1] as film museums are also engaged in restoration, a similar argument over the ethical considerations of this practice in relation to films has emerged.[2] This debate, and the way it has touched on issues relevant to this study, recurs throughout the following section.

Brandi (2005: 47) applies the term 'restoration' to any intervention intended to restore an object to its original function. However, because film museums can no longer exhibit nitrate films, the first step in the film restoration process nowadays is to make a duplicate print of these images, so it can be restored to its original function: to be projected and viewed on a screen. Part of this process is also to ensure that the damage evident on the nitrate is not – or is hardly – visible on the restoration prints by using optical and now also digital techniques. Normally, the restoration of paintings or sculptures means that the restorer works with the original object, but this is not the case with film, as the original nitrate prints remain, for the most part, unchanged.[3] Because film restoration always makes use of duplication technology, this practice results in a doubling or tripling of the amount of film a museum holds, each film being represented by both a nitrate and a (set of) duplicate print(s).

Film historian Nicholas Hiley warns that when it comes to film restoration as duplication, we must take into consideration the following set of texts:

> In fact, we're dealing with three forms of text: the original which was
> created in the first thirty years of film, the surviving copy which bears

evidence of how it has been handled as well as 'evidence' of how the film was originally made, and [...] a third form, a restoration for modern tastes. (Hiley cited in Hertogs and Klerk de, 1996: 22)[4]

These three forms of a film (text) are closely linked. To begin with, Hiley states that the 'original' film exists exclusively in the past; film historians and restorers can only imagine how this film appeared to the viewer at the time. As a consequence, this original – or 'original version' – is always imaginary.[5] Hiley also mentions the 'surviving copy', which is also known as the 'original print'. This is an extremely problematic object that is subject to differing interpretations. The original prints are those that date from the period in which the film was released, and their historical provenance gives them a certain status and value for institutional archives and private collectors: Mark-Paul Meyer (2001: 55) introduces the somewhat complex term 'original "vintage" nitrate print' to refer to this form of original print. Following his lead, I also use the term 'vintage print' or 'vintage nitrate'.[6] Vintage prints are the main source material used to trace how the original version of a film might have appeared, although, because the process of decay in nitrate film is so rapid, a vintage print will never truly replicate the original version. Film restorers also call the material on which they base their film restorations, 'original prints' (Meyer and Read, 2000: 232),[7] but as they do not base restorations on vintage prints alone but also use prints dating from a later time, I prefer to use another term for this material – I call the prints used as the basis for restorations, 'starting prints' or 'starting material'.

The third possible form a museum film takes is the final restoration print, which is made to satisfy 'modern tastes', as Hiley puts it. This print is usually an interpretation of an imaginary original version. My hypothesis is that these interpretations will, to a large extent, be analogous to the particular film historical perspective dominant at the time. Eric De Kuyper calls this phenomenon 'historical taste', and it is reflected in every restoration (cited in Hertogs and Klerk de, 1996: 79). This sort of interpretative activity, controlled by historical taste, plays a major role in the restoration of film. According to Janna Jones (2012: 138), the restored film should be understood as a new film that was born from the prevailing cinematic and archival sensibilities at a certain moment in time.

Paul Read and Mark-Paul Meyer (2000: 1) define film restoration as 'the whole spectrum of film duplication, from the simplest duplication with a minimum of interventions up to the most complex ones with a maximum of manipulations'.[8] Within this spectrum, two different levels of film restoration can be distinguished: restoration of the film image and 'philological reconstruction'. Restoration of the film image refers to all interventions on the level

of the film images, from printing with a wet-gate to grading the colours of the new restoration print, while philological reconstruction is used when the 'original' narrative structure is revived in the best way possible.[9] At both levels, though, restorations arguably produce new films or, at least, new versions of films. What is interesting is how these versions differ throughout the various periods, and how they connect with different film historical discourses (Dino, 2008: 21; Jones, 2012: 145-8).

Passive Preservation: An Historical Overview

Three different views on nitrate material are apparent during the period under investigation: the nitrate copy was seen as a functional item, as a perishable, fragile object, or as a unique print. These varying attitudes not only directly determined how film museums and institutions coped with the active and passive preservation of the nitrate films in their archives, but were also closely related to the positions film historians adopted towards this material and the value they attached to 'original prints'. Hence, the most interesting question is how ideas about the value of this material as a historical source were synchronised with contemporary attitudes towards nitrate in film museum practice.

NITRATE AND THE PARADIGM OF REPRODUCIBILITY

The first period in the history of film museums is characterised by a somewhat ambiguous attitude towards the vintage nitrate: on the one hand, film museums were worried about the proper storage of this material while, on the other hand, they continued projecting nitrate prints, with inevitably destructive consequences. In the recorded history of film museums, this dichotomy is often illustrated by the behaviour of Ernest Lindgren of the BFI and Henri Langlois of the Cinémathèque française (Olmeta, 2000: 105; Houston, 1994: 37-59). Langlois is generally characterised as a curator who did not care about the state of the material as long as he could show the films – he even claimed it was better to project nitrate prints than to attempt to preserve them, as film was made to use, not to lock away in a vault (Olmeta, 2000: 116). Apparently, despite his great love of nitrate films, this attitude contributed to the depletion of his collection. By contrast, Lindgren was known as a film archivist who directed all of his energies towards the preservation and management of the

material he collected. As a result, he considered himself a pioneer of film preservation (Houston, 1994: 40).

The history of the Filmmuseum illustrates that its attitude towards nitrate fell somewhere between these two extremes. The institute was committed to the construction of nitrate vaults that would help keep the decline of the nitrate to a minimum, but this professionalisation of the preservation and management of its nitrate collection only began in 1956, ten years after the establishment of the institute. During its first decade, the Filmmuseum developed from a distributor of art films into a real museum, with its own programme of film screenings. This implies that, at the time, the Filmmuseum considered the use of the films in its collection more important than their proper storage. Yet, in 1956, after the institute had begun screening its films, it released a report in which it stressed the need to store the nitrate material, calling for the construction of a film vault (at a cost of around 950,000 guilders) to alleviate its deterioration.[10] Despite the report, the institute received only 5,000 guilders for this project – it seems that the argument for the preservation of nitrate film had yet to spread beyond the walls of the film museum and the archive. Part of the reason for this was the commonly held belief in the 1960s that the nitrate material would perish within a few years and, if this was the case, why spend so much money building a vault for something that was destined to disappear?

As an alternative, the municipality of Amsterdam provided an old bunker in Castricum, previously used for the storage of artworks, in which to store the films. The Filmmuseum transformed the bunker into a nitrate vault, realising the report's original requirements to the best of its ability, given the obvious physical constraints.[11] In addition, it hired a vault curator in the person of Dirk Huizinga, who immediately began his duties by making a four-day visit to the BFI in London to study developments in film preservation.[12] Apparently, Huizinga's ambition was to start active preservation activities – it appears he was aware of the fact that nitrate material was inherently perishable. In the 1956 report, Jan de Vaal had also recommended the preservation of the institute's nitrate films, arguing that it was necessary to transfer the nitrate prints onto acetate negatives, which he believed would last at least 100 years. Should a nitrate print perish over time, the Filmmuseum would then always be able to strike a new projection print. As a result, the museum began to conduct laboratory work in Castricum.[13]

However, in 1961, it became clear that the Castricum bunker did not function particularly well as nitrate storage – it was too hot, humid, and small – and the focus returned to what appeared to be the more pressing need for passive preservation. New vaults were needed if irreparable damage to the film collection was to be avoided.[14] The Filmmuseum, however, was not allowed to build a new vault in Castricum, and this forced it to consider moving to another

4: Portrait of Henk de Smidt in the Filmmuseum vaults (Photo by Siranouche Balian, Collection EYE Film Institute Netherlands)

site.[15] The process was further delayed when Huizinga fell ill in 1963 (he later died in 1966). Henk de Smidt was hired to replace him in 1964[16] and, the following year, the Filmmuseum rented the Villa Koningshof in Overveen (Bloemendaal), where it was authorised to build the appropriate vaults.[17] De Smidt collaborated with the Dutch organisation for Applied Scientific Research (TNO) on a study of the optimal conditions for the passive preservation of nitrate film.

The fact that this resulted in a report in 1968, which FIAF made available to all its members via French, German, and English translations, demonstrates that the Filmmuseum had become an internationally acknowledged leader in the field of film-preservation research.[18]

Five years later, after a long period of bureaucratic delay, a subsidy was granted for the construction of the Overveen vaults, and construction finally began in 1971, fifteen years after de Vaal had first sounded the alarm.

Meanwhile, the situation in the vaults in Castricum had become increasingly acute. Due to poor climate control, overcrowding, lack of time to monitor

5: The nitrate vaults at Overveen under construction (Collection EYE Film Institute Netherlands)

the films and undertake preservation work, and the simple fact that nitrate is so perishable, the prints had started to degrade. Ultimately, the inevitable happened: because the decomposition process was so advanced in some cases, the Filmmuseum was forced to start disposing of prints.[19] By 1975, however, the new vaults were finally ready, allowing it to store the remaining prints in the best possible conditions – the result of nearly two decades of lobbying and hard work.

Given all the energy the Filmmuseum put into research for and construction of these nitrate vaults, it is clear that it was determined to regulate the preservation of the nitrate films in its collections in the best possible way. Remarkably, however, it also continued to use these prints for its film screenings. To make the damaged nitrate prints fit for projection again, it fixed broken perforations, poor splices, and tears.[20] All this was done in order to restore these films to their original function – namely, screening. This type of restoration entails directly intervening in and changing the material shape of the archival object, in a similar way to the restoration of other museum artefacts such as paintings or sculptures. During this period, the nitrate prints clearly functioned as museum objects in the broadest sense of the word.

In 1961, film historian Georges Sadoul (1961: 1175) declared that the pro-

jection of archival films should be avoided in order to prevent further damage, and duplicates should be screened instead. However, as long as the production of duplicates was at a standstill due to financial constraints, film museums had little choice but to project the nitrate prints if they were not to stand by and watch the films fall into oblivion. This was the case at the Filmmuseum: vintage prints (mostly nitrate) were the only ones available, and, if the institute wished to avoid these films being lost to memory, it had to project them. Although it was fully aware of the importance of duplicates, the museum was rarely in a financial position to fund their production. Consequently, in contemporary Filmmuseum vocabulary, 'preservation' came to signify simply that a 35mm duplicate negative had been made in an attempt to secure the film for the future.[21] But even these duplicate negatives were rare – for example, in 1958, the institute was only able to fund the preservation of eight films.[22]

However, in the same year, the Filmmuseum *was* able to preserve a group of films, thanks to financial contributions from the municipalities of Amsterdam and Rotterdam. This funding of course came with the implication that the titles it was expected to preserve related to these cities.[23] The institute also duplicated film images to order – usually as commissions from television companies, but only in cases in which the nitrate material could no longer be projected, due to shrinkage or decay, did it make a new projection print for its own collection. For example, in 1960, the institute received the heavily damaged vintage print of DE MÉSAVENTURE VAN EEN FRANSCH HEERTJE ZONDER PANTALON AAN HET STRAND TE ZANDVOORT (Albert and Willy Mullens, 1905). To ensure that it would be able to project this film, the Filmmuseum created both a duplicate negative and a new positive print. In 1967, it ran into a similar problem with the Desmet Collection. Most of the nitrate prints in the collection were so shrunken that they were no longer viable. Since it was not possible to set up a dedicated Filmmuseum laboratory, with all the appropriate equipment, the institute was unable to restore these films for some time.[24] As we have already seen in Chapter 2, this collection was accorded great importance, thus, the fact that the films were not shown for such a long time was arguably due far more to the technical impossibility of their duplication and projection than to any presumed lack of interest.

It is indeed remarkable that, although the Filmmuseum invested so much time and energy in securing storage space with the best possible climatic conditions, its determination to project these films at the same time inevitably inflicted damage on the nitrate prints. Only when the prints had shrunk or were damaged to such an extent that projection was no longer an option did the institute make new projection prints – if it was technically possible. So, despite the energy and financial resources spent on passive preservation, screening took priority over maintenance of the nitrate material. This way of

working appears similar to that of Langlois in Paris – that is, the frequent projection of nitrate prints no matter what the consequences were. However, by constructing the correct sort of vaults, the Filmmuseum also appeared to be concerned with preserving this material for future screening. The institute's policy of passive preservation was, of course, in line with Sadoul's advice to screen only duplicates, not the nitrate print. According to this perspective, the so-called pioneer of preservation, Lindgren, occupied a special place in film museum practice at the time. Yet Lindgren was not entirely careful with the nitrate material either: after duplication he would give the films away to other archives, which then proceeded to use them as projection prints once again (Houston, 1994). This clearly shows that it was not the film prints themselves that were generally considered important, but the images they carried.

Because of the focus on film as a reproduction medium, Meyer (2004: 423), referring to Walter Benjamin's theories on mechanically reproducible media, believes this period was dominated by the 'paradigm of reproducibility'. Benjamin ([1936] 1968: 218) revealed his ideas in a much-discussed article, 'L'oeuvre d'art à l'époque de sa reproduction mécanisée', in which he argues that the mechanical reproduction of artworks (and other objects) means that an individual work is never unique: 'From a photographic negative, for example, one can make any number of prints; to ask for the "authentic" print makes no sense.' During this period, the predominant view was, indeed, that all copies of the same film title were identical. The concept of the original print did not appear to exist in the discourse on film archiving (Meyer, 2004: 423). Consequently, the film (text) was seen as an entity that was disconnected from its carrier(s).[25] This decoupling of text and carrier had its origin in the arrival of printing technology, which radically altered their relationship. Carlo Ginzburg (1988: 221) explains that, whereas initially text and carrier had a one-to-one relationship, from the moment in which a text could be printed on a plurality of carriers, a cleavage occurred.

The perspective that all prints of the same film title are equal makes the particular care of one specific print much less of a priority: the loss of one of these prints does not necessarily lead to the loss of the film title. This is reinforced by the fact that, during this period, film museums were especially focused on acquiring titles belonging to the canon; in most cases, there were multiple prints of these titles already in circulation, making the loss of one of these 'important' films seem highly unlikely.

NITRATE AND PERISHABILITY

Around 1970, the attitude of archives towards film and nitrate material started to shift towards giving its active preservation a higher priority. This was heralded by '*l'affair Langlois*': in 1968, the French government tried to dismiss Langlois from his post, partly because of his negative attitude towards the active preservation of his nitrate collection and the deplorable state into which he had allowed it to fall (Olmeta, 2000: 115). However, the subsequent outcry by filmmakers and other individuals active in the field of art film forced it to withdraw the dismissal (Roud, 1983: 148-160). This event, nevertheless, seems to have triggered a growing awareness of the necessity for nitrate preservation and, in the 1970s, alarm bells began to ring. The moment was captured in John Culhane's 1977 article, 'Nitrate won't wait'.[26] Culhane (1977: 54) describes the urgent need for active preservation of the nitrate material, illustrating his argument by pointing to footage that no one would ever be able to see again as all the prints containing it had decayed beyond repair. Contrary to earlier beliefs, the fact that film was a medium of reproduction proved to be no guarantee of the maintenance of the 'decoupled' film text.

This change in attitude was in sync with the growing number of nitrate films that had decomposed and had to be consigned to the incinerator, increasing film museums' and film historians' appreciation of the fragility of the material. In addition, there was the aforementioned shift in the dominant film historical perspective. Instead of the classical focus on films from the established canon, it was the more unknown films from the history of silent cinema that increasingly claimed the attention of film historians. As mentioned earlier, an increasing number of film historians started to draw up national filmographies,[27] which included the first comprehensive list of national fiction productions of the silent period. Of course, listing what had been made brought to light which film titles had already been lost.

The shift in the historical discourse also meant that film historians began to look at unknown films from outside the canon as potential source material, while film museums simultaneously started to exhibit an interest in films that had been languishing in the shadow of the canon. MoMA, for example, initiated a programme (and a publication) on all the known and unknown films of D.W. Griffith (Gunning and Mottram, 1975). This new ferment in the film history world came to a head in 1978, when film museum staff and film historians gathered at the famous FIAF conference in Brighton (Bowser, 1979: 171, 510) – a moment that has come to symbolise the transformations that were occurring in the recording of film history. The combination of growing knowledge about the amount of film titles produced during the silent period, and the desire to investigate unknown films, automatically led to the realisa-

tion that a great many titles had been lost – as there were no longer any extant prints – and that the situation would only get worse if film museums did not intervene in time.

In the early 1970s, the Filmmuseum was forced to shed some of its nitrate prints due to their advanced state of decomposition, an occurrence that made the urgency of active preservation of nitrate painfully clear. Still, it would take until the late 1970s before the Filmmuseum actually began securing the films in its collection. This delay was due to the fact that the construction of its nitrate vaults at Overveen was not completed until 1975. Once these were ready, however, the Filmmuseum restarted its laboratory project. Its first action was the purchase of a Debrie film printer, which was adapted to the 'two-frames-per-second' duplication technique[28] essential for the transfer of very old films, such as those from the Desmet Collection, onto acetate material. Lack of funds, however, meant further delays to the structural implementation of the restoration of the nitrate material.[29] As a consequence, the Filmmuseum produced a report in 1976, which, among other things, stressed nitrate's vulnerability: for example, under the heading 'The destruction of cellulose nitrate film material', it detailed all of nitrate's self-destructive chemical reactions. In the report's conclusion, the institute emphasised several times the urgent need for active preservation.[30] This call resulted, in 1979, in the first major subsidy for film preservation[31] and, on receipt of the money, the Filmmuseum immediately began to actively preserve its film stock.[32] At the end of the 1980s, with the arrival of new management at the Filmmuseum, both the institute and the government placed active film preservation high on their list of priorities. Accordingly, in 1987, the Dutch Ministry of Welfare, Health and Culture (WVC) increased the subsidy and, in 1991, it supplemented this funding with a one-off grant, known as the 'gold ship' (Hendriks, 1996: 109). With the help of these funds, the Filmmuseum built its 'preservation factory' in Overveen and began its close collaboration with the Haghefilm laboratory.

Thus, film preservation and restoration by duplication was given a more central place in Filmmuseum policy and, as a result, nitrate prints were awarded a new, far more important role within the institute. First, it no longer screened this material, causing a semantic change in the function of nitrate prints from objects of display to archival artefacts that served as a starting material for preservation prints. Secondly, the Filmmuseum's interest moved to preservation and restoration of prints. This change in focus was partly reflected in new terminology: the institute redefined the term 'archive' to include all the film prints it had collected in the past and would collect in the future. It distinguished this archive from what it called the 'museum collection', which consisted of those films it had actively preserved. As a result, the

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nitrate films in the archive became films that could potentially be acquired for the collection. The Filmmuseum's annual report of 1988 stated:

> In fact, one should consider the not-yet preserved nitrate material located in the archive as material that can be acquired for the collection, but that is not yet part of it; one acquires it for the collection only when it is preserved. What is not preserved between now and a few years will disappear and therefore never be part of the collection.[33]

During this period, the archive was thought of as a 'sepulchre' from which the Filmmuseum disinterred 'treasures' before it was too late. Those of particular note were added to the collection, while rejected material was sent back to this 'sepulchre', where they were left to their demise. These ideas and actions had their origin in the assumption that nitrate material had a life expectancy of little more than ten years and, hence, it was not worth considering such barely sustainable objects as archival material. As the nitrate material could no longer be displayed, it was stripped of its 'real' museum function. Furthermore, film museums still saw film as a reproduction medium, and continued to view film texts as disconnected from film prints. This attitude led to the conclusion during this period that it was not the physical film prints but the moving images they carried that were important.[34]

The most extreme consequence of this way of thinking can be seen in the fact that some film museums gave away or even disposed of their nitrate prints after the film images had been transferred onto acetate material (Meyer, 2001: 55). However, true to their structural policies, most FIAF archives, including the Filmmuseum, did not follow this course, in spite of the fact that climatically appropriate storage cost a small fortune each year. The main reason for this was that many experts expected that museums would be able to further develop film restoration technologies, allowing them to make better, more sustainable restorations based on the same raw material (Cherchi Usai, 1994: 21). This implies that film museums were aware of the limitations of the duplication techniques that were current in film restoration and preservation practice at the time. As museums became more immersed in film restoration and preservation by means of duplication, they appear to have become increasingly aware of the impossibility of creating new images that would be identical to the starting material, and this realisation led to a further change in the discourse on nitrate prints as museum objects. The result was the growing predominance of the idea that nitrate prints were, in fact, unique.

NITRATE FILMS AND UNIQUENESS

An early example of a film print that acquired unique status was the 16mm coloured print of the film BALLET MÉCANIQUE (Léger, 1923) held by MoMA. During the 1970s, William Moritz, a film scholar specialised in experimental cinema, had begun to search for prints of this film. As he later described in a letter to Eric De Kuyper in 1988, it was during the course of his investigations that he discovered that Fernand Léger had donated a 16mm print of the film to MoMA in 1939.[35] When Moritz asked the museum if he could study this print, no one there seemed aware of its origin or status and he was given free access to it. However, once the staff checked the history of the item, this freedom was abruptly curtailed:

> They searched through the records and found the old card indicating that it was in fact the Léger print. They all became rather nervous, and said that it really ought to be properly copied, and that it should not be available 'over the counter' for study, etc. (Moritz, 1988: 138)

The idea that it derived from Léger himself (the film was a Dadaist, post-Cubist art film, conceived, written, and co-directed by the artist) transformed the 16mm print in the eyes of the museum staff into a vintage object that had to be treated with particular care. The belief that Léger had added paint to the print – that is, that the print had been touched by the renowned artist – was enough to render it unique. The paint was transformed into a sign, a reference to the artist who had applied it,[36] and its tangible presence as the handiwork of Léger made the print of BALLET MÉCANIQUE an object that magically linked the present-day staff of MoMA to the artist in the 1920s. In this way, the print gained an aura of authenticity, further increasing its value.

However, it took until the 1990s for the unique nature of nitrate prints to become central to the discourse on prints as film historical sources. A remark by Tom Gunning during the 1995 Filmmuseum workshop, 'Disorderly Order: Colours in Silent Film', illustrates this turnaround:

> What is interesting now, after another fifty, sixty years of film, is that we approach it [the vintage print] as preservationists. We begin to feel there's something rather unique about certain prints, which ought to be preserved. (cited in Hertogs and Klerk de, 1996: 18)

As Gunning notes, after nearly sixty years, the perspective on nitrate prints had finally changed and, from the 1990s on, they were increasingly accorded archival value. One of the biggest advocates of this new perspective was Paolo

Cherchi Usai (1995: 105),[37] who declared that nitrate prints possess a certain 'aura'.

Filmmuseum curator and film historian Giovanna Fossati (1996: 85) also regarded nitrate prints as unique objects for three principal reasons. She points out that not only does a nitrate print become unique once all the other prints of the same film title have been lost, but all the transformations a print undergoes over the course of the years also bestow on it a unique quality.[38] Fossati is referring here to the traces left by distributors, projectionists, collectors, archivists, and all the other people and equipment that have been in contact with the film.[39] The idea that the film print's uniqueness is connected to the damage it has sustained parallels Benjamin's theories on mechanical reproduction, mentioned earlier. This is particularly clear in his exposition of the relationship between an artwork and its duplicate:

> Even the most perfect reproduction of a work of art is lacking in one element: its presence in time and space, its unique existence at the place where it happens to be. This unique existence of the work of art determined the history to which it was subject throughout the time of its existence. This includes the changes which it may have suffered in physical condition over the years, as well as the various changes in its ownership. (Benjamin, [1936] 1968: 214)

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Benjamin contrasts traditional artworks with their mechanically produced reproductions by considering what makes an artwork unique. According to him, mechanically reproducible media create artworks that can never be unique in the same way as other artworks: if the actual work of art – the photographic image, for example – is mechanically reproducible, this disconnects the image from its carrier, and the 'reproduced' art, in this way, evades the same processes of transformation that turned the 'real' artwork into a unique object. However, when it became clear that reproductions always deviate from their starting material, even in the case of mechanically produced objects, this appeared to point to a process of de-mechanisation, and Benjamin's arguments could therefore be used to explain why nitrate prints were unique.

According to Fossati (1996: 85), a further characteristic that marks a nitrate print as unique is a particular print's colours. She argues that the dyes applied to film prints confer a unique quality because they are affixed individually onto each mechanically produced film print: the non-mechanical nature of the application turns each coloured print into a unique object, making it similar, in this sense, to a painting:

> In the first place, both paintings and coloured nitrates are objects that have been painted, they both 'carry' the colours that were originally applied. The aniline dyes we find on a nitrate print today are the dyes that were applied directly to that print: no matter how many prints were made of a film, each print was coloured individually. (Fossati, 1996: 83)

The history of colourisation techniques, however, presents several arguments that contradict this statement. In many cases, colour was applied to silent films by tinting or toning and this gave the images a monochrome appearance. Tinting was a technique in which the film, or a scene from a film, was dipped into a bath of dye, colouring the white and grey parts of the image but leaving the black parts black. Meanwhile, with toning, the silver in the emulsion layer was chemically processed, changing the colour in such a way that the blacks and greys in the image took on the colour while the whites remained white. Because the results of tinting and toning were complementary, it was possible to use both techniques together, creating a two-colour image. In addition to the combination method of tinting and toning, there were two other techniques for creating multicolour images: namely, hand-colouring and stencils. With colouring by hand, however, it was difficult to stay inside the borders of the photographic figures, so the technique was mechanised and perfected by the creation of stencils. In this process, all the particles in an image that were meant to be red, for example, were punched out, creating a print that could be used as a template, which was then positioned on top of the final screening print and the red paint applied with a roller (and later with a spraying system). The same process was repeated for the other colours. The advantage of this system was that it was relatively easy to produce large amounts of colour prints of the same title without a great deal of effort. Moreover, it was more precise: the colours stayed within the edges of the film image far better than with hand-colouring.[40]

Although the colours are mechanically applied to the film print with stencilling, tinting and toning, Fossati does not discern between mechanical and hand-coloured prints. However, vintage prints of the same film title whose colours were mechanically applied bear a stronger resemblance to each other than do those coloured by hand. In this respect, the analogy between these coloured nitrate prints and paintings is, arguably, less persuasive.

One similarity between the coloured prints and artworks, however, is the difficulty of making a mechanical reproduction at a later date. Paint is not a mechanically reproducible medium, in contrast to the photographic image. Cherchi Usai (1995: 105) also refers to this issue in an article in which he discusses the impossibility of reproducing mechanically and hand-applied colours with photographic technologies, leading him to conclude that dif-

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ferences between the starting material and the restoration print will always occur when restoring coloured silent films. The impossibility of bridging these differences is due to the simple fact that the materiality of paint is not photographically reproducible. Confronted by this objective drawback, film museums started to accept the idea that nitrate prints are unique and, as a result, to think about the problems encountered in film restoration.[41]

The desire to restore coloured nitrate prints challenged the dominant discourse that film prints cannot be unique objects because film is a reproduction medium,[42] and this had a significant impact on film museum practice: the debate increasingly centred on the uniqueness and specificity of the nitrate material.[43] This was paralleled by a change in the discourse on the passive preservation of nitrate prints. Following an investigation by the Image Permanence Institute (IPI), which concluded that the best way to preserve vintage nitrate prints was to freeze them, institutes such as the George Eastman House, the National Film Archives of Canada and, especially, the Danske Filminstitut in Copenhagen began to entertain the idea that nitrate's longevity could be extended by this method (Adelstein, 2002: 52). As a result, the Danske Filminstitutet, for example, started to pay far greater attention to the passive preservation of its nitrate films; the institute decided that preservation would prove more effective in keeping the vintage prints in good shape than would duplication (Johnsen, 2002). Even the head of digital collections at the Imperial War Museum, David Walsh (2008: 38), concurred that the best way to preserve a film was not by making a duplicate, but by storing the nitrate in the optimal way.[44]

At the same time, film museums had begun to celebrate nitrate as a unique projection medium – for example, this attitude was evidenced at the 2000 FIAF conference in London (Smither and Surowiec, 2000), where Cherchi Usai once again proved to be a fierce advocate of this perspective on nitrate material:

> And yet we know there is a thing such as the 'nitrate experience'. May we even call it the 'nitrate epiphany' in the sense that its unique features appeal to several senses […] The appeal to the eye is obvious: the texture, the sharpness, the warmth of an image carried by a nitrate base. (Cherchi Usai, 2000a: 129)

By stressing the effect of the nitrate material on the appearance of the projected film image, Cherchi Usai not only puts the film print on the same level as any other non-mechanically reproducible art form, he also aligns the issue of film restoration with that of the traditional arts. In 1969, Brandi discussed the influence of the material of the carrier on the appearance of, for example, a painting on a wood panel, arguing that the image owes its specificity to the

fact that it is applied to wood. Removing the (wood) carrier would alter the character of the image drastically. Brandi also notes that, if it is necessary to restore the carrier, very delicate handling is essential to ensure that the altered structure does not affect the image. The best way of producing a new carrier, therefore, would be to use similar wood (Brandi, 2005: 52-53). However, it seems that these – and similar thoughts about the relationship between the material of the carrier and the appearance of the film projected on screen – remained purely theoretical. If this line of thought were to be implemented in film museum practice, it would imply that the film restorer should remove the emulsion layer from the nitrate and transfer it onto a safe, stable carrier that is not too different from the original one – that is, the nitrate. The problem is that this is a cumbersome form of film restoration that would be very difficult to execute.

Aside from the fact that the supporting material for film restorations are by and large different from the old nitrate, there is another, more practical circumstance that film museums cannot ignore. Not only does the new acetate and polyester material differ from the nitrate in terms of their chemical structure, but contemporary emulsions also have a very different composition to those of the past. For example, the emulsion on the nitrate prints contains a considerable amount of silver, producing very deep, saturated blacks. Such an effect is difficult to duplicate with modern film materials, which contain much less silver, and, therefore, restoration prints only approximate the quality of the black and white of the starting material. In addition to this, nitrate material from different periods and even from different factories possesses different compositions, which caused different effects at the level of the image.[45]

The discrepancy between a restoration print and the starting material consequently gained an increasingly important position in film museum discourse. In 1991, for example, Cherchi Usai (1995: 105) accords nitrate a particular 'aura' (in Benjamin's sense), which is impossible to reproduce. Even Fossati (1996: 85) writes that this special aura attached to the nitrate is missing in the restoration prints and, as a result, they are actually nothing more than surrogates or even fakes. These comments again demonstrate striking parallels with Benjamin's ([1936] 1968: 214) ideas (cited above), and both authors duly reference him. The same argument applies to restoration prints, which equally do not share the so-called aura of the nitrate material.[46]

Still, this does not mean that these restoration prints do not have a unique quality of their own. They also possess a 'presence in time and space'. As historian Walter Prevenier (1995: 53) notes, '[a]n object is always real and unique: a 19th century copy of a 14th century Gothic sculpture is a real 19th century object'. Similarly, a restoration print from 1986 based on a nitrate print from 1914 is therefore a real print from 1986, which will probably also show damage as a

result of use. These transformations also give these prints increasingly unique features. The same applies to duplicates of nitrate prints made by film museums in the 1950s or 1960s: they bear the traces of the film museum's restoration processes and the presentation history of the films.[47]

At the same time as these discursive changes were taking place in the film museum field, academia appeared to grow increasingly aware that a film is not a single, static object but a multiple one, comprising all the prints that carry its multiple versions, and film history should therefore consist of more than just the investigation of film (texts). For example, Gunning (1992: 214) writes that the transformations a film print undergoes when it is screened and viewed are traces of all the people and objects that have touched that print and, as a result, the print is one of the main sources of a film's reception history.[48] He recommends that film historians who study film prints should also observe and read these traces. This interpretive activity, however, demands very specialised knowledge. As an analogy, a general practitioner is able to exclude the possibility of certain diseases and conditions by interpreting the symptoms of a patient based on the knowledge he or she has gained during years of study and practical experience; the patient, on the other hand, lacks this knowledge and is therefore dependent on the physician's interpretive abilities (Ginzburg, 1988: 214).

However, because film historians hardly ever worked with vintage film prints as historical sources, they had not accumulated the necessary knowledge and lacked any method with which to analyse and interpret the traces of the past on these prints. In contrast, film archivists had been making use of film prints as sources of information for the initial identification of archival films for a long time. As a consequence, in the late 1980s and early 1990s, a number of publications appeared in which experts such as Harold Brown and Paolo Cherchi Usai set down their accumulated knowledge on how to obtain information from film prints (Brown, 1990; Cherchi Usai, 1987; 1994). Gunning (1992: 110) claims that he learned how to investigate film prints from the work of these authors. This clearly illustrates the cross-fertilisation between film history and film museum (and archival) practice.

During the period under examination, it is clear that the attitude of film museums and film historians towards nitrate material changed considerably. The former confidence in film as a reproduction medium was replaced by a growing awareness of the impossibility of making a duplicate that would be identical to the starting material in every detail. This meant that film museums began to attach increasing importance to nitrate prints, as manifest in the greater care they took in handling this material – they started to use only duplicates for screenings – and their growing awareness of film prints as unique objects, despite the fact that they were mechanically produced.

At the same time, however, film museums continued to preserve and restore their films using duplicates. This resulted in a duality in their attitude towards film and the question of what film is, and resulted in discussions within the film museum field that, to a certain extent, impacted the restoration of the film image.

Impressions: Restoration of the Film Image

In 1995, during the Filmmuseum workshop, 'Disorderly Order', mentioned above, Meyer (cited in Hertogs and Klerk de, 1996: 18) asked the participating film historians the following question: '[S]hould we preserve these films just as we find them, or should we try to get as close to the original as possible?' Film museums and restorers are confronted with this choice with each restoration: either to restore the imaginary 'original version' of the film or to make the best possible duplicate based on what the starting material looks like at the time of restoration. What is fascinating is the way these two options were approached, and how this was related to the continually shifting discourse on film as an historical object.

As noted earlier, a large part of EYE's nitrate collection consists of coloured films. Because of their predominance in its archives, and because their restoration appears to have caused the institute so much concern, the following chapter takes these films as its primary focus.[49] However, they are also of interest because they crystallise the differences between classical and new film history – classical film historians did not consider early coloured films as either historically interesting or aesthetically valuable, but the new film historians embraced them. In order to unravel the interrelationship between the fluid pattern of theoretical beliefs and film restoration practices, I will discuss these two film historical discourses separately.

BLACK-AND-WHITE FILM ART

Before 1980, film restoration by duplication was the exception rather than the rule at the Filmmuseum; restoration of the film image was mostly done at the level of the nitrate print. One of the earliest examples of this sort of restoration

emerged in the 1950s and 1960s and involved the application of a coating to the nitrate prints, filling the cracks and other signs of damage in the images with lacquer to make them less visible during projection.[50] In this way, the Filmmuseum tried to resurrect the film image in its initial, undamaged state, before its subsequent history of projections and other potentially damaging actions were registered on the print itself. However, the fact that film museums restored their nitrate prints in order to re-enable their projection implies that coloured nitrate prints were screened, showing the tinting and toning, stencilling, and hand-colouring in their original form.

This was different in the rare cases when film museums showed a duplicate of a coloured film. Film museums at the time usually used black-and-white material for duplication. Let me illustrate this with the aforementioned BALLET MÉCANIQUE as an example. The Filmmuseum possesses a coloured 35mm nitrate print of the film that originates from the Nederlandsche Filmliga. Correspondence between Oskar Fischinger and Ed Pelster shows that the Filmliga was very keen on purchasing the films directly from the filmmakers. This, according to Moritz (1988: 137), who spent many years researching the history of BALLET MÉCANIQUE (see Chapter 4), proves that the Filmmuseum print of the film originates from and very probably was coloured by Léger himself. In 1968, the institute had duplicates made of this vintage print: de Vaal ordered a 35mm acetate negative print, a 35mm master print, and 35mm positive print from Cinetone, all three in black and white, and also had a black-and-white 16mm duplicate made for Lindgren in London.[51] The Filmmuseum archive still holds a number of the black-and-white 16mm positive and negative prints.[52] The Cinémathèque française also continued to show a black-and-white 16mm print of the film for many years. As most people assumed that the Cinémathèque print was the vintage print, the idea became fixed that Léger and Murphy had intended the film to be black and white (Moritz, 1988: 137). Moritz believes this assumption is incorrect; he states that, during his archival work, he noticed that the Cinémathèque's black-and-white print showed irregularities:

> I happened to scrutinize a print of BALLET MÉCANIQUE which comes from the Cinémathèque française/MoMA prototype, and I noticed that several of the abstract sequences show definite signs that the original was tinted – both brushstrokes and painting over the frame edge are visible. (Moritz, 1988: 139)

He drew the conclusion that a black-and-white duplicate of a coloured vintage print was shown in France too.[53]

Another frequently cited example is the THE LONEDALE OPERATOR (Grif-

fith, 1911). For a long time, the Filmmuseum distributed a black-and-white 16mm print of this film,[54] which subsequently became the subject of much debate due to the fact that the narrative structure of one specific sequence largely depends on changes in the tinting and toning (Uricchio, [1995]: 197).[55] The sequence shows a woman, standing alone in a room, armed with a wrench, while two burglars are outside trying to force an entry. The shots of the woman in the room are initially tinted yellow. After a while, however, the yellow tinting changes to blue, indicating that the woman has switched off the light (Cherchi Usai, 2000a: 26). When the burglars finally break into the room, the woman points the wrench at them as if it were a gun, and – because the room is dark – they fail to see she is deceiving them. However, this film was shown for many years in black and white, and since it is not clear on the black-and-white prints that the room is plunged into darkness, this sequence remained incomprehensible: there seemed no reason for the burglars to mistake a wrench for a gun.

The question this raises is why film museums duplicated coloured nitrate prints on black-and-white material. The primary sources, such as the Filmmuseum annual reports and correspondence, do not offer a direct answer, but it was one of the topics discussed in the 1995 Filmmuseum workshop. Participants put forward several hypotheses: first that film museums most likely did not have enough funds to purchase the more expensive colour material (Hertogs and Klerk de, 1996: 74).[56] Besides this more practical explanation, another suggestion referred to the fact that film museums were embedded in the sensibilities of the 1950s and 1960s, which connected early art cinema with an aesthetic of austere simplicity, and this meant that early art films were almost exclusively associated with black-and-white rather than colour film. This association dates to the 1930s, when authors such as Rudolf Arnheim and Béla Balázs defined the absence of colour and sound as one of the vital characteristics of film art (Hertogs and Klerk de, 1996: 21; Lameris, forthcoming 2017).[57] The use of colour in film supposedly had a restrictive effect on its artistic possibilities and hampered the film artist's freedom to use more radical camera and editing techniques; additionally, colour was thought to weaken the expressive use of light.[58]

The Dutch film historical tradition had its origin in the discourse emanating from the Nederlandsche Filmliga during the same period (Schoots, 1999: 150).[59] These ideas on the aesthetics of cinema, which excluded both colour film and coloured film, found their way into the broader film historical discourse. During the 1995 Filmmuseum workshop, Ansje van Beusekom noted that the 'purists' or advocates of film as art continued to believe that the essence of cinema was the moving photographic image and the colour was, in fact, added later. This belief gave rise to the idea that if they wished to reach the 'true' film, film museums would do better to omit the colours altogether

(Hertogs and Klerk de, 1996: 18).[60] As it was, tinting, toning, and colouring fell outside of film museums' area of interest, with the result that these films were indeed duplicated in black and white (Meyer and Read, 2000: 3). This explains the existence of black-and-white duplicates of THE LONEDALE OPERATOR and BALLET MÉCANIQUE. It is quite possible that film museums considered colour to be an unwelcome addition to the 'original' black-and-white films of artists like Griffith and Léger, despite the fact that, as we have seen above, its absence sometimes renders the film incomprehensible.

Because the BALLET MÉCANIQUE circulated in several black-and-white prints, the *black-and-whiteness* of the film was increasingly considered to be the mark of its authenticity. The black-and-white duplicates reflected the image of its 'original version' that prevailed in the 1950s and 1960s. As a result, the belief arose that the coloured nitrate prints had to be forgeries (Moritz, 1988: 132), completely ignoring the fact that the colours in BALLET MÉCANIQUE are perfectly in tune with the tradition of abstract film in the 1920s. Indeed, a number of artists in this period experimented with the moving photographic image, animation, rhythm, form, and also colour.[61] Nevertheless, the classical film historical discourse, which set black-and-white art films in opposition to commercial colour films, appeared to carry more weight than the actual historical facts about the BALLET MÉCANIQUE and its makers.[62]

A final possible reason for film museums to duplicate coloured films in black and white can be illustrated with the example of the use of coloured films from a rather different category – namely, early popular and commercial films. In film museum discourse, these films were predominantly used to explain the various steps in the then-dominant teleological history of film, which described a process whereby film was supposed to have developed from a simple registration device into a pure art form. One of the films used to illustrate this story was the hand-coloured LE VOYAGE À TRAVERS L'IMPOSSIBLE (1904) by Georges Méliès. The Filmmuseum processed a black-and-white fragment of this film, which it integrated into EERSTE STAPPEN (NFM, 1954), a film the institute made to demonstrate this developmental history. The fragment's only function was to illustrate one of the steps in the process. Because it was not considered to be an element of art film, colour was not assigned a place in its history: a coloured fragment had no place in EERSTE STAPPEN simply because it had no function in the particular historical story the Filmmuseum wanted to tell. Méliès' colourings also were not afforded much aesthetic appreciation.[63] In light of this belief, there were neither film historical nor aesthetic reasons to spend extra money on ensuring that these films could continue to be presented in colour.

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COLOUR RESTORATIONS: IMPRESSIONS OR IMPRINTS?

In 1983, the Filmmuseum duplicated BALLET MÉCANIQUE on colour film – one of its first colour restorations.[64] At this point, the coloured print was considered the vintage one, whereas, in the 1960s, it was believed that this film must have originally been made in black and white; the imaginary 'original version' had shifted from a black-and-white film to one with coloured inserts.[65] From 1986 on, colour restorations of coloured silent films increased in importance. After 1989, when Peter Delpeut and Eric De Kuyper systematically began to watch all the films in the archive, they discovered even more early films in colour, which they decided to preserve and restore. As a result, different techniques for restoring such films were developed and put to use. In the following section, I describe and analyse these techniques, and investigate what the choice of technique tells us about the different restoration philosophies that influenced Filmmuseum practices in this period, which, in turn, resulted in a particular representation of early colour in film.

The first restoration technique the Filmmuseum used is known as the 'internegative method' – that is, the institute duplicated coloured films on an internegative and then used this as the basis from which to make a colour projection print.[66] This involved making a photographic reproduction of the starting material (Fossati, 1996: 87): a reproduction was made of the colourings that included all the signs of wear and tear caused by years of use, giving the internegative restoration print the special status of a photographic reproduction, with all the characteristic properties attributed to photography. As Roland Barthes ([1980] 1993: 120) describes in *La Chambre Claire* (known in English as *Camera Lucida*), we interpret the photographic referent as if it were a real object because we know it must once have been present in front of the camera lens.[67] A photograph is always seen as direct proof of the 'former presence' of the photographed object.[68] Barthes (1980: 121) calls this the 'ça-a-été' ('that-has-been') nature of the referent. In the same way, the nitrate print must have been present in front of the camera of the duplication device in order to produce the duplicate. Restorations made by the internegative method therefore have an important side effect: the image on an internegative restoration and its projection not only refers to the restored film (the text), but also to the material vintage nitrate of which it is a direct photographic reproduction.

The fact that the uneven quality of the nitrate print is duplicated when using this technique allows researchers to draw conclusions about the history of the starting material and its colouring just by viewing the restoration print, without the need to retrieve the vintage print from the vault. An example of this is the 1987 colour restoration of THE LONEDALE OPERATOR. When the Filmmuseum showed the restoration print made with the internegative method

during the 1995 workshop 'Disorderly Order', film restorer Nicola Mazzanti noted that the colours were paler in the middle of the photogram than at the sides, and conjectured that this was because the projector's beam had caused the colour in the centre of the nitrate image to fade (cited in Hertogs and Klerk de, 1996: 24). Mazzanti could only make this hypothetical statement about the effect of its screening history on the vintage print because the restoration was made using the internegative method, which had faithfully reproduced the faded areas in the nitrate.

However, the advantage of the internegative method – namely, that it is a photographic reproduction of the state of the vintage print – is also its biggest drawback. It is almost impossible to make a reconstruction of the 'original' colours, and, in the case of THE LONEDALE OPERATOR, this proved to be a problem. The colours on the Filmmuseum's nitrate print of this film had almost completely disappeared in some places; remnants of the tinting could only be distinguished along the perforations. This was, *inter alia*, the case for the sequence mentioned earlier, in which the change of tint from yellow to blue is essential to the understanding of the film. Because the colour of the nitrate had virtually disappeared, the colour restoration appeared just as incomprehensible as the black-and-white prints film museums had previously exhibited and distributed.

The internegative method had even more disadvantages. First, the colour film material that was used for the restoration was of a totally different nature than that of the starting material – that is, black-and-white material with applied colour. The nitrate prints were modified with dyes, while the restoration prints consisted of photographic colour material. It turned out to be an illusion to think that such a different technique could achieve a similar effect. For example, this method was not particularly suitable for the restoration of starting material that had been tinted because it was difficult to reproduce the blacks of the nitrate: the colour the internegative material produced was never really black, but was always tinged with blue or brown (Hertogs and Klerk de, 1996: 13-14), in contrast with black-and-white nitrate, which exhibits extra-deep, saturated blacks. In addition, the colouring of the white is often not visible in internegative restorations of tinted films. The absence of white is a characteristic of tinted films: because the emulsion was stained with dye, the effect was to filter the light shining through, so that what would have been white appeared as another colour. All these imperfections made it nearly impossible to faithfully restore tinted films using the internegative method. The shift of black to brown or blue and the disappearance of the colouring of the white resulted in a colour effect that was closer to toning than tinting.

The colour effect of hand-coloured and stencilled films was similarly near-impossible to replicate using modern colour material. To begin with, both

the validity and the nuances of the colours were very hard to achieve; it was extremely difficult for a grader to get all the colours correct in one attempt.[69] In fact, each preservation print relied on colour corrections contained in a so-called 'answer print',[70] and because there was often not enough money for this process, the colours on the projection prints usually differed from the tints and tones on the starting material. Deviations also arose as a result of the limited colour spectrum of the Kodak internegative material (Hertogs and Klerk de, 1996: 13-14). This was particularly problematic in the case of hand-coloured or stencilled films. For example, it was difficult to reproduce magenta and pink with this material, so faces and other body parts that were initially coloured pink appeared as black and white in the restoration prints, leading Gunning (1994: 254) to hypothesise that the early techniques were not suitable for colouring bodies and, therefore, those parts of the image were originally left as black and white.[71] Had he been able to see the nitrate material, however, Gunning would have noticed that, in a significant number of cases, the faces and bodies *were* actually coloured pink.[72]

The greatest disadvantage of the internegative method, however, was the fact that the material lacks sustainability. Even when film museums keep such prints under the right conditions, the colours fade particularly fast.[73] The restorations, which were meant to secure the coloured images of the vulnerable nitrate material into the future, appeared to be more vulnerable than the nitrate prints themselves.

All in all, although this method held the potential to reproduce an image of the coloured starting material the way it appeared at the time of its restoration, the limitations of the technology and the film material meant there were too many serious differences between the restoration print and the starting material to realise this potential. As a result, these *photographies* should always be approached with caution.[74] In practice, this method ended up mainly being used for the restoration of coloured and stencilled films and those films that had acquired a very particular look due to the decay of the nitrate. In the first case, the decision to restore the colour of the films was of a film-historical nature, while the second type of restoration was usually aesthetically motivated. In both cases, the internegative method was the only one suitable for reproducing the colours on these films and rendering them visible again.

The colours of coloured silent films, whether red, blue, green, or yellow, have one common characteristic: they are extremely unstable – to the extent that their volatile nature was remarked on even in the early years of the 20th century. In 1912, for example, Frederick Talbot wrote in his book, *Moving Pictures, How They Are Made and Worked*:

> The circumstance that aniline dyes have to be used is a distinct handicap owing to their fugitive nature. The colours during the first runs through the projector are brilliant, but repeated exposure to the intense electric arc tones them down to a remarkable degree. In the end, the film tints have a washed-out appearance which is far from pleasing. (Talbot, 1912)[75]

This meant that the audience at a premiere saw a particular film in colours that differed from those seen by audiences just a few weeks later. With each screening, the colours became a little paler.[76] Because the nitrate collection in the archives of the Filmmuseum almost exclusively contains old projection prints, we can conclude that the colours on all the starting material must have faded due to repeated projection. In addition to the transience of the dyes, Meyer pointed to another problem: the dye may or may not react to the nitrate, changing its chemical structure and, thus, radically affecting the colour – for example, blue often becomes rusty brown. Obviously, this makes the reconstruction of the 'original' colours very complicated (cited in Hertogs and Klerk de, 1996: 78).[77]

Due to fading and discolouration it was (and is) difficult to figure out what the 'original' colours looked like based on the vintage prints alone. For this reason, film and photography manuals from the 1910s and 1920s are potentially a better source of information on early colours. Among other things, they describe how the dyes were made and applied.[78] Unfortunately, however, they do not inform us about other important parts of the process, such as the exact concentration of the dyes and the amount of time the filmstrips had to be submerged in the dye baths. These decisions were left to the technicians, resulting in differences in colour between various films, and even between various scenes (Meyer and Read, 2000: 194). Due to the absence of this information, it remains unclear how bright or dense these colours were in the past. In fact, none of the existing sources on the colour in early films are sufficient to form a truly authoritative picture and, as a result, it remains impossible to know what the colours really looked like some 90 years ago (Fossati, 1996: 87). This implies that the 'original' colours cannot be retrieved and, as such, will always be imaginary. Still, in addition to the internegative method, film museums developed other restoration techniques whereby they attempted to retrieve the 'original' colours, with methods known as the 'imitative method' and the 'Desmet method'.

The imitative method made use of old tinting and toning techniques. First, a black-and-white copy of the film was struck, after which the restorer provided tinting and toning using, as much as possible, the 'original' techniques and dyes (Hertogs and Klerk de, 1996: 73). The dyes were based on the recipes in the manuals mentioned above. The Narodni Filmovy Archiv

(National Film Archive or NFA) in Prague in particular experimented with this old method of tinting and toning.[79] First of all, some of the ingredients for the dyes were no longer available,[80] and then it was discovered that a number of dyes and chemicals were toxic, which meant they could not be used safely. The result was that it was not possible to reconstruct all the dyes that were used in the early 20th century. Furthermore, film museums discovered that it was difficult to apply the colour evenly onto the film, and information on the concentration of the dyes and the length of time the filmstrips should be left in the dye baths was not available. All this made an adequate reconstruction of the colourings very difficult.

A further problem was that the acetate material used to make the duplicates differed from the starting material and, thus, from the imaginary 'original version' of the film. For example, as mentioned earlier, the vintage prints contain deeper blacks than those obtained with the acetate emulsion layer. The new acetate carrier, made of a different plastic to the nitrate and with a different emulsion layer, which, among other differences, contained a lot less silver, resulted in a black-and-white image that deviated from that produced in the early years of the 20th century.

The aberrant black-and-white images made an exact reconstruction of the coloured films from that period virtually impossible. However, by experimenting with the old colour techniques, film restorers did discover some new historical facts about tinting and toning. For example, the experiments with the imitative method made clear that recently applied colourings significantly differed from the colours on the vintage prints: they were much clearer and brighter (Meyer and Read, 2000: 194).[81] This changed film museums' image of the 'original' colours. In addition, colours on the new restoration prints faded so quickly that they rapidly approached those on the vintage prints and, as a consequence, the new restoration print once again began to differ from the alleged original within a relatively short period of time. However, the rapid decomposition of the colours enabled restorers and film museums to observe the fading process of these dyes.[82]

The imitative method therefore provided more information on the 'original' colours. Besides which, other characteristics of the vintage nitrate were also preserved – for instance, one characteristic of tinted and toned vintage prints is their large number of splices,[83] due to the fact that tinting and toning techniques require each piece to be dipped in a chemical bath separately. A restoration print that has been made with the imitative method will exhibit splices at exactly the same places as the starting material. Of course, this is also the major disadvantage of this method; after all, splices make a film more vulnerable. It is partly for this reason that the Filmmuseum only used this imitative method a few times. The films Quo Vadis? (Guazzoni, 1912),

BLOOD AND SAND (Niblo, 1922), and SOUTH (Hurley, 1914-1917) were restored using this technique; however, the method the institute mainly used to restore tinted and toned films is called the Desmet method – in fact, this method was even standardised in 2002.[84]

This method, which was named after one of its inventors, Noël Desmet,[85] used a black-and-white negative (based on the coloured vintage print) to make a positive colour print with the help of colour filters. This means that the colours were added to the positive print during the printing process. The Desmet method also allowed for the reconstruction of tints and tones with a black-and-white vintage print as starting material – for example, with a camera negative. In such cases, the information on the 'original' colours was based on the colours of a tinted or toned vintage print, or on instructions written on the vintage negatives about which colours to use for the tints and tones (Meyer and Read, 2000: 193). As such, the Desmet method is similar to the techniques used in the early period – in both cases, the colours were added to a black-and-white film print (Fossati, 1996: 87) –; however, the colouring with the Desmet method was not done with aniline but with a photochemical process.

The advantage of the Desmet method was that it restored the imaginary original colours without duplicating the damage or the fading on the starting material. A good example is the 'new' 1993 restoration of THE LONEDALE OPERATOR, which was intended to replace the 'failed' internegative restoration. As mentioned earlier, the yellow and blue tints that are so crucial to the understanding of the film had almost entirely disappeared; the only place where there was any visible residue of the original tints was around the perforations. Using only these sparse clues, the Desmet method was able to reconstruct the tinted film images, and the differences between the blue and the yellow became visible once again, clearly showing that the woman had switched off the light at the crucial point in the narrative.

Yet the Desmet method also had its problems. First of all, the reconstructions of the 'original' colours were based on the faded vintage prints; these were the main sources of information. The colours of the Desmet restorations, therefore, were a mixture, falling somewhere between a reconstruction of the 'original' colours and the colours on the vintage prints. The 'original' colours were restored in the sense that they were equally distributed over the image, as they were in the 1910s and 1920s, but the brightness of the colours was based on the appearance of the vintage prints. Despite this drawback, the Filmmuseum took the decision in 2002 exclusively to use the Desmet method for the restoration of tinted and toned films, instead of the internegative method, since black-and-white negatives are more tenable than the internegative material. This method, however, did not, in fact, secure the colours, so the film museum continued to be dependent on the transient vintage nitrate prints, and, as a

consequence, the risk remained that all the information on the colours would disappear with these prints.[86]

Besides the fact that the Desmet method was a better way to save the photographic image, the Filmmuseum's choice to use only this method also reveals something about its general policy. It seems that the desire to restore the 'original' colours was greater than the wish to capture the state of the starting material. As a result, the Filmmuseum approached film restoration more as a way of reconstructing the past than as a method of rendering its remains visible.

In addition to these three techniques for restoring coloured black-and-white films in colour, the Filmmuseum during this period sometimes chose to restore coloured films in black and white.[87] This decision was guided by certain parameters. First of all, colours with an essential narrative function were always restored. In other cases, the Filmmuseum took into account the aesthetic function of the colour: if this was not significant – for example, in a film that was entirely tinted or toned in the same colour – the institute often chose to restore it in black and white. It also preferred to restore films with only a few, very short tinted or toned fragments in black and white, the reason being that, with the use of colour film material, as mentioned earlier, the blacks and whites showed bluish and brownish effects.[88] The choice of black-and-white material was therefore aesthetically motivated because, in these cases, the restorations are integrally more beautiful on black-and-white material.

The choice to restore certain tinted and toned films in colour and others in black and white meant that the totality of early silent film restorations provided a distorted perspective on the tinting and toning of the films in the archive. The Filmmuseum's moment of selection had a long-lasting impact on the film historical discourse and the perspective on film history, referred to in Part I. Still, the choice to restore a tinted or toned film in black and white was, to a certain extent, historically justifiable. Production houses from the early years of cinema often sold film titles both in black and white and in colour; the tinted film was often slightly more expensive than the black-and-white version.[89] Hence, it is very likely that every tinted or toned film also existed in black and white. As a consequence, a black-and-white restoration of a tinted print could also be seen as the reconstruction of one of many different versions of a film – a version that probably existed but presumably did not survive. However, what the Filmmuseum did not take into account was whether the black-and-white version of a certain film had actually been shown in the Netherlands, so that it is uncertain if the black-and-white reconstruction, based on a coloured nitrate print, comprises part of the history of *Dutch* film or not. In this respect, the fact that the Filmmuseum preserved 20 percent of the coloured films from the Desmet Collection in black and white is striking,[90] as the collection represent-

ed the Filmmuseum's decision (referred to in Part I) to promote the history of Dutch film culture. Nowadays, due to the fact that tinted and toned films were sometimes preserved in black and white, whenever EYE wants to produce a new preservation print, it always checks the nitrate print to see if it is in colour, in which case, the new print will also be made in colour.[91]

The hypothesis that film historians and archivists in the 1950s and 1960s considered black-and-white films as symbolic of the pure, unadulterated form of early cinema, and that this idea strongly influenced the way films were preserved for posterity, appears to be substantially vindicated. Yet, this was not the only influence on the decision to duplicate films in black and white: it may often have been more the result of indifference and limited budgets than a conscious choice to restore a film to its 'original' state. However, this practice led to assumptions about the role of colour in film in the early period that were not always correct.

The 1980s witnessed a revision of the film historical discourse and film museum practice, which manifested itself in a new approach towards early coloured films, as they came to be regarded more and more as aesthetic objects. Restoration practice also changed to reflect this new approach. Although it is difficult to say exactly how discursive changes or revisions begin, it seems safe to conclude that the final restoration prints made during the years under investigation bear striking parallels with contemporaneous film historical beliefs, and vice versa. Consequently, the restoration prints in the Filmmuseum collection (and archive) reflect the different types of 'film historical taste' over successive periods. In addition, the intensity of the discussion that arose in the late 1980s and early 1990s around the earlier practice of duplicating (some) films in black and white shows that the growing interest in coloured silent films was, to some extent, a reaction to the previous dominance of classical film history.

The Filmmuseum's restoration and presentation of early coloured films demonstrates a previously unremarked historical practice: the institute prioritised the reconstruction of the (imaginary) 'original' colours over producing a duplicate of what Meyer calls 'the film as it was found' (cited in Hertogs and Klerk de, 1996: 18). This reflected the Filmmuseum's policy to preserve and exhibit the history of Dutch film culture, which it interpreted as the history of a (possible) cinematographic experience. This approach also enabled it to create restoration prints with a high-quality image, making the old films shine in a new way and, thus, allowing the institute to take into consideration the aesthetic experience of future film museum audiences. Nevertheless, the colours were never the same as those on the nitrate, either ontologically or aesthetically. As Chapter 3 explains, colour in early film became one of the important historical questions prompted by the material in the archive – questions

the institute attempted to answer with the help of these various simulations that imitated the early colours but were far from reproductions. We need to take this into account when discussing the 1995 workshop 'Disorderly Order'.

All in all, the result of the development of restoration techniques over the course of time can be seen in the variety of colour restorations in the Film-museum's collection, turning it into an eclectic assemblage of colour restoration prints. The same applies to institutes in other countries. For this reason, Thomas C. Christensen (2009, 65) of the Danske Filminstitut, advises film historians not to accept an early film at face value, but to investigate the duplicates of the film to be found in the archives: 'Especially in cases when the object of study is not studied in its original form, the path of representation should be considered when attempting to analyse a film at face value.' Unfortunately, however, there is often no information about the chosen restoration techniques, which means that the best source of information for historians who wish to research the use of colour in early film remains the nitrate prints. Yet, without the preservation and restoration of these early colour films, they would not have been visible at all. Or, as Delpeut said in his keynote speech at the 2015 conference, *The Colour Fantastic*: 'We were right to be wrong'.[92]

Reconstructions

'The current discourse of film restorers is a model for history making because it makes transparent the ways that a history is spliced together' (Jones, 2012: 138). This comment clearly summarises the focus of this chapter: the reconstruction of films and the consolidation of a film museum editing structure, literally 'splicing' the fragments of film history together. As with the activities of acquisition and collection, reconstruction is a matter of selection: the curator chooses which film clips will end up in the final restoration print. As a result, the reconstruction is generally aimed at 'completing' a film, making it into something that equates to what Meyer and Read (2000: 69) call the 'original'.[93] This process, however, raises a number of problematic issues.

The first major problem that occurs is that films were often distributed and displayed in multiple versions, which means that various editions of the same film, each displaying a different editing structure, could – with equal validity – be considered the 'original'. Hence, it is important to ask which version was used as the starting material for a particular restoration, and how this influenced its reconstruction.[94] A second problem is the aforementioned imaginary status of 'original' versions, which implies that reconstruction is always a creative process, determined by the prevailing ideas and opinions on film history and aesthetic value.[95] Finally, the possibilities and limitations of the reconstruction methods and techniques available at the time also had an impact on the final result.

For these reasons, every reconstruction print is, in fact, a new version of the film, coloured by the attitudes of the time in which it was made. But the starting point of the process is also a crucial factor – that is, which of all the possible versions of the film was used as the starting material for the reconstruction? Ultimately, the question remains as to what extent different reconstructions reflect the historical taste of a given time and period.

THE DIRECTOR'S VERSION

The first version of a film is the so-called 'director's version' and is generally one of the possible candidates for reconstruction. This is the version of the film as the filmmaker (presumably) delivered it. In the 1980s, the term 'reconstruction' implied that the restorer had traced and restored this version. This corresponded to the ideas of classical film history, which was dominant at the time, in which filmmakers were regarded as auteurs or artists and awarded an almost mythological status (Hommel, 1991: 137). Film critics and cinephiles, particularly those involved with the *politique des auteurs* movement (mentioned in the introduction), emphasised the filmmaker's pre-eminence. This celebration of directors naturally led to a strong desire to watch the version of the film they made (Pinel, 1985).

Given this framework, it is not surprising that, during this period, the director's version was considered to be the sole truly 'original' version. For example, Raymond Borde, founder and long-time director of the Cinémathèque de Toulouse, notes in *Les Cinémath*èques (1983)[96] that the task of archivists is to reconstruct films that had undergone censorship and self-censorship by distributors or production companies, returning them to their 'original' state. To Borde (1983: 175), this 'original' version reflects the film the way it was before others made changes to it: 'When we are sure of a mutilation, then there is no moral problem. We can be sure to be faithful to the author's mind and give him the justice we owe him.'[97] A responsible reconstruction, according to Borde, will do justice to the auteur or the film artist. Since he considered gaps as indicative of changes to the 'original', we can conclude that he considered that only the most complete version of a film equated with this imaginary director's version. Jacques Ledoux, director of the Cinémathèque Royale, was also of the opinion that comparing and combining all of the recovered and available material from a film title would lead to a reconstruction of the director's version (Borde, 1983: 175). As a result, reconstruction in this period primarily meant filling in any recognisable gaps in a film.

The Filmmuseum also reconstructed (imaginary) director's versions of films by collecting as much material as possible, comparing the different prints with each other, and cutting and pasting them into reconstruction prints. In 1961, for example, the institute made a reconstruction of THE ROBBER SYMPHONY (Feher, 1936). This film was an all-time favourite of the Amsterdam art cinema, De Uitkijk, and had sustained a fair degree of damage due to its frequent projections. The print's mutilations were so clearly visible that even the newspapers commented on its poor condition.[98] As the damage to the film material was clear, a reconstruction made by filling these gaps would, according to Borde's theory, be the best way to do justice to the film's 'auteur'.

This was exactly what the Filmmuseum did: it reconstructed the film as best it could by collecting what material was available and piecing it together like a jigsaw.[99] Interestingly, this was not done with duplicates of the vintage prints; instead, fragments were literally taken from all the different vintage prints available, which were then edited into the most complete director's version possible. The reconstruction print of such a film was thus a collage of vintage material from different origins. Remarkably, the 'original' prints themselves were not seen as valuable enough to be kept intact; on the contrary, they were approached as incomplete objects, which could be stitched together and reconstructed into a supposedly 'original' whole. This confirms the conclusions reached in Chapter 4 – that is, it was the film text, not the material, that was regarded as the work of art and the film museum's true subject.

These 'incomplete' prints, however, remained the main source of information whereby the 'original' version of the film text could be retrieved. This led to several problems. Besides the fact that it is extremely difficult to reconstruct the 'original' narrative structure of a film solely based on retrieved fragments, this method ran the risk of what could be called 'hyper-restoration' – a sort of a overcorrection of the restoration. An example of this was the reconstruction of Novyj Babilon (Kozintsev and Trauberg, 1929) by Enno Patalas of the Filmmuseum München. Patalas found fragments of the film in a German archive that did not appear in the Russian vintage print, and he thought that, by adding this material to the Russian print, he could reconstruct what he assumed to be the director's version. However, after Leonid Trauberg, the co-director of the film, saw the reconstruction, he commented that he had already removed these fragments before the film's premiere: the imaginary director's version, in the form of the most complete print, was found to deviate from the version that the director had actually released. The filmmaker's intentions therefore cannot always be read from a compilation of all of the recovered material from a particular title. Incidentally, following Trauburg's intervention, Patalas removed the excerpts from the reconstruction print (Hommel, 1986: 37).

In some cases, film museums invited the director to help reconstruct a film – after all, who would know better about the intentions behind the film than the creator? In this way, film museums hoped to achieve a result that was as close as possible to the actual director's version. For example, the Filmmuseum solicited the help of Charles Huguenot van der Linden in the reconstruction of his film Jonge harten (Huguenot van der Linden and Josephson, 1936).[100] The institute had discovered pieces of what was once a vintage print at a cigar maker's in Maastricht in the 1950s. Once the loose pieces were sorted out and glued back together, the Filmmuseum submitted the results to the director for inspection, and he declared himself very satisfied.[101]

However, one problem with using filmmakers as restoration consultants

is that they are sometimes tempted to try to improve the film to fit their current tastes rather than to help contribute to the reconstruction of a work they completed many years before.[102] This tendency not only caused problems for the deployment of directors as a source of information on the 'original' version, it also meant that they sometimes made several versions of the same film. In 1971, for example, René Clair made a whole new version of his first film, PARIS QUI DORT, which was fifteen minutes shorter than the 1924 'original' (Kaufmann, 2001: 121), so there are now two director's versions of the one film title. And while, in the case of PARIS QUI DORT, there is a clear distinction between the 'early' and 'late' director's versions, in a number of other silent films, the difference is less clear. For example, Abel Gance repeatedly modified and 'improved' his 1927 film, NAPOLÉON (Pinel, 1989a: 60). Thus, many director's versions of this film exist, which only differ from one another in small details. In such cases, the restorer must choose which director's version to reconstruct. The decision to reconstruct the director's version therefore does not give a definitive answer to the question of what a reconstruction should look like, as many variables are possible, and, of course, there are also material constraints – which parts of a film have survived and which have been lost. Furthermore, the choice of which director's version should be preserved also influences the final result.

SHOWN VERSIONS

After 1980, film restorers still regularly tried to restore the director's version of films. One example is the reconstruction of MENSCHEN AM SONNTAG (Siodmak, 1929-1930). The Dutch version of this film was found in the Filmmuseum's archives. By supplementing this print with images from other recovered material, the pre-eminent restorer Martin Koerber reconstructed the 'original' German version in 1997.[103] Koerber (2000: 231-237) believed that, since the German censors had not cut the film, this 'German version' matches the version Siodmak delivered in 1929,[104] hence he made a concerted attempt to find as much material as possible to process back into the reconstruction.

Similar attempts were made with other film titles; in practice, this meant that the Filmmuseum followed an unspoken reconstruction policy that entailed attempting to get as close as possible to the director's version. The fact that this practice was not mentioned in so many words may have been the result of an increased awareness of the impossibility of determining which version was the authentic director's version. Additionally, the idea began to surface that the director's version of a film was not the only version that could justifiably be called 'original'. Vincent Pinel (1985), for example, claims that 'it

is also important *to know the work the way the audiences saw it, especially when the latter differs in important ways from the first* [the director's version]'.[105] The film the audience saw at the time could indeed differ greatly from the director's version, because the production company had adapted it, for example, or the censors had required changes before they allowed it to be screened. All these versions also slowly started to acquire the status of 'original', and, as a result, the term 'original version' was interpreted in many different ways, rendering the concept barely viable.[106] Despite this, it continued to recur in the writings of film archivists and historians, although it could now refer to the director's version, the censored version, or indeed any other early version.[107]

When the Filmmuseum changed its official policy in the late 1980s, and began to ascribe a more important role to the history of Dutch film culture, the version of foreign films shown in the Netherlands also gained museological interest. The institute's 1989 collection programme stated that '[f]oreign nitrate material already preserved elsewhere will not be preserved by the Filmmuseum, unless it is considered important for the collection to preserve the version that was distributed in the Netherlands'.[108] These screened versions were accorded an increasingly important place in the institute's restoration policy. In 1999, for example, all the films from the Uitkijk Collection were re-restored, as the Filmmuseum decided to reconstruct the versions shown by the Filmliga and distributed by the Centraal Bureau voor Ligafilms (CBLF).[109] As mentioned earlier, it believed the majority of the films in the Uitkijk Collection were directly connected to these organisations.

> The version [that] we secure, and preferably make visible, is the one that was distributed by the CBL[F] (eventually reconstructed in the best possible way). The choice for the distribution collection implies the choice for the film versions the way they were probably seen by the Dutch audience. Changes done by the censorship, or by the CBL before offering the print to censorship, are therefore not 'restored'. (Muis 1999)[110]

Because the Uitkijk Collection contained vintage prints, the Filmmuseum assumed that it reflected the film versions that were shown and distributed by the Filmliga. As a result, it was able to provide reconstructions of screened and distributed versions by means of a simple duplicate of the vintage material. However, the word 'probably' in the above quote by Muis shows us that the Filmmuseum was very much aware of the fact that it could never be entirely sure that these reconstructions were correct. After all, the history of each print would include many modifications, not only in terms of the quality of the image, but also at the editing level. According to Cherchi Usai (2000b: 159), therefore, when a film museum refers to the 'shown version', it generally

means the *earliest known* shown version, although the phrase might just as well mean any other possible version screened at a later date.[111] Consequently, the term 'shown version' became increasingly broad, as any editorial changes in the structure of the film during the course of its history would effectively create a new version. If an institute really wanted to render the history of the film culture of a particular country visible, as the Filmmuseum did with Dutch film culture, then basically every version that had ever been shown should be worthy of reconstruction.[112] To get around this problem when determining which shown version to reconstruct, film museums seemed to prefer to take the place of presentation into consideration rather than the date. For example, in relation to the film ERDGEIST (Jessner, 1923), the Filmmuseum decided to restore the 'original' German version, based on information found in sources from the German censors.[113] The choice to reconstruct one particular version meant that any other shown versions that had been in circulation would not be reconstructed.

In some cases, however, the Filmmuseum chose to secure and restore two different versions of a film. As mentioned above, the Filmmuseum made a reconstruction of the 'original' German version of the film MENSCHEN AM SONNTAG in 1997 (Siodmak et al, 1929). By the 'German version', Koerber (2000: 232) means 'the original version distributed in Berlin in 1930 – around 400 metres longer than the Dutch version'. However, within the framework of its Filmliga project, the Filmmuseum also reconstructed the Dutch version without the extra 400 metres (Koerber, 2000: 231-235).[114]

ARCHIVAL VERSIONS

In the period after 1970, film museums increasingly chose to reconstruct films as they were found in the archive. As Cherchi Usai (2000b: 159) describes it, this meant '[t]he film [...] just as it was found, with all the gaps and imperfections it had when the copy became part of the archive's collection'. This version, which could be called the 'archival version', is a duplicate of the vintage print, without any further reconstructive activity.[115] In the strict sense of the term, this type of restoration is not a reconstruction – indeed, it might be better to speak of a 'non-reconstruction'.

There are three reasons why a film museum might opt for a direct duplicate of the vintage print. First, it might believe that the archival version must be safeguarded because it reflects the state of the film as it was encountered in the archives, in contrast with the reconstruction of the 'original' version, which is the result of an archivist's interpretation of the film. Securing archival versions allows for reinterpretations and new reconstructions at a later date.

For this reason, FIAF agreed to secure, as much as possible, the archival versions of films.[116] In reality, this meant that, when film museums used images from a vintage print to reconstruct a director's version or a shown version, they also duplicated this vintage material on a negative or master print (Cherchi Usai, 2000b: 159).[117] We must take care, however, in these cases, that we do not speak of film 'restoration' but, rather, of 'preservation'.

Museums do not usually make these archival versions fit for projection, and these versions generally are not screened. However, archives and museums also tend to make direct duplicates of a vintage print when they believe that the archival version can be equated with the shown version – for example, when the Filmmuseum restored films for its Filmliga project, it made the assumption that the vintage prints probably corresponded to the versions that were shown by the Filmliga. Because the Filmmuseum's vintage prints were regarded as 'complete versions' in this case, these restorations were not just preservations of archival versions. As a consequence, neither of these examples involve preservations of the archival versions in the strict sense of the word: in the first case, the FIAF members did not make duplicates of the archival versions for screening purposes, and, in the second, the institutes did not duplicate the vintage prints because they considered them to be archival versions, but because they regarded them as shown versions.

The only situation in which film museums restored archival versions was when vintage prints were duplicated with the intention of screening them as incomplete archival objects. A good example of such a deliberate choice to restore incomplete films is the Bits & Pieces project – the series of fragments that the Filmmuseum selected for their beauty, peculiarity or aesthetic value, or because they derived from a well-known film. In addition to these more aesthetic and classical film historical motives, the project also had a rhetorical function: Bits & Pieces made the effect of the decomposition of film prints abundantly clear. In this sense, it was at odds with the reconstruction practices described thus far. Whereas film museums generally tried to return a film to its 'original' state by restoring the 'original whole', the Bits & Pieces collection showed the patchy state of the films as they were found in the archives. Instead of hiding the fact that large parts of films and, therefore, of film history are lost to us, it emphasised the transience of the film material.[118] This effect was enhanced when fragments originated from narrative films. Media philosopher Nanna Verhoeff (2006: 29) explains that encountering excerpts from a narrative always make us yearn for the original whole. The lack of this whole – the film's narrative – imposes itself because the fragments begin and end in the middle of what was once a story. One of the characteristics of a narrative is the presence of a clear beginning, middle, and end; if this structure is lacking, it will be interpreted as incomplete. As Verhoeff (2006: 29) observes,

'[t]he bits and pieces are not whole, by a long shot, but somehow, in relation to the visitor to the archive, they strive toward wholeness'.

Besides the fact that a fragment always refers to its former whole, a broken item also possesses its own aura of authenticity (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1998: 19). This is also the case for film fragments. The fragments in the Bits & Pieces series are proof of the former material existence of the originals they belonged to, and so they also refer to the lacunae in the archive. Moreover, the numbering of the fragments also brings to mind museum artefacts. All in all, Bits & Pieces displayed the fragmented reality of the historical remains in the archives, and in so doing, it set itself against the neatly fitting film historical narrative – with its own beginning, middle, and end – that classical film history strove to tell.[119]

This awareness that the archival remains of film history consist of fragments was one of the main preoccupations of new film history, which had come to dominance at the time the Bits & Pieces series was released. The presentation of the fragments referred directly to the fragmentary state of the archive and of written film history (Hertogs and Klerk de, 1996: 79). By referring to the lacunae in the archive, and its inability to fully reconstruct the history of film, the Filmmuseum also placed the rest of film history writing in an archival perspective. What was at stake here was the belief that every stored object is a fragment. As Verhoeff (2006: 27) says, '[e]very object found in a film archive is a fragment of an irretrievable, ever-widening whole: the "complete" film, the genre, the program, the cultural habits of watching films, the culture'. This puts the idea of 'completeness' underlying the reconstructions of 'original' director's versions and shown versions into perspective. As with the fragments in Bits & Pieces collection, which are patches of films of which nothing more exists, these reconstructions were also fragments of film programmes that no longer existed. In this sense, in the case of complete reconstructions of the 'original' versions of films, large parts of film history still remained unseen and unremarked.

This continuous opening up to the forgotten, to that which was not saved and can no longer be seen, is the true essence of the archive. In Derrida's (1996: 11) words, '[t]he archive takes place at the place of originary and structural breakdown of [...] memory'. This essential feature makes it impossible to forget forgetting, no matter how much an archivist or restorer tries to make decay and loss invisible.

NEW VERSIONS

Given the high level of speculation involved in reconstructing a film, every restoration should, in fact, be treated as if it were a new version. However, film museums themselves only use the term 'new version' if the archival film has been reconstructed in a consciously creative manner,[120] as when a contemporary artist is asked to re-edit the 'original' version of a film, or a film museum adapts an archival film for a modern audience, making it suitable for a commercial re-release (Meyer and Read, 2000: 71).

An early example of a creative reconstruction is the Giorgio Moroder 1984 version of METROPOLIS (Lang, 1925-1927) (Cherchi Usai, 2000b: 160). This reconstruction is an example of the conversion of a film into a 'new' work of art. Another example of creative intervention is the construction of a sound version of ZEEMANSVROUWEN (Kleinman, 1930). This film was once intended as the first-ever sound film produced in the Netherlands, but, due to technical and financial difficulties, it became instead the last Dutch silent film. At the beginning of the 21st century, the Filmmuseum invited musician Henny Vrienten to transform it from a silent film into a sound one by using actors to add spoken dialogue. The result was a new version of the film, which the Filmmuseum unveiled at its 2003 Biennale.[121] This sound version simultaneously made it suitable for commercial exploitation and realised the hypothetical version that had been planned but never finalised.[122] Both these examples demonstrate how a creative interpretation of the concept of reconstruction can make a film more attractive to a paying audience.

New versions also emerged through so-called 'reconstruction to the letter', in which the restorer deliberately made visible what he or she had added to the film and what was still missing. For example, restorers sometimes added pieces of black film to show where material was missing. But, as Pinel (1989b: 77) points out, although such a restoration is of course a loyal and literal reconstruction, it is also quite boring to watch.[123] This rather ascetic reconstruction technique, however, was rarely used; the Filmmuseum only turned to it when absolutely necessary – for example, when it wanted to add an 'original' musical score. This was the case with the last reconstruction of REGEN (Ivens, 1929). Hans Eisler had composed a score to accompany this film in 1941; however, when the Filmmuseum decided to reconstruct the film using this score, it discovered that the film and the music did not fit together because some of the footage was missing, so it filled the gaps with black film in order to synchronise the music with the images.[124]

As well as the fact that watching sections of black film for minutes on end is less than riveting, these sorts of reconstructions using black film or intertitles gave no indication of what the unknown missing material may

have looked like. To solve this problem, restorers sometimes used images derived from non-film material (Cherchi Usai, 2000b: 159). An example of a film reconstructed with the help of such material is DER VAR ENGANG (Dreyer, 1922), made by the Danske Filminstitut in Copenhagen. The Danish restorers used set photos and film stills to replace the missing sequences.[125] Even with this creative input, however, such a reconstruction can never be more than an impression of the 'original'. The cinematographic qualities of the film, which are mainly related to the movement in the photographic images and the way they are edited, cannot be recovered using this sort of reconstruction method.[126] Cherchi Usai (2000b: 67) is of the opinion that these cases can no longer be called reconstructions; instead, he introduces the term 're-creation' to indicate that they are actually new films.

Reconstructions exclusively done 'by the letter' are quite rare. However, almost every reconstruction shows by-the-letter elements, such as the way in which intertitles are reconstructed. Film museums are usually very concerned about distinguishing between titles that are 'original' and those that are reconstructed. For example, sometimes restorers use a different typography for the new titles. The Filmmuseum distinguished these 'new' titles by deliberately not numbering them, in contrast to the intertitles on vintage prints in the archive, which almost always have a number. In the Dutch language, the titles themselves can also be distinguished by differences in spelling (which changed quite radically after the spelling reform in the Netherlands in 1947);[127] the intertitles were only reconstructed with the former spelling in cases where the original text was found, for example, in a censor's file.[128]

What is striking about reconstructions 'by the letter' is that, on the one hand, they were made as the best possible reconstructions of the 'original', while, on the other hand, they render visible the incomplete state of the archival material. This had consequences for the audience experience: because these films constantly refer to the transience and materiality of the starting material, they encourage a reading of the film that could be called an 'archival reading', in which the film is interpreted first and foremost as an archival object, and only then as a fiction film, for example. This archival reading turns the 'original' viewer experience upside down. For this reason, Meyer (1986: 29) believes it is not advisable to exclusively reconstruct a film 'by the letter', showing all too clearly where and which pieces were missing.[129] This fits with the Filmmuseum perspective that films should be considered primarily as 'performance art'.[130] As a result, the institute not only reconstructed the editing structure of a film as faithfully as possible, but also the potential experience of it. Its restorers tried to hide the evidence of reconstruction; they were 'artist-restorers', as Pinel (1989b: 77) puts it. Instead of stressing where pieces are missing in a film, emphasising the fact that the film is old and damaged, the

artist-restorer tries to return the film to its former consistency, and, thus, to its role as a potentially pleasurable or stimulating viewing experience of a *moving* picture.

UNITY IN PARTS

In many cases, the aim of a reconstruction was to recover the former 'unity' of a film. This ever-elusive 'original unity', however, was not necessarily material, as is the case with other types of restoration practice; film reconstruction was, and is, focused on the reconstruction of the imaginary whole – that is, the 'original' film text. Film restorers, therefore, often used various known vintage prints of the film title. As a consequence, the reconstructions were often assemblages of what were once two or more prints, unlike the reconstruction of other museum artefacts such as vases, in which the remaining pieces of one formerly intact object are gathered together as much as possible.

Nicola Mazzanti explains that the use of different objects for the reconstruction of a former whole is a contradiction in terms as the reconstruction combines images, intertitles, and shots that were never part of the same print, and therefore never screened together (Comencini and Pavesi, 2001: 29). Not only are the various projection prints different objects, in the earlier period, films were also often filmed with more than one camera. Duplicate negatives were not made before 1930; instead, multiple cameras were used to produce several negatives for various regions (United States or Europe, for example). These negatives all differed from one another, since the camera positions were slightly different, but sometimes distribution negatives also consisted of different takes of a scene (Jones, 2012:148).[131] As a result, a reconstruction print cannot, in truth, form a unity – a fact that rapidly became apparent in practice. In photochemical duplication, for example, the contrast in the image always increases, so the quality and details in the image always decrease (Meyer and Read, 2000: 1), with the result that prints of different generations differ greatly in quality. When restorers merge such strongly differing prints into a reconstruction print, it invariably has a patchwork appearance.[132]

Film museums developed a number of techniques to try to suppress this effect (Meyer and Read, 2000: 73). One example is the reconstruction of ERDGEIST (Jessner, 1923). The Filmmuseum used two prints – the first, a very incomplete vintage print from the institute's own archives, and the second, a master of a vintage print from the Gosfilmofond archives in Russia.[133] By Filmmuseum standards, the picture quality of the Russian master was rather bad: it was very dark and had a relatively high contrast. If the institute had simply edited the excerpts from this print into a preservation copy of its own

vintage print it would most certainly have shown the huge difference in quality. In order to avoid this, it struck new elements from the Russian master with the help of pre-flashing, which resulted in a lighter image.[134] This helped the image quality of the Russian material to approach that of the reconstruction based on the Filmmuseum vintage print and, as a result, the fact that the starting material for this restoration consisted of two different prints is less evident on the final reconstruction print.

Such interventions helped limit the differences within the same reconstruction print. To a certain extent, this ensured a unity in the image quality, giving the impression that the restoration used only one print as starting material. In this way, film restorers tried to reconstruct the 'unity' of the imaginary original, avoiding the visible transitions from print to print that would disturb the viewing experience of the new (museum's) audience.[135] On the one hand, in terms of the overall smoothness of the image quality, the reconstruction print was indeed the best possible way to approach the 'original' version, but, on the other hand, it is striking that the film museum made concessions about the image quality. To guarantee a smooth image quality overall, the Filmmuseum did not only try to improve the poorer prints, but also slightly worsened the quality of the better ones in the process. It seems that it preferred to seek an overall evenness of the final print rather than to pursue the possibility of a better image quality at the level of individual shots. In the end, the final quality of the image naturally differed from that of the so-called 'original' image. The Filmmuseum seems to have prioritised the imaginary original unity of image quality over the best possible image quality at the level of the photograms or shots.

ACADEMICS AND THE 'ORIGINAL'

In light of all these different 'original' and accidentally or deliberately created versions, Cherchi Usai (2000b: 160) has introduced the term 'multiple object' for archival films. By this, he indicates that films are not the immutable unitary objects that film museums and historians often assumed them to be; instead, they disassemble into separate surviving sets of prints. Yuri Tsivian (1996: 341) believes that this innovative idea of film as a 'multiple object' is very productive for film historical science, leading to a fresh perspective: 'Cherchi Usai's point is innovative because it invites us to perceive film history as a process rather than as a gallery of art objects.'[136]

Classical film historians, like other academics from the schools of formalism and semiotics, described the history of film in general as a series of unchanging texts. This does not mean, however, that they were unaware

of the variability of film prints and, thus, of film texts. In 1964, for example, Lotte Eisner analysed the different prints of NOSFERATU (Murnau, 1921) in her book, *F.W. Murnau*, and, in 1967, Sadoul noted that national versions of films could sometimes differ radically from each other (cited in Pinel, 1985). Visitors to the film libraries and museums were also able to see for themselves how incomplete some of the prints on display were. However, this growing awareness of the fact that the film texts survived in multiple prints on highly unstable surfaces was not reflected in the film historical discourse, or in the semiotic and formalist research. Moreover, academics did not take research into the various prints and consequently into versions of the same film text into consideration when undertaking a textual analysis of a film. According to William Routt (1997: 3), film analysts did not usually indicate on which print and thus on which version they had based their textual or semiotic studies,[137] as he believes they felt uncomfortable with the idea of the filmic text's instability. Gunning (1992: 102) also notes that film scholars continued to yearn for the 'original' film text: 'The film as it originally showed itself, without the disfiguration of time and use, haunts the film historian as a spectral ideal.'

Of course, the dawning awareness that the 'original' is an unattainable ideal was not pleasant. Still, new film historians increasingly viewed film history more as a process and less as an accumulation of unchanging film texts. In the case of Tsivian's personal project, an investigation into Russian cinema, this new perspective provided him with special insights. For example, he approached the re-edited Western films from the Soviet period as separate objects, and this enabled him to discover a very different historical story. Film historians, such as Tom Gunning, Frank Kessler, Nanna Verhoeff, William Routt, Giorgio Bertellini, Charles Musser, and Janna Jones, also shed new light on archival issues, and explored the implications for the discipline of film history.[138]

The fact that, for a long time, the academic discipline failed to prioritise the problems of various prints and different versions most likely led to conclusions about film titles that said more about the print under investigation than the film text. In an interview about her reconstruction of the director's version of LA COQUILLE ET LE CLERGYMAN (Dulac, 1927), Catherine Cormon notes that it is worth comparing the many different prints of a film in circulation, as well as the many different interpretations of a film made over the course of time (cited in Olcese, 2005: 5). In order to answer the questions Cormon poses, it is necessary to investigate all the prints of a given film title that were created and shown. This illustrates that the film, as an historical source, is also a multiple object. For this reason, it is extremely important for film historiography and film theory that ancient, even worn-out duplicates of films are preserved.

Reconstructions are not easy research subjects. As Charles Musser (2004:

102) recounts, '[o]ften "restorations" create synthetic texts that have no historical standing – mishmashes of variant prints that obscure as much as they illuminate'. The fact that Musser, an extremely experienced film historian, highlights this issue, indicates that the topic of reconstruction not only complicates the work of film historians, but also excites them. Cherchi Usai (2000b: 67) advises researchers to be very cautious because film is such a changeable subject. However, he believes that film archives, museums and restorers have a duty to provide the relevant information; good documentary evidence on how a reconstruction came about (and the purpose behind it) is often lacking. The paucity of information on the reconstruction of films means that film studies lags far behind other disciplines such as literary studies, wherein scholars have access to critical editions of ancient texts (Routt, 1997: 3).[139]

However, film restoration practice has the advantage that the originals have basically remained untouched. With the restoration of a mosaic, for example, the loose pieces that once formed a whole must be reassembled somehow, whereas film historians only edit vintage prints together in some very early exceptions, such as THE ROBBER SYMPHONY, so, in most cases, the starting material remains untouched. A researcher who wants information about versions of a film other than the reconstructed one can always go back to the various surviving vintage prints. Insofar as they are not affected by the ravages of time, these prints are kept safe in the vaults of EYE.

Because film restorers make so many creative decisions during the restoration process, Hiley (1996) compares them to filmmakers and artists. In addition to Hiley's comparison, I would also compare restorers to film historians, precisely because each restoration is an interpretation of the past based on the vintage prints in the archive. Film restorers are, in fact, creative film historians who render interpretations of film history visible: they create new versions of the archival films, which reveal the dominant film historical perspective at the time of restoration. Taking this more subjective side of film restoration into account, filmmaker and film restorer Ross Lipman (2009: 5) suggests that it would be better to use the term 'faithful' rather than 'authentic' when discussing the relation of the restoration to the imaginary 'original'.

All in all, film restoration prints reflect historical taste, which can change – often significantly – from one moment to the next. Initially, the main aim of restoration practice was to 'retrieve' the director's intentions on which to base a reconstruction of the director's version. However, in the period after 1980, the perspective of film museums changed, shifting from a unique focus on the reconstruction of director's versions to include shown versions and archival versions in their reconstruction repertoire. Furthermore, film museums started to consider the production of new presentation versions, which were often a combination of experimental film and found footage. These experi-

mental new versions made old films more attractive to a 'new' audience. At the same time, the perspectives on film history became increasingly diverse: instead of allowing for only one possible original version (the director's version), the archives now took a plurality of potential 'original' versions into account, which meant that they could all be defined as the starting point for a reconstruction. However, this produced an uncertain situation –it was never quite clear which version was reflected in the restoration print. As a consequence, it has become even more important for film historians and analysts to be able to access information about the film museum's restorations and reconstructions.

However, the reconstruction of director's versions remained high on the priority list of film museums for some time. One explanation for the importance they continued to place on discovering the 'intentions' of the filmmakers could be that changes in perspectives and opinions often occur at different rates with different groups of people. Because the audiences of the Filmmuseum are so widely divergent – ranging from professional audiences of film archivists and historians to the general public – these two different tempos can also be found in the history of the institute. The Filmmuseum took great care restoring films, paying attention to the quality of the images, but it also reconstructed director's versions of films by well-known filmmakers, prioritising the reconstruction of the editing structure over image quality. Because it incorporated these two different perspectives on the reconstruction of films, the Filmmuseum's practice followed the different rhythms found in film historical discourse and, as a result, its restoration prints form an eclectic manifestation of film history.

PART III
PRESENTATIONS

A film is not just a physical object, an amalgam of celluloid and chemicals, it also consists of fleeting images projected onto a screen. Hence, it is both a fragile material object and an elusive, temporary, performative one. This means that all the elements related to its display, such as its projection and the interior design of the screening room, form a crucial part of the film's presentation. The screening situation fundamentally affects the meaning an audience creates out of the images that appear before it. As Paolo Cherchi Usai says:

> The nature of the light source, the apparatus, the physical structure of the image carrier, and the architectural space in which the event occurs are variables which have the power to determine the quality of visual perception and its patterns. (Cherchi Usai, 2001: 103)

In the context of film museum practice, these elements take on an added complexity. Exhibiting a film in a film museum environment turns it into a museum artefact, an historical object, above all else. In this sense, the way the museum presents a film fundamentally differs from the way it was screened in the past, and this automatically produces quite different meanings.

In order to analyse these issues, film theorist Roger Odin (2002) has introduced what he terms the 'semio-pragmatic' approach, explaining that film and television are always subject to a 'double text production': one located in the 'production space', the other in the 'reading space'. Odin uses the concept of 'space' as it is understood in communications theory – that is, as a combination of determinants that guide the production of meaning. The degree of difference between the determinants in these two spaces changes according to their geographical and/or historical distance; the more they approach each

other in space and time, the more the meanings produced in the production space overlap with those that arise in the space in which the film is read (Odin, 2002: 42). For example, in the case of a British film made in January 1920 and screened at a London premiere in February that year, this overlap would be considerable. However, if the Filmmuseum screened the same film in 2012, the constraints influencing the reading of the film – the production of meaning – during its viewing would differ greatly from those experienced at the time of its production. This applies to the entire collection of silent films in the Filmmuseum archive. These films all predate the establishment of the institute, so there will always be a historical distance between their production and their reading. Film museums also differ radically from the commercial cinemas where most of these silent films were initially screened, and this invariably results in the attribution of very different meanings (Lenk, 2006: 320).

Film museums did not adhere to a general set of standards for their screening-room design and decor or the programming of their films – factors that are of crucial importance to the reading and experience of a film. The essential role of these factors is encapsulated in the concept of the '*dispositif*' ('apparatus').[1] Jean-Louis Baudry introduced the idea of a cinematographic *dispositif* into film theory in the 1970s in order to analyse the effect of the interior design of screening rooms and cinemas on the way films are perceived and understood. Baudry (1999: 763) uses the term to refer to the formation and positioning of all elements present during the screening. In short, the *dispositif* refers to the constellation of effects dictated by the specifics of a screening room's interior design, such as the location of the projector or the screen. In my opinion, this is supplemented by all the other elements that play a role in the performance of a film, such as the programme, the musical accompaniment, and the posters in the lobby. When all these different elements are activated, the cinema-goer is transformed into an 'ideal' film spectator (Kessler, 2002b: 106).

Baudry is specifically interested in the ideal spectator of what he believes to be the dominant cinematic institutions, those that screen commercial (Hollywood) films. In film theory, and particularly in semio-pragmatics, institutions are defined as bundles of mandatory forces that induce certain expectations in the spectator before they begin to watch a film. In addition to the commercial Hollywood institutions, there are others that are active in the cinematographic field, such as those involved in film art or education, not to mention film museums (Odin, 1988: 121). Baudry's main question is how a cinematic institution is able to program a spectator into believing in the fiction presented in the film. As Christian Metz[2] says:

The position of the 'I' in the film has nothing to do with an astonishing resemblance between the film and the natural properties of all perception. Rather, this position is created in advance and determined by the institution ([the] equipment of the screening room, the mental dispositif that internalised all this). (Metz, 1980: 69)[3]

Institutional constraints play a particularly important role in inducing a certain mental state in spectators and, as such, in their perception and experience of the film, as well as in the way they produce meaning out of what they see before them.[4] Hence, an analysis of the screening situation is pivotal to an understanding of the particular reading modes in force in a certain place during a certain period (Kessler, 2002b: 106). We should, arguably, be able to discover traces of former *dispositifs* in a cinema's physical heritage, because the ideas and beliefs that were prevalent in a particular institution at a particular time on how films should be seen and perceived were materialised in its buildings, screening rooms, and seating arrangements. They provide a concise demonstration of the tastes and beliefs espoused by a specific institution. An analysis of the architecture and interior design of film museums, for example, enables the researcher to draw conclusions about how these institutes tried to influence spectators and turn them into their ideal of a museum audience. This is a crucial element in the history of film museum presentation, which involves the screening of films that were made in (and for) a very different time and place.

How did film museums guide their visitors in their reading of the films they showed? An historical analysis of the exhibition-space interiors, the programmes and their accompanying texts, and all the non-cinematic elements that add up to a film performance enable us to achieve a deeper understanding of how film museum practice produced film spectators, influenced viewing experience, and sometimes even gave museum films a film-historical context.

During the period under investigation (1946-2000), the Filmmuseum's public area had experienced two dramatic makeovers. For this reason, I start this section with an analysis of the institute's three different interiors, which entails a further division of the period under examination based on the source materials. As I outlined in the introduction, I began my investigation by dividing film historiography into two periods, according to the distinct change in theoretical perspective evident in the written sources. It seems apposite, therefore, to explore the Filmmuseum's transformations in appearance to see if the physical changes were reflected in its film historical discourse.

Film Museum Exhibition Spaces

As with film theatres and cinemas, film museums are 'other spaces', with very different rules, customs and time dimensions to those we are accustomed to in daily life (Foucault, 1984: 48). These other spaces, which Foucault also calls 'heterotopias', are separated from the world we normally live in and can only be entered after performing a number of rituals. To step over the threshold of one of these institutions is literally to make the transition from our everyday world into that other space (Poppe, 1989: 21). From the moment that the visitors enter a theatre, for example, their expectations are streamlined in a certain way and, as such, they are programmed into the desired spectator for the performance. This effect is, to a great extent, created by the architecture and furnishings, which are part of the heterotopia's presentation strategy. This leads to the specific question of how the Filmmuseum produced film museum audiences with the help of its various interiors.

THE ART MUSEUM *DISPOSITIF*

The first Filmmuseum screening room was located at the Stedelijk Museum. The institute moved there in 1952[5] and, soon afterwards, it began to show films twice a week in its newly completed auditorium.[6] The Stedelijk Museum had extended its invitation to the Filmmuseum in imitation of New York's MoMA, where popular art, film, photography, and design were assembled together and exhibited with the aim of taking 'high art' out of its ivory tower and bringing it closer to popular art forms. At the same time, MoMA also insured that 'the institution of cinema was now intertwined with the institution of art' (Wasson, 2008: 124). For the Filmmuseum, this move had an effect similar to the latter: it was an opportunity to place its archival films in an art-museum

context, giving them an artistic *kudos*. This meant, for example, that the Stedelijk's art-loving visitors were also able to attend the Filmmuseum's screenings in its auditorium (Hendriks and Blotkamp, 1996: 11).

The Stedelijk's director, Willem Sandberg, ensured that the museum's interior design was executed in a simple, transparent style, in order to make the artworks it held accessible to all. The purpose of the design was to bring modern art to the ordinary person on the street. This aim was most evident in the design of the windows in the newly built wing that faced the Van Baerlestraat; their vast size meant that the art on display was visible from the street, and the street, in a sense, became part of the museum's artistic space (Jansen van Galen and Schreurs, 1995: 108).

However, for audiences at the Filmmuseum's screenings, the Stedelijk Museum's interior design and style of architecture had the opposite effect: they were confronted at every turn with visual (high) art. First of all, before entering the auditorium, they had to pass through the 'Appelbar', which was

6: Museum auditorium with artworks on the wall and a view through the door of Karel Appel's 'Appelbar' (Collection EYE Film Institute Netherlands)

decorated with a 1951 mural by Karel Appel (Hendriks, 1996: 72). Pictures of the auditorium confirm this experience.

As a result, functionality, modern art, and the upcoming film screening were mixed together in this heterotopia. In his novel, *De Rokkenjagers* (1963), Isaac Faro describes a visit to the Filmmuseum. The excerpt shows, that the other parts of the Stedelijk Museum and the modern art they housed were accessible to the Filmmuseum audience – for example, during the intermission (Faro, 1963: 53-62). Apparently, the Stedelijk allowed popular art forms, including film, to be literally surrounded by the 'higher' arts. In their annual reports, Sandberg and Jan de Vaal invariably mention that the development of cinema (and modern music) ran in parallel to that of modern art.[7] As a result, Filmmuseum audiences were constantly reminded of the fact that the films they saw were part of a modern art tradition. In the sense described by Stephen Greenblatt (1991) (as outlined in Chapter 3), the history of modern art resonated with the films on display, and this resonance produced the effect of wonder that, according to Greenblatt, is intimately connected to the artistry of an object. The continual confirmation that the Stedelijk Museum afforded the Filmmuseum that the films it presented belonged within the tradition of the visual arts amplified the sense of wonder that seeing these films invoked in the audience. In this case, resonance and wonder clearly functioned together.

The spare, unembellished design of the auditorium where the Filmmuseum screened its films further stimulated a reaction of wonder in the audience, echoing Greenblatt's (1991: 49) description of the moment when the intensity of the gaze eliminates all surrounding sounds and images. The auditorium was a clean, simple space with white walls and a platform at the side, which was covered with a shade when not in use. When the audience arrived in large numbers, the Filmmuseum made use of the space on the platform; however, if there was a smaller attendance, it closed the shade, and the platform became invisible again.

This interior design of the auditorium was in line with that of the rest of the Stedelijk Museum, which had undergone a physical metamorphosis initiated by Sandberg. The walls were painted white, the doors and rooms were made smaller, focusing attention on the individual artworks. As John Jansen van Galen and Huib Schreurs (1995: 103) describe it, 'the arrangement of the museum should not be based on the sheer pulling-power of large quantities of works, but should take as its starting point an isolated, carefully selected piece'. The Stedelijk Museum presented these pieces as individual works of art, evoking an effect of focused wonder. This was the opposite of nineteenth-century presentation strategy, which involved placing large quantities of artworks next to one another, producing a resonance between them and providing an overall context for each individual piece.

The effect of wonder was reinforced by taking the focus away from the architecture; in a sense, the building withdrew – no more variegated decorations or panelling that could distract from the art, just plain white walls that allowed the individual artworks to stand out. This perspective was in tune with 'modern architecture', which was characterised by – among other things – the absence of ornament, polychromy, humour, or any other distractions (Jencks, 1986: 31). In addition, its simplicity stimulated the sense of wonder experienced during the film screenings. This approach can also be positioned within the broader modernist move towards breaking with traditional forms of spectatorship, which had flourished during the interwar period, and which returned to favour following the Second World War, taking a lead from playwright Bertolt Brecht. Brecht wished to encourage a critical audience by producing a '*Verfremdung*' or 'distancing effect' in his theatrical productions, which was interpreted as 'a stripping of theatrical performance down to its basic components' (Bordwell, 1997: 85). This desire to pare back the presentation – be it of a play, a film, or an artwork – was clearly evident in the post-war interior design of the Stedelijk Museum, including the auditorium that hosted the Filmmuseum screenings.

7: The Filmmuseum auditorium with its creaky wicker chairs (Collection EYE Film Institute Netherlands)

8: Alberto Cavalcanti tries out the seats at the Kriterion during a trip to the Netherlands (Collection EYE Film Institute Netherlands)

Yet there were also elements of the auditorium that militated against inducing a sense of wonder – for example, it was equipped with rather uncomfortable wooden seats. In 1956, Sandberg partly replaced these with designer wicker chairs, but these tended to creak, disrupting the silent films that were mainly shown (although not always) without a musical accompaniment (Hendriks, 1996: 72).[8]

The bare interior of the auditorium, with its uncomfortable chairs, was also indicative of its aspiration to multi-functionality. In addition to film screenings, the space was used for lectures and performances of modern music.[9] However, the interior of the screening room at the Stedelijk Museum was also attuned to what could be called a broader art film *dispositif*. For example, Amsterdam's Kriterion, the famous arthouse cinema that was founded immediately after the Second World War, was also furnished with seats that looked anything but comfortable.[10]

The seats at the first arthouse cinema in the Netherlands, the Uitkijk Theatre, were equally as punishing.

Mannus Franken, director of De Uitkijk from 1934 to 1936, explained that he kept the hard seats in his theatre to prevent the spectators from getting too comfortable; he was of the opinion that the soft armchair-like seats so typical of commercial movie theatres made the audience lazy. By choosing hard seating that kept the audience awake, Franken therefore deliberately placed De Uitkijk in diametrical opposition to the commercial, popular film institutions. The audiences of commercial cinemas were often labelled as 'passive': the theory was that sitting immobile in the dark encourages the viewer to enter a sort of artificial state of regression, which could be compared with a dream state (Baudry, 1999: 773), and comfortable seating only reinforced this tendency. This sort of dream state did not fit with modernist ideas about how art should be experienced. After all, the prevailing view was that, whereas commercial entertainment set out to lull the spectator, art should be actively expe-

rienced (Beusekom van, 2001: 115). Franken's explanation of why the seats in De Uitkijk were deliberately hard and unwelcoming was completely at one with this theory.

The Filmmuseum and the Stedelijk Museum were also part of this discourse. This became apparent in their first joint project, the 1948 exhibition, 'De Film', which was held in the Stedelijk. The sense conveyed by the exhibition was that the passive spectator 'happily searched for consolation', led by instinct; in contrast, the active spectator wanted to formulate judgments to recognise which films were 'bad' and which 'good' (Schmidt, Schmalenbach and Bächlin, 1948: 56).

Once again, the views of post-war modernism are clearly recognisable. Brecht preached the merits of audience activation using the technique of *Verfremdung* on the stage, but he also claimed that it was necessary to keep the audience awake by physical means – and hard seats were seen as a useful strategic tool. It was obvious that soft, comfortable seats had no place in the art cinema, where the viewer was expected to stay alert and active. In this respect, the uncomfortable seats stand for the way the *dispositif* contributed to the construction of the 'ideal spectator' of art film as perceived at the time.

10: Jan de Vaal's exhibition, De Film, with panels about the NHFA (ABP Foto (Amsterdam) Collection EYE Film Institute Netherlands)

The art-film institution also believed in its role of enlightening its audience. This is illustrated by Charles Boost (1967: 24), who wrote that Franken thought that De Uitkijk was 'more an effective lecture room where film art was taught, than a cinema with oriental carpets, springy armchairs and a wonder-organ, where one [goes for] a night out'.[11] This remark not only positioned De Uitkijk outside the dominant institution of commercial film, but placed it within an educational tradition. The Filmmuseum too had educational ambitions. In 1952, for example, it reported that the films it acquired should be shown 'with the aim of spreading a correct understanding of quality film'.[12] In addition, it wrote in 1956 that it wanted to 'encourage that one will not undergo film passively, but approach it in an active and critical way'.[13] De Uitkijk, Kriterion, and the Filmmuseum first ensured that their audiences were alert and actively engaged with what they were seeing, and then tried to teach them about what was considered to be quality film. The uncomfortable, creaky chairs, which constantly reminded the viewer of his or her own physicality, were part of this educational *dispositif*. Screening the films in a theatre with such hard seats, and introducing the programmes of films with serious lectures, gave the Filmmuseum evenings an (art) educational character.

This educational function helped position this group of films and its related institutions within the art field, in which the idea of education was frequently employed.[14] It was (and continues to be) the general opinion that true art has an educational function, and this equally applies to film (art). As Dutch film critic Bob Bertina (1950: 90-91) says, '[o]ne must learn how to read a poem, one must learn how to listen to music and one must learn to see Film'.

Thus, the Filmmuseum presented its museum films within a *dispositif* that positioned film in the field of the high arts. This was, first of all, because the films were screened in the Stedelijk Museum, within the context of modern art. In addition, the furnishing of the screening room (or auditorium) was designed to produce an active spectator, a common aim in the modernist tradition in relation to the contemplation of art. As a result of all these elements, the audience was guided into a specific reading of these films as (modern) art.

TWO FILM MUSEUM TRADITIONS

In 1972/3 the Filmmuseum gradually moved into the Vondelpark Pavilion. After a period of presenting film as the 'seventh muse', surrounded by its sister arts, the institute now had the opportunity to establish its own museum, exclusively in celebration of film. This also raised the possibility of creating a dedicated screening room and exhibition space. In its search for the ideal

presentation environment, the institute created an area inside the Vondelpark Pavilion that revealed the influence of two film museum traditions.

Because the transformation of the Vondelpark Pavilion into a film museum took some time, the Filmmuseum screenings continued to be organised at the Stedelijk Museum until 1973. It is striking that the institute began to voice an increasing number of complaints about the auditorium, including its lack of comfortable seating and poor ventilation.[15] No doubt its reason for disparaging the auditorium was primarily political: it needed money for the construction of a cinema in the Vondelpark Pavilion, without which the Filmmuseum would not be a film museum.[16] Yet its emphasis on the absence of comfort also points to a change in perspective on how the viewer should approach a museum film – that is, it signalled a change in the film museum *dispositif*. This is reflected in the design of the new film theatre in the Vondelpark, which was halfway ready by 1974. The museum cinema was totally black: the walls, ceiling, and even the windows were black.[17] In addition, it contained no ornamentation, polychromy, or any other potentially distracting elements. As such, the screening room was a typical modernist building – but it had a purpose that differed from that of the Stedelijk Museum in various ways. The idea of screening art films in a completely black auditorium was derived from the experimental filmmaker Peter Kubelka, a well-known figure in the modernist movement in cinema (Bordwell, 1997: 83). Kubelka made his first designs for what he called the 'Invisible Cinema'[18] in 1958, which he later displayed in the Anthology Archive in New York (he was co-founder of the archive).[19] This version of the Invisible Cinema existed from 1970 until 1974 (Alfaro, 2012). Albie Thoms, writing in 1974, describes the Invisible Cinema as follows:

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> It is something of a space capsule, and when one enters it one is plunged into a sort of sensory deprivation chamber in which all one sees is the film on the screen and its sound (if it has any) is all one hears. Everything inside the cylindrical cinema is black, except for the screen, and the seats have hoods and blinkers so that one only looks at the screen. The cinema is tiered so that the seats of the row in front cut across the bottom of the screen just below head height. All visual and aural impressions extraneous to the film are eliminated. No one is admitted once the program has begun. (Thoms, 1974: 33)[20]

Whereas the earlier, more educational *dispositif* of film art stressed the materiality of the body, in this *dispositif*, the body and its senses were stimulated as little as possible.[21] At first sight, this might appear similar to the *dispositif* of the dominant commercial institutions; however, whereas commercial cinemas use comfort to encourage the spectator to relax, the Invisible Cinema's

audience was intended to remain alert. The under-stimulation of the body was intended to enable the viewer to concentrate his or her visual senses.[22] Instead of the pleasant physical experience of the soft, comfortable seating of a commercial cinema, inside the Invisible Cinema, the body of the spectator was supposed to become invisible and impalpable. The lack of physical stimulation of the other senses would, it was believed, allow the visual senses to become even more acute.[23] In addition to this, the chairs were constructed with 'hoods', separating but not isolating the audience members from each other. As a result, they barely heard or saw each other, which was supposed to reduce the potential distraction caused by the presence of the other spectators to a minimum (Hanich, 2016: 351). At the same time, however, the members of the audience continued to enjoy the communal experience that is so characteristic of the cinema *dispositif*. Although the Invisible Cinema grew out of modernism, the concept leads us back once again to Greenblatt's concept of wonder. The Invisible Cinema ensured that nothing and no one could distract

11: The black cinema in the Vondelpark Pavilion, with its white faux-leather chairs (Collection EYE Film Institute Netherlands)

the spectators from the artwork it displayed there – even more so than in the auditorium at the Stedelijk Museum – thus enabling a way of looking that was filled with the sense of wonder.[24]

In the 1907s de Vaal also felt that nothing should distract from the aesthetic experience of the films he screened.[25] In fact, his construction of a 'black box' cinema seems to have been inspired by Kubelka's Invisible Cinema. However, the Dutch version remained somewhat limited. There was a makeshift projection booth at the back of the screening room, a kind of carton box holding the projector, and the audience heard the projector running during the screening, something that surely must have distracted from the visual experience of the films. In addition, the seats differed from those in the Anthology Archive in many respects. In the first year, the cinema was furnished with white faux-leather chairs.

Although the testimony as to the comfort of these chairs varies, it remains a fact that they were very different from those in the Anthology Archive, which completely individualised the spectators and turned them into a sort of visual-experience machines. They were then replaced with cast-offs from the Circus Theater Carré, which offered a little more comfort – yet they were still not comparable to the seats in the Invisible Cinema. Despite these practical limitations, the idea behind the Filmmuseum's soberly designed cinema was connected to Kubelka and the ascetic modernist conception of what film was and how it should be shown and seen. Compared with the auditorium at the Stedelijk Museum, this new modernist-oriented screening room was even more austere and simply furnished, and as a result, it had even fewer distracting elements.

In the upstairs hall of the Pavilion, the Filmmuseum organised temporary exhibitions that visitors could peruse before entering the cinema. This hall, with its parquet floors and wooden doors, had been added to the Pavilion in 1924. During an exhibition, most of the old wood-panelled walls were covered with black partitions, which the Filmmuseum used to display posters, photos, graphic designs, or other materials from the collection. Sometimes the institute also arranged more official and extensive exhibitions. At these moments, it would divide the space further by using more black partitions. In this way, the Filmmuseum built a modernist, ascetic exhibition space inside and on top of the old interior of the Pavilion. It particularly organised exhibitions about filmmakers from the canon, such as Dziga Vertov and Joris Ivens. However, it also put on temporary exhibitions that were much less in the art-film tradition, such as the exhibition *De eerste dertig jaar film in Amsterdam* (*The First 30 Years of Film in Amsterdam*). This exhibition is a reminder of the fact that the municipality funded the Filmmuseum to preserve films about Amsterdam; most probably, the staging of this exhibition was a gesture to the city council

12: Dziga Vertov exhibition in the upper hall of
the Vondelpark Pavilion, 1975 (Photo by Henk de
Smidt, Collection EYE Film Institute Netherlands)

that made the institute's move to the Pavilion possible. The Filmmuseum also
organised the exhibition *Caligarismus* on German Expressionism in 1985 – its
first collaboration with Hoos Blotkamp, who was to become its new director
just a few years later.[26]

The exhibitions were used to teach the Filmmuseum visitors about how to
adapt and assimilate their contextual knowledge. In this way, it guided them
towards the screening and turned them into a more uniform audience. The
library was also located directly across from the screening room and, con-
sequently, this area of study became part of the presentation space. Visitors
could immediately access information about what they were going to see or
had just seen.

The remaining space in the Pavilion was decorated in a strikingly loud way. For example, two life-size female figures – former ornaments from a travelling cinema – flanked the fireplace in the upstairs hall. They were replaced in the 1980s with a Hupfeld Phonoliszt Violina, which came from the Willigers Collection.

The female figures were moved to the downstairs hallway next to the cash register, which was crammed full of old projectors and other devices illustrating the history of cinema. The downstairs entrance, with its square marble pillars and marble floor, was also built in 1924; thus, from their very first step, visitors were ushered into an environment suffused with an historical atmosphere (Hendriks, 1996: 17, 24).

The Filmmuseum exhibited the technological history of film, combined with the history of film as entertainment in this more or less permanent setup. By exhibiting objects derived from the history of film technology, the institute seems to have promoted the idea of film as 'cinema' over its connotation as 'art'. This may have helped to clarify the institute's position within the film field, but it was also a way of arranging the film museum that corresponded with a broader, international movement. This kind of exhibition on the history of film was rather popular during the late 1960s and early 1970s – for example, the Cinémathèque Royale opened a permanent exhibition of such

13: The library in the Vondelpark Pavilion, 1985 (Photo by Jean van Lingen, Collection EYE Film Institute Netherlands)
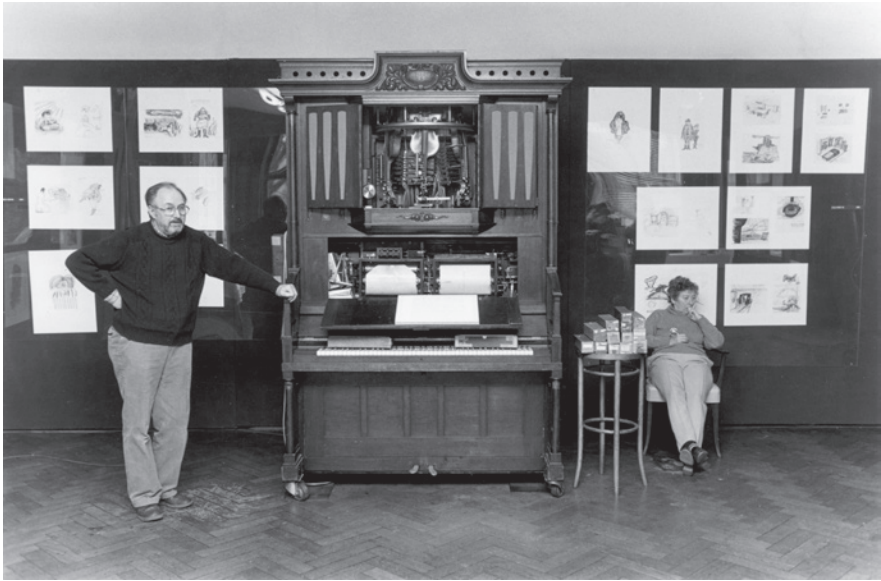
14: The pianolo-violina upstairs at the Vondelpark
Pavilion (Collection EYE Film Institute
Netherlands)

artefacts in Brussels in 1968, and Henri Langlois' Musée du Cinéma opened in 1972. In 1973, even Ernest Lindgren, who was never enthusiastic about gathering 'associated materials' together, began to think about how the BFI could host such an exhibition (Robinson, 2006: 251-252). Clearly, this kind of presentation strategy was in vogue during this period. Considering that this was also the time when video emerged and old films were frequently broadcast on television, it seems natural that the function of film museums changed, since they were no longer the only media providing access to old or forgotten films. Langlois (cited in Trope, 2001: 39) believed the film museum was increasingly the place where all the different elements of film should be preserved and contextualised,[27] and this implied exhibiting the history of cinema with material objects. This change in presentation was synchronised with the change in film history away from a constant repetition of the canon as part of a teleological narrative relating the development of film into an art form towards that 'other', not yet written history of film.

The spartan modernist screening room seems to contrast strongly with such an exhibition, full to the brim with historical objects. However, by using both these models, the Filmmuseum represented the different ideas about film museums – and the way they should be constructed and decorated – that

existed at the time. While the screening room imitated the strictly modern-istic Invisible Cinema, the exhibition of equipment and paraphernalia from the history of cinematography revealed its connection to the activities of Henri Langlois, Jacques Ledoux, and others, showing that side of film history that could not be presented on video or television.

The overall interior design of the Vondelpark Pavilion as a film museum was therefore the result of the search for the way of designing and furnish-ing an independent film institute. The Invisible Cinema may be seen as the ultimate consequence of the presentation of museum films as art. In turn, the exhibit of cameras and other objects illustrated the shift in film histori-cal interest towards other histories of film, such as film as entertainment and the technological history of film (Fielding, 1967). In its entirety, the building represented an institution where film as an independent museum object was placed centre stage.

TOWARDS A HISTORICAL SENSATION

In the late 1980s, a number of further developments took place in the film museum field. In 1988, for example, institutions such as the Museum of the Moving Image (MoMI) in London and the American Museum of the Moving Image (AMMI) in New York were created, where the history of film and media was exhibited in large-scale installations (Trope, 2001: 64). As mentioned earlier, the Filmmuseum also underwent a number of changes during this period, including a change of management, which led to the introduction of a new policy based on the idea that film should be regarded as a performance art, rooted in the history of performance. As a result, the Filmmuseum shifted its attention towards the history of film as a cultural-historical phenomenon, with an emphasis on the history of Dutch film culture. This change took shape, for example, in the institute's reconstruction policy, which turned towards the Dutch versions of films, focusing on the films as they were shown in the Neth-erlands rather than on the previously valorised director's versions. It was also reflected in the way the Filmmuseum refurbished the Vondelpark Pavilion. The Pavilion was totally renovated: it was stripped of its modernist, ascetic 1970s interior, unveiling walls and woodwork that dated from the late nineteenth and early 20th centuries. This not only changed the upstairs hall, but also the room in which the library had been located. This room was stripped of its suspended ceiling that dated from 1974, revealing one that was constructed in 1881.[28] The Filmmuseum started to use this space as a film theatre and, from that moment on, it screened films in a room with decorations that harked back to the nine-teenth century, the period in which early cinema is artistically rooted. In 1988,

the Filmmuseum programme noted: 'It is striking how film at the beginning of its history reverted to the "Art" of the last century.'[29]

The Filmmuseum, therefore, was able to link the popular medium of film directly to the traditional 'arts' of the nineteenth century by means of its screening room. This also implicitly referred to the hidden artistic side of the unknown silent films the museum had started to exhibit. So, once again, it showed its films in a space with artistic connotations. However, this new cinema differed greatly from the Invisible Cinema, which minimised the presence of any possible distracting ornaments; by contrast, the new interior was not meant to encourage the visual experience of wonder and an artistic reading of the films, but to create a historical sensation. The term 'historical sensation' was introduced by Johan Huizinga to refer to the feeling of contact with the past that was evoked not only by encountering historical details, but also by the materiality of the sources and the way they are rooted in the past. As

Huizinga explains:

> It may be that such a historical detail [...] suddenly gives me the feeling [of] immediately be[ing] in contact with the past, a sensation as deep as the pure enjoyment of art, a (do not laugh) almost ecstatic sensation of no longer being myself, of flowing into the world outside me, of being in contact with the essence of things, the experience of Truth through history. (Huizinga, 1948: 566)

In other words, the auditorium interior made these museum films resonate with their history during their screening. However, despite the fact that this screening room breathed the atmosphere of the late nineteenth and early 20th centuries, it had never actually been used as a cinema.

The Filmmuseum also reconstructed the Invisible Cinema, which it turned into a room that literally had its origins in the history of Dutch film culture. When Jean Desmet's Cinema Parisien, which he founded in the 1910s, closed its doors, his granddaughter Ilse Hughan donated the interior to the Filmmuseum, and the institute used it to reconstruct the screening room of the former cinema. From then on, the early films that, for a large part, derived from the Desmet Collection could be screened in a room that the institute called 'an entirely appropriate architectural historical monument'.[30] With the reconstruction of the Cinema Parisien in the Vondelpark Pavilion, the Filmmuseum made the historical screening context part of the museum presentation. This happened simultaneously with the theoretical shift from film art to film culture, and from the history of film as art to the history of its presentation.

Initially, the intention was to use this room primarily for the screening of silent films and early sound films.[31] These were mostly descended from the

time when Desmet showed films in the Parisien, so their screening resonated with the room's interior, and the audience became part of the reconstruction of a historical film-viewing scenario. The walls and lamps of the old Desmet screening room could be touched and the panelling emanated the special smell of old wood. Additionally, the screening of silent films was always accompanied by live music. This new presentation strategy reflected broader developments in the theoretical understanding of the way we perceive and learn.

> Today, minds and bodies are understood to be interrelated. The behaviour of the body cannot be separated from the mind and the emotions, and, equally, mental activity (cognition) works in partnership with bodily responses. Learning is understood to involve tacit, felt knowledge in addition to knowledge that can be verbalised. (Hooper-Greenhill, 2000: 113)

In line with this change in thinking, exhibitions were designed to address all the senses, not just that of the eye. The shift from visual dominance to an appeal to multiple senses was reflected in the Filmmuseum's new look: its spectators were very much a part of its reconstruction – they sat inside it, breathed it, smelt it, and felt it.

Furthermore, the recreation of an old film theatre created a sense of authenticity as a museum object gives weight to interpretation and signification by its physical presence. Eilean Hooper-Greenhill (2000) calls this the 'thinginess' of objects: they seem to have a one-to-one relationship with the past they refer to, which gives them an aura of authenticity (in Benjamin's sense). However, Hooper-Greenhill warns that objects' alleged 'authenticity' should simultaneously prompt a critical attitude. Despite the aura possessed by a historical object, its meaning will be just as flexible as that of a word or an image. In fact, the meaning bestowed on objects that are used to signify something are even more arbitrary than linguistic signs; the possible meanings of an object are less clear and the production of meaning can vary considerably, depending on the context in which it is presented and on the eye of the beholder (Hooper-Greenhill, 2000: 115).

In order to ensure that the spectator is clear on exactly what the object is intended to communicate, the referent and thus the interpretation of the object is often anchored in its contextual presentation. Objects are displayed alongside other objects with predetermined reference functions, and their meanings are also steered in a certain direction with the help of text or pronouncements. For example, the Filmmuseum underwrote the significance of the Cinema Parisien with its remarks about the interior as an 'appropriate architectural historical monument [in which] to exhibit silent films'. In

15: The exterior of the Cinema Parisien in its incarnation as a pornographic cinema (Collection EYE Film Institute Netherlands)

addition, whenever the Filmmuseum explained to audiences why the Cinema Parisien screening room was so special, it always referred to Desmet, his collection, and the early years of the 20th century, even though the interior could also refer to many other moments in the history of film. Indeed, the Cinema Parisien closed in 1987, screening films until that time. For example, in the 1970s, films like BLUE MOVIE (Verstappen, 1971) and DEEP THROAT (Damiano, 1972) were screened in this theatre.[32]

However, the Filmmuseum presented the Parisien as a screening room that reflected only its early years. As a consequence, the later films that were shown more recently in the Cinema Parisien were not included in its historical contextualisation of film. Here, we see a striking parallel with the film restoration policies of the time, described in Chapter 6: film museums concluded that

the director's (and possibly the premiere) versions of films were the 'original' ones, automatically dismissing all later versions, and they concentrated on reconstructing these particular films' editorial structure. Similarly, the Filmmuseum made the Parisien refer to its historical starting point – to the 1910s and to Desmet –, which had the effect of excluding all the other moments in its history.

This does not mean that films from another period were never shown in the Parisien, although such screenings automatically produced a sense of anachronism. Still, this was not necessarily a problem, because a museum space does not have to form a homogeneous whole with all the historical moments it presents. On the contrary, museums are so-called 'heterotopias of time'; they are special, isolated places, wherein time is stored and presented in a discontinuous way. As Foucault (1984: 49) says, 'there are heterotopias of time that accumulate unendingly, for example, museums and libraries; museums and libraries are heterotopias in which time never stops dividing itself'.[33] In museums, this heterogeneous accumulation of time, of periods, is automatically included in the displays. The Filmmuseum accomplished this, for example, by showing films from 1900 or from 1960 in a screening room that specifically referred to the 1910s, leading to an eclectic presentation format that could be called 'historical bricolage'.

The Filmmuseum also redecorated the Pavilion's upstairs hallway, which it stripped of the black panels nailed against the wood panelling that were previously used for exhibitions. It replaced the original doors with doors from the Cinema Parisien, giving the entrances to the screening rooms a material reference function, pointing to Dutch cinema history and film culture. The downstairs hallway, however, broadly retained its 1920s appearance. In this way, the Pavilion promised a journey back into the late nineteenth and early 20th centuries, to the romantic beginnings of film.

What is most remarkable, however, is the excessive focus on the early period of film history in the decoration of the Pavilion. This preference might be related to the fact that the Filmmuseum decided to start its work of preservation with its oldest films and so placed these high on the agenda, especially in the late 1980s and the early 1990s. Nevertheless, the reconstruction of a location is far more permanent than decisions over the priority of a certain part of a film collection. Another reason why it might have favoured objects from the early period of film history is the fact that they are older and rarer, which, as we saw in Part I, increased their (financial and cultural) value. A final explanation is that the Filmmuseum was influenced by the new film historical discourse, with its strong focus on silent film.

The move towards eclecticism during the last period is something we have already come across in the previous sections in relation to, for example, broad-

er ideas on the value of films as museum artefacts, which turned the collection into an accumulation of different sorts of films. There was also a similar move in the direction of a greater diversity in restoration policy, which expanded the potential versions of films to be restored from an emphasis on director's versions to screened and archival versions. All these different opinions and ideas about film and film history left traces in the archive, which means they were incorporated into the Filmmuseum's physical and material history.

Framing Programmes

'Programming allows works to contaminate one another'[34]– this quotation by Dominique Paini (1992: 25), former director of the Cinémathèque française, sums up the following chapter in a nutshell: namely, the way films 'contaminate' one another when shown together in the same programme. A similar phenomenon occurs in museum displays and exhibitions. In the field of museology, Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (1998) has coined the phrase 'in-context presentation' to describe how contagion works in these settings. An in-context presentation is created by means of a number of different strategies. The first entails positioning objects adjacent to one another, connecting them spatially; this spatial relationship then produces a semantic connection between the objects. However, film museums do not usually align their archival offerings spatially but temporally when they screen them as part of their film programmes. Jean-Luc Godard (1980: 130) was an exception – the director was a great advocate for film museum presentations that would literally show films side by side. The most common way of presenting films 'in context' with each other, however, is by screening them on the same evening.

The second way museums present objects 'in context' is by connecting them to textual resources containing explanations or offering ideas about the exhibited material (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1998: 21). In the case of film museums, these resources predominantly comprise programme booklets, posters, exhibitions, introductory lectures, and other forms of information that determine the content and meaning of the films and film programmes. The titles of the programmes and retrospectives also help guide the audience's reading of the films in a certain predetermined direction. For this reason, I frequently include these textual messages in the following analysis of film programmes.

The problem with the concept of in-context presentation is that it contains the term 'context'. Structuralist and literary theorist Jonathan Culler was

deeply critical of the term and submitted it to a sharp interrogation in the late 1980s. Ever since then, it has always been viewed by those involved in the field of cultural studies as highly problematic. In the preface to his book *Framing the Sign* (1988), Culler indicates that the relationship between the context and the contextualised has often been presented as far more straightforward than it actually is, with the context described as if it were a fixed element providing the contextualised object with meaning. Culler is of the opinion that it is in fact a far from static relationship, with a constant exchange of influence and meaning. The meaning of the context is also variable, according to what it contextualises. To prevent the analysis of signifying elements from falling back on a static image of signs operating within a fixed context, Culler suggests that we should refer not to 'context' but to 'framing':

> [O]ne might try to think not of context but of the framing of signs: how are signs constituted (framed) by various discursive practices, institutional arrangements, systems of value, semiotic mechanisms. (Culler, 1988: ix)

In her book, *Travelling Concepts*, Mieke Bal bases her analysis of museum presentation on flexible semantic systems by addressing the concept of 'framing'. Bal's (2002: 135- 136) conclusion is that the display of museum objects is always an event, which means that it entails constant change. As it stands now, what Kirshenblatt-Gimblett calls the in-context presentation consists of placing museum objects alongside other museum objects, providing each other with (shifting) meanings. In-context presentation, in this sense, is actually a form of framing that allows objects to 'contaminate' one another, producing a constant stream of flexible meanings.

Research into programmes, programming, and programme structures has emerged as a field of interest in film history over the past two decades. As with many other film historical issues, the recent research on this theme began, for the most part, in the field of early film, in which programming is considered to be one of the most important components of the film culture (Kessler, Lenk, and Loipendinger, 2002). However, studies by Tom Gunning and Malte Hagener draw attention to the fact that programming also played a major role in film leagues and ciné-clubs (Gunning 1999; Hagener 2006). In this chapter, I show that it was an equally important component in the history of film museums, precisely because it could either block or stimulate historicising, aestheticising, or other sorts of readings.

To gain a deeper insight into the interaction between the components of the various film museum *dispositifs*, I will look at the three periods that parallel the three different interiors of the Filmmuseum, analysing the institute's

programming strategies and the way these changed over each period, as well as at the structure of the programmes and how they were framed textually. The question I investigate is the way in which the film museum produced certain reading modes through its programmes of film screenings.

FILM AS ART OR FROM 'THE OLD BOX'?

In its founding report in 1946, the Nederlandsch Historisch Film Archief (Netherlands Historical Film Archive) stated that it wanted to focus mainly on the history of film art; thus, right from the start, it pledged to follow the route laid out by classical film historical discourse.[35] The Filmmuseum also publicised its ambition to familiarise cinema audiences with 'good' films, and it aimed to achieve this by, for example, a series of courses it offered in 1958.[36] In addition, the institute made known its ambition to educate its audience by programming what counted as 'good' films.

The programmes the Filmmuseum prepared with this goal in mind were shaped in various ways. The initial format consisted of screening an individual film as a complete full-length programme, which then took the title of the film. As these films stood alone, they were removed from any film historical context and placed on pedestals as independent works of art. According to Greenblatt (1991), viewing a work of art in isolation helps evoke an essential sense of wonder. By presenting an individual film as a full evening programme, the Filmmuseum guided its audience towards an attitude imbued with this feeling of awe. Examples of this include the films GREED (Stroheim, 1923) and CABIRIA (Pastrone, 1914), which the institute presented as full evening programmes in the 1950s and 1960s. It emphasised the artistry of the films in the accompanying texts, such as the *Filmmuseum Mededeling*, an informative programme leaflet that the Filmmuseum sent to its members. In some cases, it cited the opinions of other renowned institutions in the cultural film field – it reported, for example, that GREED was 'generally considered to be the best film by Von Stroheim and was elected one of the twelve best films of all time [...] at the Expo in Brussels in 1958'.[37] By referring to the Brussels Expo, an established authority in the cultural field (works by Corbusier and Varèse were also exhibited at this international exhibition), the Filmmuseum indicated that this film had been anointed as a work of art. With other films such as CABIRIA, the institute announced (in its own words) that it was 'one of the highlights of the Italian "silent" period'.[38] In cases such as these, the Filmmuseum itself acted as an authority in the field of cinema.

With the help of these accompanying texts, the Filmmuseum guided the audience in the direction of what Odin (2002) calls an 'aestheticising reading

mode', which invites the spectator to pay attention to the aesthetic values of the film. Generally, there is a third party, in this case the Filmmuseum, that indicates that the film is worthy of such a reading (Odin, 2002: 45-46). This was the strategy that institutes such as MoMA's Film Library in New York adopted during the 1930s, often using terms such as 'genius', 'masterpiece', and, more generally, 'brilliance' in their programme guides (Wasson, 2005: 152).

Although screening a single film as an entire programme was, of course, a way of presenting it as a work of art that deserved a reaction of wonder, most films were too short to fill the rather long Filmmuseum evenings at the Stedelijk Museum. The institute, therefore, often presented a programme with a number of shorter art films. In some cases, two films were shown, one before and one after the interval. CHELOVEK S KINO-APPARATOM (Vertov, 1929) and GOLUBOY EKSPRESS (Trauberg, 1929) were both shown in a programme entitled *Russian Film*. The Filmmuseum used its cinematic resources to inform the audience that these films were special.[39] In the event of even shorter films, such as experimental films, the Filmmuseum would show more than two in one evening. On the 13 and 14 March 1957, for example, it screened a programme called *The French Avant-garde*, which contained FAITS DIVERS (1923, Autant-Lara), LA COQUILLE ET LE CLERGYMAN (1927, Dulac), L'ÉTOILE DE MER (1928, Man Ray), ENTR'ACTE (1924, Clair), and UN CHIEN ANDALOU (1929, Buñuel). These five experimental films were introduced to the Netherlands by the Nederlandsche Filmliga – and came to the Filmmuseum through the Uitkijk Collection –, which christened them as avant-garde movies. By exhibiting them in one programme, the Filmmuseum presented them as a corpus of works. In addition, it showed that it regarded them as equivalent to one another by paying equally strong attention to each film in its guide, the *Filmmuseum Mededeling*.[40]

For some programmes, this textual guidance was a key element of the presentation strategy. In 1955, for example, the films THE KID (Chaplin, 1921) and THE GENERAL (Bruckman and Keaton, 1927) formed the programme *American Humour*.[41] In these films, Charlie Chaplin and Buster Keaton, respectively, played the leading roles. The titles of the films and the programme appear to imply an evening of entertainment and laughter rather than a night of watching serious, museum-quality films, but the programme notes made sure to alert the viewers to the artistic value of such comedies.[42] In order to convince its audience, the Filmmuseum quoted from *De komische film*, written by Constant van Wessem in 1931, as part of the series *Monografieën over de Filmkunst*, which states that 'it is a mark of superficial consideration when one neglects comedy in the reflections on film art' (van Wessem, 1931: 3). Van Wessem believed that comic film was initially more of a '*film an sich*' (that is, a film of an intellectual nature) than 'dramatic film'. Comic effects were indeed

achieved by means of technical experimentation: speeding up, slowing down, and other technical tricks (van Wessem, 1931: 5). By combining these films with quotes from van Wessem, the Filmmuseum presented them within the tradition of art film.[43] These connotations not only arose because of the content of the citations, but also because van Wessem and the monograph series were deeply embedded in the Filmliga tradition, which, as mentioned earlier, was the starting point for the discourse on film art in the Netherlands. The textual and programmatic presentation of these silent comedies is a good example of the guiding effect of accompanying texts.[44]

The Filmmuseum programmes almost always had an overarching theme. In this way, it framed the films historically and thematically – that is, it placed them within one, mostly classical, film historical frame so that they were seen to resonate with the appropriate part of (classical) film history. In addition, because they were often presented within the framework of a genre that was taken to represent the aesthetic development of film into an art form, the programmes duly encouraged the effect of wonder.

The Filmmuseum also presented programmes that exclusively contained film fragments. An example of one such was *Marie Seton on the work and person of Sergei Eisenstein*, presented in May 1953. During this programme, excerpts were screened from Eisenstein's films – BRONENOSETS POTYOMKIN (1926), OKTYABR (1928), STAROYE I NOVOYE (1929), ALEXANDER NEVSKY (1938), and IVAN GROZNYY (1944) – and combined with a lecture by Marie Seton, whose biography about the filmmaker, a personal friend, had appeared a year earlier.[45] The excerpts were literally cut out of their original context and deployed as 'signs' within a new structure illustrating the various stages in Eisenstein's work.[46] As a result, the images were given a new meaning, which differed greatly from the one they possessed as part of the film they derived from.

The Filmmuseum thus constructed its film historical arguments based on fragments from the films in its collection. They functioned as a *pars pro toto* (representatives of the whole) on two different levels. First, the institute described these fragments by the titles of the films they originated from, but in most cases their actual content remained without mention – the fragment was simply a means of illustrating the film title. In a further move, the Filmmuseum turned the film titles themselves into elements of a whole film historical narrative. In this way, the fragments that were used in the programme on Eisenstein stood in for each of his films, and this allowed the Filmmuseum then to use these film titles to illustrate its narrative about the development of Eisenstein's genius.

In other cases, the Filmmuseum presented film fragments as independent aesthetic objects – for example, the fragments showing the Odessa Steps sequence from BRONENOSETS POTYOMKIN and the cream separator sequence

from Staroye i Novoye. When the Filmmuseum showed these fragments as a prelude to the reprise of Time in the Sun (Seton, 1939/1940) in 1957, they were specified as 'De Odessatrappenscène' and 'Melkseparatorscène', respectively.[47] As mentioned earlier, this first sequence was celebrated as one of the highlights of Soviet montage, and acted as a guarantee of artistry. This was also the case, although to a lesser extent, for the cream separator scene. In a way, Eisenstein himself wrote this sequence into film history because he used it as an example of how to construct emotional scenes using non-emotive imagery (Eisenstein, 1949: 77). Bertina (1950: 91) considered the use of Soviet-style montage to be a prerequisite if a film was to be considered art. He attributed a pioneering role to the Russian filmmakers: 'The Russians clearly proved that film art needs to use montage as the essential starting point for an art of movement.'[48] B.F. Hoyer (1932: 24), who wrote a booklet, *Russian Film Art*, as part of the series *Monografieën*, also stated that editing was the starting point of film art. As a result, a fragment that functioned as a *pars pro toto* for Soviet montage met the aesthetic standards of the time, and could not but be an example of film art.

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The fragments that were programmed during this period were mostly acquired actively; it seems obvious that the reason they are in the archive is because the Filmmuseum wanted to show them in this form. We can see in retrospect that, besides the motivations behind the Filmmuseum's acquisition policies mentioned in Chapter 2, in many cases, its programming and presentation strategies also provided a rationale for the collection and acquisition of specific film material.

In addition to the way the Filmmuseum structured its programmes, it also connected various evening screenings to each other by giving them an overarching theme and title, presenting them as a single episode in film history. This seems to have been a deliberate strategy, devised to present film history on the screen in a more complete and coherent way. However, despite the fact that such a series allowed the institute more time to work intensively on one historical episode, there was still a need for selection and exclusion. Still, because the selection of films was less limited by the constraints of time, a closer reading of these series should provide us with an insight into the other reasons behind showing particular films. For example, the retrospective, *40 years of Russian Film from 1917 to 1957*, illustrates which films from this historical period the Filmmuseum considered the most important. The retrospective consisted of eight screenings, during which it showed eighteen films illustrating the history of Russian film. The institute, however, clearly excluded those films made before the Russian Revolution. Within the dominant film historical narrative at the time, these pre-revolutionary films were considered bourgeois and anti-artistic (Hommel and Meyer, 1989: 50). This perspective

was present in the Netherlands from very early on: for example, in 1932, Hoyer wrote that Russian films made before 1917 were not very different from those made in Western countries. Besides, he argues, these films were hardly shown or seen in the West and, consequently, they barely played a role in the development of (Western) cinema – the fact that, by 1932, almost no one remembered Yevgeni Bauer or Iosif Ermoliev indicates that these films were not been very valuable. Hoyer (1932: 3) ended his chapter on pre-revolutionary Russian film by claiming that 'Russian national cinema was born in the month of October in the year 1917, in "the last days of St. Petersburg" – "ten days that the shook the world"'.[49]

In 1958, the Filmmuseum repeated Hoyer's claim almost verbatim in a publication it released to accompany its Russian retrospective. It is striking that these pre-revolutionary films had been shown a year before during the first *Congrès international de la recherche historique* in Paris, organised by the Cinémathèque française and FIAF in November 1957, where they were hailed as a major discovery (Mannoni, 2006: 251-252). Yet, just a year later, the Filmmuseum excluded these seminal films of the Russian silent film era from its programme. This shows that it kept strictly to the dominant film historical ideas as applied to Russian cinema, despite the fact that the FIAF archivists had drawn the opposite conclusion. Le Giornate del Cinema Muto showed these early films in 1988, causing a general surge of excitement over their 'rediscovery'. But the prevailing assumption that this corpus of films had been starved of the appreciation they deserved due to lack of access to the Soviet Union's film archives was belied by the fact that they had been shown in Paris in 1957.[50] It seems more likely, therefore, that the general unfamiliarity with and lack of appreciation for these films was mainly because of the persistence of certain dominant film historical ideas.

Another retrospective that closely followed the film historical perspective of the time was *Van Caligari tot Hitler* (*From Caligari to Hitler*) (1952-1953), based on the 1947 book by Siegfried Kracauer. In a series of six programmes, the Filmmuseum demonstrated the development of German film, starting with DAS CABINET DES DR. CALIGARI (Wiene, 1919) and ending with TRIUMPH DES WILLENS (Riefenstahl, 1935). In an almost flawless chronological line, it showed a series of fifteen films, all discussed by Kracauer. Because the Filmmuseum decided to base this programme on Kracauer's book, any film not mentioned in the text was excluded from the very start, and it limited itself even more by following the period mentioned in the title of the book, starting with Caligari and ending with the propaganda films of the Third Reich. This is in contrast to the book itself, which begins with a description of the earlier period in the history of German film. It is also notable that the Filmmuseum chose to screen only the well-known films Kracauer discussed, even though he

also wrote about films that were far less well-known. By following Kracauer, the Filmmuseum decided to present a different, more socio-historical perspective on film history, but, when it came to selecting a number of films from his book for its final programme, the canon once again re-emerged. So we can discern several conflicting approaches in the one programme series.

Aside from the connections it made between the films in its retrospectives, the Filmmuseum also drew parallels between those films it screened completely independently from one another. For example, it informed its members about the screening of CABIRIA in these terms: 'It is therefore interesting to be able to compare "Cabiria" with what is still one of the most impressive presentations from the history of film, Griffith's "Intolerance", which was recently screened at the NFM.'[51] By making these connections, the Filmmuseum again followed an existing discourse: CABIRIA was one of W. D. Griffith's favourite films. Moreover, these observations reveal that the Filmmuseum used the entire programme to construct a film historical argument, and it again placed the emphasis on producing an aesthetic reading of the film by comparing CABIRIA with the aesthetic value of the highly appreciated film INTOLERANCE.

The programme formats discussed so far always displayed the films as equivalent in status. However, the Filmmuseum also deployed certain strategies when it wished to infer distinctions, giving some films more emphasis, and hence more importance, than others. One strategy the institute used was the prelude – that is, by showing a film as an introduction to the main film. A clear example of this format was the programme *Mensen Geobserveerd* (*People Observed*), containing the film MENSCHEN AM SONNTAG (Siodmak and others, 1929-1930). In the programme notes, the Filmmuseum clearly laid out the structure of the programme and the different status of the films shown as the prelude and the film shown as part of the main programme. 'In the prelude, some films are being shown that, as well as the main film, observe man in his daily life: *Images d'Ostende* (1929), *Dagjesmensen* (1929), *A propos de Nice* (1929).'[52] As with the main film, the three short films comprising the prelude all derived from the avant-garde tradition; however, the three shorts were shown together before the interval, while the main film was programmed afterwards and shown in isolation, which signifies that its presentation was intended to evoke a sense of wonder.

A prelude was also sometimes made up of fragments. One example is the screening in 1954 of TIME IN THE SUN (Seton, 1939/40), which was preceded by excerpts from Eisenstein's films BRONENOSETS POTYOMKIN, STAROYE I NOVOYE, and ROMANCE SENTIMENTALE (1930). These fragments positioned Seton's film within the tradition represented by Eisenstein's classic films, effectively focusing audience attention not on the film made by Seton but on

those by Eisenstein. Remarkably, this example concerns the screening of a main film that was not (yet) part of the canon; by programming it in combination with fragments derived from canonised art films, the Filmmuseum positioned it within the canonical framework, so that it would be 'contaminated' by the artistic connotations of Eisenstein's films. In fact, the programming even pushed the spectator in the direction of a reading that took Eisenstein to be the maker of the film, rather than Seton. This programme structure produced a so-called 'artistic reading mode', which is activated when a spectator follows the promptings of an 'expert' considered to be part of the institution of art (Odin, 2002: 47).

Often, preludes only consisted of a single fragment. For example, in November 1960, the Filmmuseum screened Dr. Mabuse, der Spieler (Lang, 1922) twice, preceded by an excerpt from Das Cabinet des Dr. Caligari (Wiene, 1919). The latter was a film the audience was assumed to know, at least according to the text in the accompanying *Mededeling*, which connected the films to each other by means of quotations from the aforementioned book, *From Caligari to Hitler* (1947).[53] The combination of the text and the fragment positioned Dr. Mabuse, der Spieler within Kracauer's film historical framework.

In addition to the canon, the Filmmuseum also showed unknown silent films that it considered 'primitive'. Because these films had been awarded a lower status since the 1920s, they contrasted perfectly with the films it presented as 'art'. Therefore, whenever the Filmmuseum showed both 'types' of film in one programme, this resulted in what I would call 'contrast programming'. By emphasising the presumed difference in the quality of the films in the accompanying *Mededeling*, the Filmmuseum strengthened the effect of contrast.

One way of encouraging the emergence of such a contrast was to show a canonical film immediately after an unknown 'primitive' film. An example of this tactic is seen in a programme with the ambiguous title, *Van filmdrama tot absolute film* (*From Dramatic Film to Absolute Film*) (1957). Before the intermission, the Filmmuseum showed Fior di male (Gallone, 1914), an Italian silent film that the institute indicated was both 'precious' and a 'curiosity'. It placed this is in contrast to the one shown after the break, Berlin. Die Sinfonie der Grossstadt (Ruttmann, 1927), which it stated was one of the finest examples of 'absolute film'. Finally, the Filmmuseum literally announced the comparison it wished the audience to draw between the two films by saying that Berlin created a 'wonderful contrast' to Gallone's film.[54] From this example, it is clear that art films could hold extra allure when contrasted with so-called 'primitive curiosities'. Those films included in the institute's programme that it thought of as less valuable were also termed 'primitive progenitors'.

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Another presentation structure that promoted this form of contrast programming was the prelude mentioned above. In this scenario, a series of unknown silent films was screened as a prelude to the *pièce de résistance* shown after the break. For example, in June 1954, the Filmmuseum presented a programme called *The Western*, consisting of the film STAGECOACH (Ford, 1939), preceded by THE STAGECOACH DRIVER AND THE GIRL (Mix, 1915),[55] THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY (Porter, 1903), and ÁRIE PRÉRIE (Trnka, 1949). The accompanying text said the following about STAGECOACH: 'In this so-called 'Western' [the content] is given a more responsible form and meaning [...] than in the previous films of this genre, in which fighting and shooting [is shown] from beginning to end.'[56] The first two films were just such 'previous films of this genre'. In the above quotation, the Filmmuseum presents THE STAGECOACH DRIVER AND THE GIRL and THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY – clearly two Westerns of an earlier date that it labelled as 'primitive' – as a prelude to STAGECOACH, which the institute described in the text as the peak of this genre.

Programmes showing fragments as a prelude could also be used to produce a contrast: for example, on 25 and 26 November 1953, the Filmmuseum showed JONGE HARTEN (Huguenot van der Linden and Josephson, 1936) in a programme entitled *Oude mislukkingen en Jonge harten* (which roughly translates as *Old Failures and Young Hearts*). In the early 1950s, the Filmmuseum had recovered this film, which A. van Domburg (1936: 70) had raised to the level of art, in a number of small pieces. Based on these fragments, and with the help of Huguenot van der Linden, it reconstructed the director's version.[57] Subsequently, the Filmmuseum's 1953 programme showed the recently reconstructed film in contrast with excerpts from three 'failed' 'old' Dutch films. The so-called failures were presented as anonymous pieces of film without mentioning their creators or their year of production; they were simply presented as old and unsuccessful, in marked contrast to the announcement of JONGE HARTEN, in which the Filmmuseum credited not only the director, but also the cameraman and actors.[58] The fact that these 'failures' were not further specified shows that their only value was as examples of 'primitive' film.

The idea of contrasting film art with old 'failures' also appears in the film historiography of this period, in which early films were often described as 'primitive'. Apart from these parallels with the dominant film historical perspective, this type of programme also shows striking similarities to the screenings organised by the Filmliga (1982: 34) from the 1920s on, in which it also showed both old and new films in what it called *Querschnitt* (literally, cross-section) programmes that made visible the 'progress' that cinema had made since the beginning of the 20th century. According to Gunning (1999: 242), this format was also seen at similar film associations in other countries. Hagener (2006: 270-273) argues that this type of programming fitted within the broader

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programming strategies that characterised avant-garde screenings: the programmes consisted mainly of films that appeared to conflict, stimulating their audiences to analyse what they saw. This was at odds with the tactics used by commercial cinemas, where spectators were not encouraged to think but to immerse themselves in the spectacle. The Filmmuseum wielded similar strategies, aimed at producing an active spectator with the help of contrasting programmes and, as became clear in the previous chapter, hard seating.

The Filmmuseum also screened programmes that contained exclusively 'primitive' films. These often had more general titles than their regular programmes, such as *Uit de oude doos* (*From the Old Storage Box*), *Uit oude tijden* (*From Olden Times*), or *Uit de oude draaidoos* (*From the Hand-Cranked Cinematograph*). These programmes were made up of what the Filmmuseum called 'old failures' and 'odious films'. In 1956, the institute announced such a programme as follows:

> Film history has experienced many highlights that are just as many milestones in its development. Between these highlights are periods during which films were made that only are of interest as historical-romantic documents [...] and that take us back to earlier times, the period of 'odious films' and comical one-reelers.[59]

This text divides the corpus of silent films into two very different parts, and it does this in two different ways. On the one hand, the Filmmuseum differentiates the highlights and successes of film history from the 'historical-romantic' documents of lesser value, which were made in the periods between what it believed to be cinema's early failed experiments in film and its later incarnation as art. On the other hand, the institute connects these so-called historical-romantic films to the early period of film history. Indeed, the written sources of classical film history reveal that these early films were accorded less value. In general, the classical film historians skipped the more commercial productions that were made in the period between the alleged highlights; the Filmmuseum, however, programmed these early pre-war films, although any potential interpretation of these films as aesthetic or artistic objects was blocked in advance. Notably, the Filmmuseum also showed three comedies from the 1920s, one with Buster Keaton, in its 1958 programme, *From Olden Times*. This appears to be contrary to the idea mentioned earlier that comedies should be regarded as art films. These two different presentation strategies also encouraged the adoption of two contrasting ways of reading such films: on the one hand, the Filmmuseum presented comedies as progressive experiments leading to the development of film as an art form; on the other hand, it contrasted these films with that same tradition of film art.

Finally, coloured films also played a role in this programming strategy. As the Filmmuseum screened its nitrate prints during this period, the audiences must have seen the tints, tones, and hand and stencil colourings. An example of this was the screening in March 1956 of the programme called *Uit de oude doos* (*From the Old Storage Box*), containing two Pathé films. The Filmmuseum announced both films as 'hand-coloured films by Pathé Frères'.[60] Interestingly, this seems to have been the only time that it paid any mind to these colourations, even though the colours must have been visible in many other screenings (for example, the aforementioned projection of FIOR DI MALE). By drawing attention to the coloured films within the framework of an 'historical-romantic' programme, the institute presented their colours not as intrinsic to these films but as curious additions, preventing any potential aesthetic appreciation of them.

The colouring of silent films only began to be considered artistic around the mid-1980s. By gathering together the available facts, we can conclude that canonical films were more likely to be shown in black and white than 'primitive', often unknown, films. First of all, the Filmmuseum projected nitrate without any problems, and this was often the case for the so-called 'primitive' films. After all, the purpose was to show a random selection of films and every film archival institute had at least a few examples of such films in its collection. However, canonical films were duplicated far more frequently, mainly to provide film museums that did not possess these titles with projection prints. As we saw in Chapter 5, film museums generally used black-and-white material for duplication, and as a result, these canonised titles were spread around the archives in the form of black-and-white prints. The chance that film museums would show well-known titles in black and white was many times greater than for 'primitive' or 'curious' examples from film's early period. It seems likely that, due to these mechanisms, art film became increasingly associated with black and white, while colour was connected to the far less valued early part of film history.

By presenting early films as curiosities from 'the old storage box', the Filmmuseum followed a different strategy than, for example, MoMA, which tried to create an aestheticising reading mode for these films. However, the audience refused to follow the discourse MoMA tried to promote and instead produced a very different reading, as Peter Catapano (1994: 39) shows: '[A]udiences sometimes displayed a more raucous pleasure often expressed in outbursts of laughter at what were sometimes simply referred to as "old films".' Another example of a different presentation strategy can be seen in the screenings of Méliès' films in France during the late 1910s and early 1920s. Hagener (2006: 274) explains that writers, artists, and critics active in the avant-garde movement claimed that these films could be considered examples of an alter-

native form of cinema that resisted conventional narrative structures. In this sense, they exhibited the prevailing modernist belief in the disruption of narrative forms and their replacement with abstraction. Remarkably, however, the Filmliga did not draw the same conclusions. This is probably due to the extremely rigid way it adhered to the 'doctrine' of abstraction as defined by Menno ter Braak (1929) in his theory of 'absolute film'.

TRANSITIONS

The Filmmuseum's move to the Vondelpark Pavilion signalled the start of its pursuit of an individual identity. However, its conversion into an independent film museum that functioned without the support of the Stedelijk Museum had begun a little earlier. For example, four years before the move, the Filmmuseum launched a magazine called *Filmmuseum · cinemateek*, containing background information about the institute and its film programmes. In the first issue, it explained that the emergence of the journal was 'the sign of a new turn in the course of the development of the Filmmuseum';[61] it was a manifestation of the direction the institute intended to follow. An image of the Vondelpark Pavilion graced the first cover, indicating this new direction.[62]

During this period, a number of changes also took place in the Filmmuseum's programme strategies and structures. Remarkably, the differences in status between the films screened together in a single programme decreased, although there was still a clear distinction between, on the one hand, programmes in which the Filmmuseum presented lesser-known films, and on the other hand, its programmes of art films. Both categories, however, were presented in novel ways.

The display of art films showed some striking changes, increasing the focus on the main film. For example, on the 10 March 1971, the Filmmuseum showed INFLATION (Richter, 1928), POLIZEIBERICHT ÜBERFALL (Metzner, 1928), and DIE FREUDLOSE GASSE (Pabst, 1925). The first two films, which formed the prelude to DIE FREUDLOSE GASSE, had no relationship whatsoever to the theme of the evening, a retrospective of the work of Asta Nielsen.[63] The main feature was the only film on the programme that fit the overall theme. The brief overview of the programme on the back of *Filmmuseum · cinemateek* mentions DIE FREUDLOSE GASSE as a stand-alone; the films preceding it are not mentioned. As a result, the prelude appears to be included more because the Filmmuseum felt obliged to do so, rather than as a fundamental part of the evening programme. Another example is the screening on 3 November 1971 of a programme of films that made up part of a larger series, *De nieuwe Zweedse film* (*New Swedish Film*), in which a new Swedish film was preceded

by two Buster Keaton films that were neither Swedish nor new.[64] This prelude once again did not add anything to the theme of the retrospective. As a consequence, the films before the interlude increasingly became a separate presentation, functioning less as examples of a film historical narrative and more as independent screenings.

A year later, the Filmmuseum stopped programming films as a prelude to the main film entirely. All the films it screened as part of a programme were given equal importance, and it only showed programmes that consisted of more than one film if they formed some sort of unity, or when the programme was part of a retrospective. Shorts were presented in special 'short film' programmes. Films were therefore no longer programmed as a sort of 'compare and contrast' exercise for the audience, and the prelude disappeared. Meanwhile, the Filmmuseum also reduced the duration of the programmes to a maximum of two hours,[65] allowing the spectators to devote their whole attention to watching a specific film. Overall, a clear shift is apparent – away from programmes that combined films in ways that reinforced a certain film historical argument towards a more individual presentation. This focus on the individuality of each film, seen in isolation from the rest, echoes the aims of the Invisible Cinema, which attempted to construct an environment in which nothing could distract from the particular film on display.

A simultaneous change occurred in the way art films were screened and the reading modes they produced. For example, in 1982, the Filmmuseum used its Filmliga films to tell the story of the history of modernism in the Netherlands in the programme *De eerste FILMLIGA films – 1927/28/29* (*The First Filmliga Films – 1927/28/29*). The occasion for this programme was the reprint of the journal *Filmliga*.[66] Hans Schoots states that the reprint was an expression of the revival of the modernist approach to film. The re-evaluation of the *Filmliga* followed Dutch film critic Jan Blokker's attempt in the 1960s to banish these ideas (Schoots, 1999: 150-51). The Filmmuseum wrote an introduction to the programme in *Filmmuseum · cinemateek* that gave a short summary of the history of the Nederlandsche Filmliga. The programme itself consisted of four films, each of which illustrated a certain moment in the history of the Filmliga. These films were DE BRUG (Ivens, 1928), which the Filmliga had presented as the first film made in the Netherlands; OPUS 2, 3, 4 (Ruttmann, 1921-1925)[67], an illustration of 'aesthetic thinking' about film; UN CHIEN ANDALOU (Buñuel, 1929), which was used to illustrate the fierce debates among the Filmliga members on what to show and what not to show; and MAT (Pudovkin, 1926), whose screening in the 1920s was perceived to be the reason for setting up the Filmliga in the first place. Unexpectedly, though, the order of the films did not follow the chronology of the accompanying film historical story: the programme started with DE BRUG and ended with MAT (Pudovkin, 1926),

even though, in reality, the Filmliga story started with MAT and ended with DE BRUG. This seems to have been the result of a practical choice to screen the three short films first and then show the longer film as a feature. Apparently, the grip of the traditional programming format, which always started with the shorts and ended with the feature, proved stronger than the chronological demands of classical film historical discourse.

The descriptions of the films, which were direct copies of contemporary articles in the journal *Filmliga*, written by Filmliga members, positioned the films within this history.[68] The texts were peppered with the latest ideas about film art and art film from the 1920s and, by reprinting them, the Filmmuseum quite transparently presented these films as artistic works.[69] The institute, in fact, frequently used existing reviews or similar texts to describe the films in its programmes and, in nearly all cases, this had a double effect: it placed the films in a film historical framework while retaining the existing discourse on their artistic value.

What stands out in this period, however, is the increasing appearance in the programmes of films that were not considered film art. They were no longer labelled 'curiosities' as in the preceding period; instead, the Filmmuseum now presented these films as relics of film history, traces of the unknown past. As a result, these more ordinary films also gained stronger film historical connotations. A good example of a programme that presented early films in this way was the retrospective *De Amerikaanse zwijgende film* (*American Silent Film*) in 1973. This differed from earlier similar programmes in many ways. First, the number of silent films included had increased remarkably: the retrospective consisted of 37 films, spanning twelve evening programmes.[70] This contrasts greatly with previous programmes with the same theme – for example, the retrospective held on 29 May 1957 consisted of just three films, including a 1955 documentary on the subject. The 1973 programme, therefore, offered a far more extensive and detailed insight into the development of American silent film.[71] The Filmmuseum also emphasised that this programme consisted of films that were previously unknown and had never before been viewed in the Netherlands. Another striking detail is that a large part of these unknown films dated from before 1900.[72] Until the time of the retrospective, the Filmmuseum had shown exactly one film from before 1900, L'ARROSEUR ARROSÉ (Lumière, 1895), in 1971.[73] The fact that such a large number of films from that hitherto neglected period were shown in one programme was certainly an important development.

In 1985, the Filmmuseum presented the programme *Hommage aan Jean Desmet* (*A Homage to Jean Desmet*) in the Cinema Parisien, Desmet's old cinema, in celebration of its 75 years of existence. The Filmmuseum reported in its journal that it wished to reconstruct the programmes screened in the 1910s

just as Desmet had presented them. However, due to the composition of the Desmet Collection, it was impossible to reconstruct the original programmes authentically: the collection simply did not cover enough genres. Thus, it was Desmet's later selection choices (described in Chapter 1) that determined the Filmmuseum's programming possibilities. Besides which, as digital humanities project Data Driven Film History has shown, Jean Desmet often screened films he rented from other distributors in his theatre, making it practically impossible to reconstruct these programmes using only films from the collection.[74] This was reinforced by the fact that the institute had almost exclusively preserved the collection's longer feature films – a marked example of the repercussions of preservation decisions on later programming activities. In the end, the Filmmuseum decided to limit itself to six reconstructions that were 'as close as possible' to the 'original' Desmet programmes. What was remarkable was the way the Filmmuseum openly discussed the limitations of the archive as a film historical instrument in its descriptions of this programme in its journal.[75]

The Filmmuseum also wrote about similar problems with its film prints, mentioning, for example, if they were complete or not. In contrast to earlier times, when the Filmmuseum had presented film fragments as a deliberate programming choice, the reference to incomplete films drew attention to the vulnerability of the film material. The institute emphasised the limitations of the material as a source of film history. This more historically critical approach to its film prints occurred simultaneously with the shift in focus at the end of the 1970s away from the construction of film vaults to the problems of preservation. The preservation of films necessitated the study of the film prints, and these new activities resulted in the discovery of new forms of information that shed light on their film historical value.[76] The Filmmuseum used these new ideas to revise the framework within which it presented its films.

Although, during this time, the Filmmuseum increasingly regarded early, unknown films as significant film historical documents, it continued to present them as 'primitive' testimonies from a less sophisticated stage in film history.[77] Despite the fact that, by 1985, it had begun to mention judiciously and frequently the possible beauty of these films, it still felt constrained to add that this quality was probably coincidental. Its comments on an unidentified Kalem film is an example of this approach:

> The Kalem films are known for their sophisticated photography, with a high degree of naturalness. This is also very visible in this film. However, this quality mostly arose by chance, as is often the case with cinematic discoveries in the period of silent film.[78]

The Filmmuseum seemed to mix ideas from the emerging new film history with those from classical film history. For example, when discussing a film by Edwin S. Porter, it stated:

> New film history is working towards a more nuanced and better documented perspective, which shows that Porter was one of the better directors of the 'primitive' period. This is shown in this film by, among other things, the composition of the well-defined shot.[79]

In one sentence, the Filmmuseum showed itself to be aware of the new film historical research that was attempting to establish a more nuanced perspective on film history, yet still rehashed the old ideas about the 'primitive' nature of early film. It seems that the teleological view that new film history denounced kept reappearing in film museum practice. As a result, programmes such as the Desmet retrospective, mentioned above, became a patchwork of detailed research on a micro-level, interspersed with classical views on the 'primitive' status of the films on show.

EDUCATIONAL DISCOVERIES

As previously mentioned, film museum practice underwent a number of changes in the late 1980s. This not only took the shape of a new approach to the preservation of nitrate films, but also resulted in new programming policies. For example, the Filmmuseum decided it would mainly show films from its own archive from then on.[80] During this period, the institute frequently selected unknown films from the archive for preservation and restoration and, as such, for inclusion in the museum collection; hence, the canon gradually disappeared into the background. Since screening and collection policies were strongly intertwined at this time, these patterns were also reflected in the Filmmuseum's programming. But what did this mean in terms of the film historical discourse?

The Filmmuseum mostly presented unknown silent films from the museum collection in thematically structured programmes. These often comprised multiple evening shows, during which the Filmmuseum showed sometimes one but, more often, several films. The programmes developed sub-themes that were explained in the programme notes and in its *NFM-Themareeks*, a series of publications on film museum discoveries.[81] In this way, the Filmmuseum was able to present unknown films in a new film historical context.

One example of a programme in which the Filmmuseum organised this new form of 'retrospective' was *Film en de Eerste Wereldoorlog* (*Film and the*

First World War). The programme was shown in July 1993, at the same time as the *IAMHIST* (*International Association for Media and History*) conference on the same subject, which was also taking place in Amsterdam. As part of the overall theme, the Filmmuseum put forward several sub-themes, such as newsreels and German propaganda films, two genres that were very under-researched.[82] In the programme *Amsterdam-Venetië in het Nederlands Filmmuseum* (*Amsterdam-Venice in the Netherlands Filmmuseum*), the Filmmuseum screened underexposed nonfiction genres, such as early 'travelogues'.[83] In addition to these previously unknown films, it also brought attention to underexposed techniques: in 1992, for example, it presented a programme about coloured films entitled *Een staalkaart van kleur* (*An Overview of Colour*). This programme included three evening shows covering three sub-themes: namely, the extravagance of the early use of colour; the use of colour to satisfy the prevailing obsession with realism; and the dramaturgical use of colour.[84] It particularly focused on the various functions of colour in early film, the different styles of colour in the early period, and the interrelationship between style and technology.

What is striking about the thematic programmes is that they appeared to breathe an atmosphere of surprise: the Filmmuseum presented its programmes as voyages of discovery, in which the public could partake in unravelling the secrets of silent films. On some occasions, the Filmmuseum even referred to this sense of discovery in its thematic title, such as *Heroïsche Omzwervingen – de gouden jaren van de expeditiefilm 1900-1940* (*Heroic Wanderings – the golden years of the expedition film 1900-1940*). In this programme, it showed sixteen unknown early films of expeditions, all of which were silent,[85] and released a series of publications on the theme entitled, *Heroïsche omzwervingen met de camera* (*Heroic Wanderings with a Camera*), a description of the work of three travelling cameramen from that era. Peter Delpeut introduced it with a short biography of the three filmmakers, followed by excerpts from their writings, in which they describe the hardships they had to endure in order to bring these 'unknown' parts of the world to the viewing public. Indeed it was often through their efforts that audiences in the first decades of the 20th century discovered these faraway places. In a later parallel, the Filmmuseum's archival explorations enabled its audiences to re-discover these films that so vividly represented a particular part of the history of film.

Film historical discoveries often returned in the programming. For example, in March 1990, the Filmmuseum invited its audience to undertake a joint film historical quest in a programme it dedicated to the theme of exoticism and film. First, it explained in the programme guide what it meant by 'exoticism' and the special role this theme had played in the history of cinema. The fact that the reason why and the means by which cinema embraced the exotic

had not yet been investigated[86] meant that the Filmmuseum was able to ask the members of the audience to watch the films together and discover for themselves how the idea of the 'exotic' and film were related. This way, the museum participated in the endeavour of film historical research in an intoxicating exploration of unknown films, as well as in the quest to identify other potential gaps in film history as it was written during the classical period.

The Filmmuseum introduced this new experimental programming policy at approximately the same moment as Dutch universities started to view media studies more seriously and to integrate it into their curricula. Both Utrecht and Amsterdam universities introduced a chair of film studies, enhancing its academic status, and Eric De Kuyper established a course called 'Film en opvoeringskunsten' ('Film and Performance Arts') at the University of Nijmegen. In 1993, this professionalisation of the field of media studies in academic research and university programmes in the Netherlands was central to a debate organised around the title, 'The Future of Media History', by the Vereniging Geschiedenis, Beeld en Geluid (Association of History, Image and Sound) and the Committee to Promote Media Historical Research, founded by the Sociaal Wetenschappelijke Raad (Social Science Council) (Vree van and Slot, 1993-1994: 4).

This focus on film history and the desire to enrich the discipline were best reflected in the workshops and *themadagen* (theme days) organised by the Filmmuseum. I discussed in Chapter 3 how, during these workshops, the Filmmuseum showed films that still lacked historical resonance as a way of prompting a discussion about them. These screenings further operated as a programming strategy, in which the Filmmuseum was able to show a large number of its films over a short period of time to a select audience of film historians and archivists. In addition, the institute provided a time and place where these two groups of people, who were equally part of the ongoing film historical discourse, could meet, allowing them to discuss with and learn from each other.[87] Finally, because the Filmmuseum published books based on their discussions, the workshops also provided a film historical framework for the films it screened in its regular programmes.[88]

During the same period, the Filmmuseum also preserved many unknown silent films from the archive, simply because of their quality and beauty, and mentioned this when announcing the screening of these films.[89] However, it did not appear so easy to convince audiences of the beauty of this 'new' old material. In its programme notes, the Filmmuseum printed an article by De Kuyper in which he gave a detailed description of his experiences as a programmer, revealing that, although he lovingly showed all kinds of special unknown films, the audience still preferred the more famous ones. De Kuyper uses the metaphor of a cook who introduces a novel menu to explain that an

audience needs to learn how to appreciate certain flavours and tastes. He concludes: 'They do not know what is good and tasty [...] But I have stamina. And I will serve it again another day' (Kuyper De, 1989).[90]

The audience therefore had to develop a taste for these films; it would need to learn from its viewing experience before it could see for itself the beauty of these unknown gems. To accomplish this, the Filmmuseum employed three strategies. First, it continued to programme unknown films, with hopes that Dutch film-lovers would stand up and be counted (Hommel, 1991b: 44). In addition, De Kuyper produced a booklet on the character and aesthetics of early 20th-century commercial films, entitled 'De vreemde taal van de stomme film – film in de periode 1910-1915', which appeared in the *NFM-Themareeks* (Kuyper De, 1992b; 1992c). In this essay, he argues that these films were artistically valuable, even though there was still no defined paradigm or aesthetic standards by which to judge them.[91] Third, the Filmmuseum organised a series of courses on film history called *Kijken is een kunst* (*Watching is an Art*).[92] Not only were these films declared to be of aesthetic value, but the recognition of this value was also promoted to the status of an artistic activity.

All in all, the Filmmuseum created a profile for itself as an institute that knew which films were valuable and beautiful, giving it an educational purpose. The institute indeed continuously stressed the aesthetic value of the unknown silent films it showed: for example, it described the film fragments in its Bits & Pieces collection as 'a lush bouquet',[93] and it entitled a programme of early shorts as *Kort & Prachtig* (*Short and Beautiful*).[94] Besides this, it regularly reminded the audience that the 'brilliant colours' and 'brilliant documentary footage' in the films had remained undiscovered until that moment.[95] All this shows that the Filmmuseum clearly wanted to produce an aestheticising reading mode for these films, inviting the audience to interpret them as aesthetic objects. As such, it pursued a strategy it had often used since the 1950s. The difference was that the visitors were now invited to aesthetically appreciate a very different category of film.

The Filmmuseum also continued to use strategies that guided its audience into an art-reading mode by using the concept of the 'auteur' to describe a filmmaker in order to bestow value on a film. This seems a surprising move, given that the classical film historical discourse that gave birth to this term was no longer predominant. However, the institute dealt with these auteurs and their oeuvres in a different way: whereas classical film historians usually named a few masterpieces made by a proclaimed auteur, in the 1970s, both film historians and museums showed an increasing interest in the unknown films of the 'masters', and these started to appear in film museum programmes. A good example of such a director was D.W. Griffith. In the 1970s, for example, MoMA organised a retrospective of his hitherto unknown

work, accompanied by an extensive study by film historian Tom Gunning, who was then just starting his academic career (Gunning, 1991). The Filmmuseum mounted the same retrospective in November and December 1976, showing 33 films made by Griffith.[96] Until that moment, the Filmmuseum had only shown two of his films – namely, the well-known, canonised titles, THE BIRTH OF A NATION (1915) and INTOLERANCE (1916). The film festival, Le Giornate del Cinema Muto in Pordenone, even organised a retrospective of all Griffith's retrieved films from 1997 to 2008. This shows that, on the one hand, the desire to see the films of famous auteurs was as strong as ever; on the other hand, there was an emerging need to see unknown films, reflecting the fascination with new discoveries that was so characteristic of this period of film historical research.

Added to this, film museums also introduced 'new' auteurs such as Jevgeni Bauer, Léonce Perret, and Alfred Machin, valorising their previously unknown, recently rediscovered early films.[97] Film museums first disinterred and preserved the films of these directors, and then initiated research into the filmmakers in order to inform audiences about their work, cinema environment, and status as auteurs (Kuyper De, 1993; 1995). Film museums and film historians used the old parameters to consecrate unknown films as potential masterpieces. The Filmmuseum, for example, organised retrospectives on these auteurs, presenting the films within a newly constructed historical framework. As with the presentation strategies for unknown films mentioned above, which helped produce an aestheticising reading, the Filmmuseum also programmed its audience to adopt an art-reading mode. By presenting the unknown films in a programme framed by these newly discovered auteurs, the institute guided the audience in the direction of seeing them as works of art, a mode of reading that becomes functional as soon as the creator of the film is perceived to be an 'artist'. This pattern is so deeply embedded in our culture that it is nearly impossible to eliminate the idea of the artist/auteur from our film historical views. The film museum made (and continues to make) full use of this.[98]

In the various publications the Filmmuseum produced on these newly discovered filmmakers, it explains why it considered them auteurs by referring to classical film historians. For example, it writes that it considered Perret's films to be of a 'stunning visual quality', and that '[b]oth Jean Mitry and Georges Sadoul indicated that in those years that Perret remained far ahead of his contemporaries in terms of mise-en-scène and narration'.[99] Thus, the texts accompanying the screenings used the views of classical film historians to endow Perret with the status of auteur. Furthermore, the Filmmuseum stated that Perret's films were distinguished by his deployment of exposure and exteriors, and it considered his use of decor very sophisticated for an early

filmmaker. These statements are consistent with Sadoul's comments on Perret in his *Histoire du cinéma*:

> Before 1914, Léonce Perret seems to have had a greater feeling for art than Feuillade. He took great care [with] his photography, used backlight, used artificial light in a dramatically effective way, worked systematically with close-ups, etc. (Sadoul 1962: 77)[100]

Consequently, the Filmmuseum presented Perret as an auteur both directly and indirectly by citing Sadoul and Mitry. In addition, the line of argument it used when presenting Perret as a genius who made aesthetically pleasing films, despite the constraints of the primitive system he worked within, reminds us of the discourse of the auteur critics of the 1950s. The Filmmuseum was using old, familiar film historical patterns and structures, on various levels, in order to convince its audiences that these unknown silent films were actually works of art.

In 1991, the Filmmuseum first presented its collection called Bits & Pieces by spreading the fragments over several programmes. In each newly released programme, Bits & Pieces was presented as a testimony of the most recent discoveries from the archive. In this respect, we can consider Bits & Pieces to be a series in which the story of the archive was highlighted in several episodes. As mentioned earlier, the collection largely consisted of unidentified film fragments that had no place in the official film historiography. In particular, during the period in which the dominance of classical film history ensured that the gaps in the archives were ignored for the most part, such material caused discomfort among both film archivists and historians. But the new film historians also struggled with this material. This new form of film history writing expressed a desire to bring the archive's lacunae to the surface in order to examine them, and the historians therefore visited the film archives with the purpose of approaching and investigating films as film historical sources. However, when they did so, they found that the archives were even more patchy and fragmented than they anticipated. This was partly due to the way the films had been acquired, but it was also a consequence of the transience of the film material. As a result, the archive, with all its gaps and discontinuities, showed that the ambition to record the complete history of film was, in fact, impossible.

In 1991, De Kuyper wrote an article in the journal *Versus* on the denial by film historians of the incompleteness of the archive:

> [Does it not] falsify the history of film, when one gives the impression that it is complete, closed and linear? Should film historiography not

bear witness to the situation and recognise that it works with lacunas and loopholes in its actual data and historical facts? (Kuyper De, 1991a: 10)[101]

Here, De Kuyper gives voice to his belief that film history, in a similar way to archaeology, has to accept that its source material is fragmentary.[102] With Bits & Pieces, the Filmmuseum highlighted the similarities between the state of the film archives and archaeological remains. Just like archaeological excavations, Bits & Pieces revealed the past in fragments and, as such, it made visible only that part of film history that had survived in these pieces of film. The difference is that archaeological excavations display the ruins and remains of the past in location, or they take that location into account when putting them on display elsewhere, whereas the Bits & Pieces fragments were displayed on the screen.[103] Another difference is that the fragments discovered in archaeological excavations are usually identified. By contrast, the collection's fragments mainly consisted of unidentified material, and as such, turned this programming format into an even stronger metaphor for the inaccessibility of the past (Verhoeff, 2006: 14). As a result, Bits & Pieces represented the ragged edges of film history and the film archives on the silver screen.

As well as a programming format, the fragments found in the Bits & Pieces collection could also be seen as so-called 'found-footage' films. Starting in the early 1990s, the Filmmuseum became actively involved in the production of such films: it invited filmmakers such as Gustav Deutsch, Vincent Monnikendam, and Fiona Tan to compile new films out of the archival material. These films, such as the Gustav Deutsch series, FILM IST... (1998; 2002; 2009), often provided alternative perspectives on film history. Deutsch ordered the images thematically, reflecting the thematic programming of the Filmmuseum but using fragments instead of entire films.

An example of a found-footage film born entirely inside the Filmmuseum archive is Delpeut's LYRISCH NITRAAT (1991). Delpeut (cited in Bosma, 2010) states that the film was the logical consequence of his work as a programmer at the institute. Other film scholars have analysed this film, mainly focusing on the way it presents the decaying beauty and nostalgic power of the fragments (Kamp Op den, 2004; Habib, 2005; Blum, 2013). And, indeed, the film itself warns us: 'All nitrate films in their original state will be irrevocably lost.' However, Dino Everett (2008: 28) argues that this is not the only message Delpeut is communicating: '[T]he film does not appear to use deterioration as its motivation, especially because it announces upfront that the colors being viewed were restored by the Nederlands Filmmuseum.' According to Everett, over and above the fragility of the fragments and their deterioration, the film testifies to the work of the Filmmuseum in saving this material, especially its colours.

In his presentation at the 2015 conference, *The Colour Fantastic*, Delpeut (2017, forthcoming) remarked that, in retrospect, he saw the film as 'a pamphlet, a celebration of unknown beauty, as well as an accusation of [those who] had kept that away from us'. In addition, it was a visual presentation of a new film historical perspective on early cinema. Delpeut explained that the film was intended to convey four important messages about early cinema: first, it had colour; second, it was hand-cranked and had no stable speed; third, it was more than just slap-stick, and in fact was comparable to opera; and last, by showing the decay of the filmic image, the film emphasised that 'the richness of early cinema was on the verge [of] vanish[ing]; nitrate couldn't wait'.

However, Delpeut also explained that he was confronted by a series of constraints when making the film. The idea for it began to form after he encountered the Desmet Collection in the late 1980s. However, when Filmmuseum director Hoos Blotkamp allowed him to make the film in 1989, it was on the condition that he would only use fragments of films that had already been preserved. As a result, he was not allowed to choose from the entire Desmet Collection but was restricted to a very select group of films. This meant that he also had to use earlier duplicates that were made in black and white, resulting in a film that did not reflect the actual colours of the collection itself. Taking this into consideration, the film could be said to represent an accumulation of moments of choice. The first choice occurred when Jean Desmet decided to buy a certain film for his distribution company, and the second, when he decided to keep the film in his later collection rather than sell or discard it (see Chapter 1). The third moment of choice came when the Filmmuseum decided to preserve the film in either colour or black and white, the fourth when Delpeut chose to use it as one of a particular set of titles to make his film, and the fifth was the moment he picked certain fragments from the film and left others out. As a result, this film did not reflect the history of film distribution from the 1910s, nor did it reflect the way the Desmet Collection was shaped in 1989; rather, it was an entirely new product that not only represented Delpeut's perspective on film history, but also reflected (due to the constraints on its creation) the collection and preservation history of the Desmet Collection.

Overall, then, the thematic structure of the Filmmuseum's programming made it possible to present certain topics in-depth. However, the disadvantage of this format was that it introduced large portions of film history that were totally unfamiliar to audiences,[104] so, in order to avoid incomprehension and keep its screenings accessible, it decided to show films from the canon in addition to its programmes of unknown and unidentified films. The institute showed these canonical films in series, framed by overarching programme titles, on a regular basis. It decided to use these films to give an overview of film history: in January 1989, for example, it began a series of screenings entitled

Repertoire, presenting the canonical films it had preserved or rehabilitated. In the screenings, the institute showed film history with a twist: in addition to the classic titles 'that every cinephile must have seen', it also showed 'either the lesser known, or perhaps somewhat overlooked titles of important directors'.[105] The strategy of including the unknown titles of well-known directors introduced a new film historical element into the Filmmuseum's programming, despite its focus on the canon and canonical filmmakers.

Soon, the Filmmuseum split the *Repertoire* programme into two separate series, each, in its own way, referring to the classical film historical discourse. In one, it initiated the so-called 'series of classics', in which it screened canonical films from its own archive.[106] The screenings were introduced by specialists and accompanied by textual information.[107] It was particularly striking that the criteria the Filmmuseum used to select these films were closely related to that espoused by classical film history: the series consisted of films that were either still well-known or were illustrative of a step forward in the development of film into an art form,[108] reviving the teleological conception of film history prevalent before the 1970s. In addition, the Filmmuseum introduced a series called *Film History from A-Z*, which it presented in a daily evening programme. In order to show, as the title suggests, film history from 'a' to 'z', it also screened 'more obscure films' and 'average' film productions, since they were also part of the history. It showed this alleged cross-section of film history in chronological order.[109] The idea of presenting film history through a series of 'highlights' shows parallels with classical film historical discourse. In this series, the Filmmuseum did not go against the *doxa* or accepted beliefs in the way it did when showing 'forgotten' films in its thematic programmes; rather, the canon was the starting point for the search for other potentially 'important' films. Thinking in terms of – and presenting – the canon and its highlights remained on the institute's agenda, although it supplemented the canonical films with rediscovered (forgotten) ones. This, of course, represented, to a certain extent, a revision of the existing discourse, but it had a less than revolutionary effect.

Although the Filmmuseum composed this programme series very carefully, it presented the more radical thematic programmes as unique productions. For example, these programmes were much more visible in the accompanying texts, and much more elaborately developed. This created a situation in which the screenings of the canon mainly contextualised or framed the other, thematic programmes. Hence, there was a reversal in status: the films that used to be considered the most important and artistically valuable films were now mostly used to show the (old) film historical story, while the newly discovered, unknown silent films were presented as aesthetic objects, important museum artefacts that any self-respecting film enthusiast could not deny him or her-

self. In addition to a shift in status, there was also a change in the meaning that the Filmmuseum gave these films. The canon reinforced a more historicist reading, while the rediscoveries were bestowed with a sense of wonder, which guided the spectators in the direction of an aestheticising mode of reading.

With this series, the Filmmuseum also gave new audiences the opportunity to experience (and old ones to stay informed about) the classical canon. Although these canonical films had been repeatedly screened over a long period of time, it cannot be assumed that they were generally known as there will always be newcomers to a cultural field or an academic discipline. As De Kuyper (cited in Hommel, 1991: 44) put it during an interview: '[O]ne generation of film students after the other should be able to get an idea of what film history has been.'[110] Indeed, most of the *Repertoire* programme was screened in collaboration with the University of Amsterdam. These screenings were designed to familiarise new generations of film students with the canon, a purpose that emphasises the fact that this canon remained of great importance as the *doxa* of the discipline.

The Filmmuseum also turned to another approach as part of its new presentation strategy: its screening of the programme *Hommage aan Jean Desmet* in his old film theatre on the Nieuwedijk appears to have been a prologue to the policy that it adopted a few years later of presenting film as performance art. To emphasise this approach, the Filmmuseum turned Dutch film culture into its main area of interest, including the history of cinema and film screening in the Netherlands. This resulted in, among other things, the reconstruction of Dutch versions of the institute's archival films. (The installation of the interior of the Cinema Parisien in the Vondelpark Pavilion was a further result of this new approach.) We can also recognise the idea of film as performance art at a programming level – for example, in the revival of programmes from the early years of film. In July 1993, the Filmmuseum reconstructed two theatre performances with the theme, *Film and the First World War.* In addition, in October 1993, it reconstructed a film programme from the first decade of the 20th century. The programme guide declared: 'On the basis of six short films from the period 1909-1913, the audience gets an idea of what a cinema performance looked like in the 1910s.'[111] The institute clearly intended to use these programmes to reconstruct the history of cinema performances and give an impression of how films were screened and seen during these early years. While the Filmmuseum's 1985 programme had tried to reconstruct historically Desmet's programme of film screenings as faithfully as possible, this time, by contrast, it was mainly concerned with giving an *impression* of an early film presentation. The element of surprise played a big role in these programmes, particularly in relation to the variety of the genres and the beauty of the films. Within the framework of a reconstruction, the Filmmuseum gave

itself the freedom to (re)construct programmes with films from the archive that allowed the audience to enjoy an aesthetic experience and to encounter feelings of surprise and wonder, combined with a sense of touching history.

This analysis of the Filmmuseum's programmes over the years has shown that expanding the division of this period from two parts to three is justified. The new period, which is characterised by the search for a 'film museum identity', can be inserted between the two periods traditionally adopted by film historiography. It is notable that, during this additional period, the Filmmuseum seemed to search for a compromise between the old discourses and the new – a search that finally resulted, nevertheless, in film museum practice finding its place within the film historical debate and taking a new position in relation to the aesthetic and film historical value of early films. This translated into a new receptivity to the films of that era, encouraging a diversity of film historical expression.

CHAPTER 9

Performances

Each film museum is embedded in a history of performances. Sometimes they attempt to deny this history, showing their films in screening rooms stripped of any historical reference. In other cases, however, they choose to show films in a 'historically accurate' way, which often results in hybrid forms of display, a mixture of historical reconstruction and modern experimentation. What seems central to the choice of display at the Filmmuseum is the way it defined its films – as individual works of art, to be displayed and viewed in isolation, or as examples of the way films were presented in the past and, hence, as performance art.

The problem that occurs with museum reconstructions of former display practices is that they use a mimetic code that implies that they faithfully represents historical facts; the audience is encouraged to interpret the historical reconstruction as true to life (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, 1998: 20). These displays easily give the impression that they are accurate reflections of the past, while they are like all other forms of historiography, a *reconstruction* of the past – which is a very different matter. In fact, they are performed reconstructions of the past. As Frank Kessler (2012) explains in his article, 'Programming and Performing Early Cinema Today', 'as the lecturers are played by actors and the texts are delivered according to a fixed script, which is repeated during every show, the screenings literally are performances'. The crucial question here is whether the Filmmuseum indeed inferred that its reconstructions were truthful facsimiles of past screening practices or, instead, encouraged its audience to adopt a different type of reading.

MUSIC AND LECTURES

By imitating 'original' programmes, the Filmmuseum attempted to summon the atmosphere of yesteryear. The emergence of this programme format occurred at the same time as film museums focused their attention on 'film culture'. This meant, first and foremost, taking a new perspective on the presentation of silent films. The Filmmuseum wanted to create performances of a more authentic but also more surprising and diverse character: its screenings were accompanied by music and, if possible, a lecture, as well as by song and sometimes even dance. A good example of its array of presentation formats for silent films is the 1992 programme *Sprakeloos en ongehoord – geheimen van de zwijgende film* (*Speechless and Unheard – The Secrets of Silent Film*). The aim of this programme was to present a number of the Filmmuseum's 'discoveries' about silent film, including the discovery that, before 1930, most films were

accompanied by lectures and music. In order to familiarise the audience with this rediscovered historical fact, its screenings incorporated a musical accompaniment and a lecturer who explained the film.

However, the programmes were not solely designed as factual presentations; the Filmmuseum also sought to showcase the beauty of many of its early films, and, in order to do this, it deployed a number of different strategies. First, the institute believed that early film performances had been 'bustling and animated', and it wanted to revive these performances in 'all their splendour'.[112] The aim was to reconstruct an atmosphere that approached the sort of experience audiences would have had in the past. In this sense, its intention was not to render the reconstruction of historical facts perfectly, but to evoke, above all, the excitement of early cinema screenings.[113] As a consequence, the Filmmuseum hardly ever used the 'original' scores, which generally contained elements that an audience of today would not understand, such as certain (now obscure) musical jokes and forgotten melodies.

The Filmmuseum allowed itself a free interpretation of the musical accompaniment of silent films, inviting well-known Dutch musicians such as Henny Vrienten, Joost Belinfante, and others, giving them *carte blanche* to compose new scores. This resulted in experimental screenings that positioned the screened films in the domain of experimental art. By using musicians, actors, or writers from the contemporary art world, the Filmmuseum was also able to present early film and its presentation context as part of that artistic world.[114] Thus, music gained a permanent place in the screening of its silent films.

This was not unique to the Filmmuseum. During the mid-1990s, the Cinémathèque française and the Centre National de la Cinématographie (CNC), for example, also organised performances of silent films that were combined
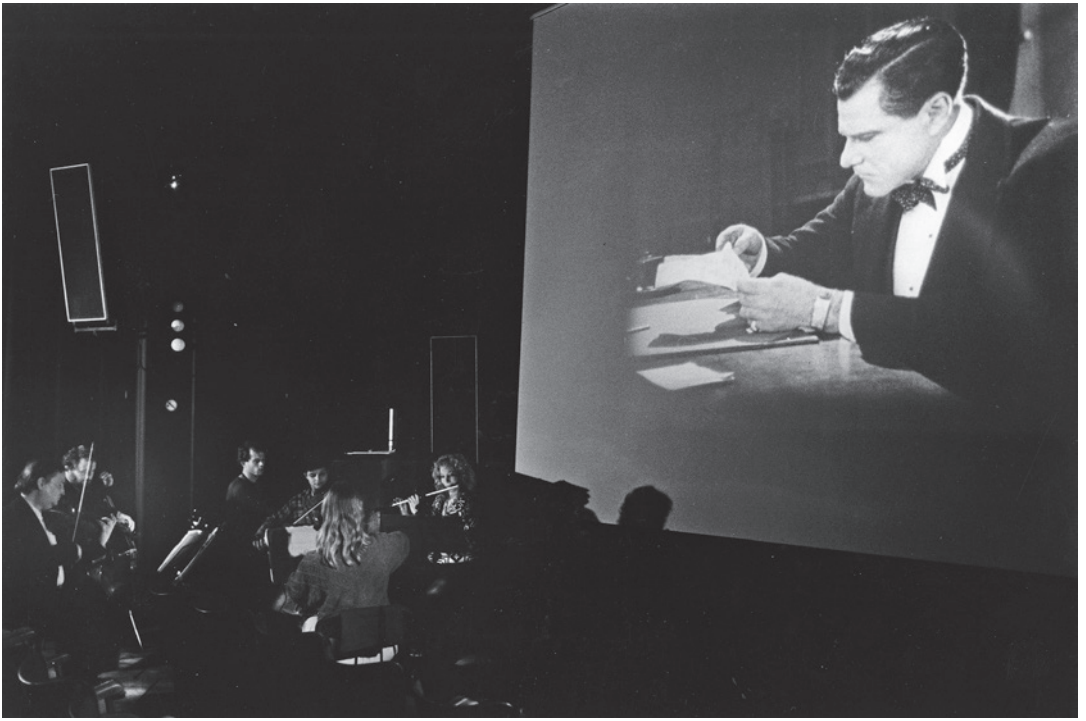
16: Film screening with live musical accompaniment, 1984 (Collection EYE Film Institute Netherlands)

with the experimental use of music and theatre. The same was true for Le Giornate del Cinema Muto, which even named itself a 'live-music' film festival. Indeed, every screening is accompanied by a live solo piano or ensemble performance. In addition, the festival organises evening events with special musical performances.

In the 1980s, film historians and producers Kevin Brownlow and David Gill began to promote, with composer Carl Davis, the presentation of silent films with an orchestral accompaniment, initiatives that inspired the Filmmuseum to adopt the practice (Kuyper De, 2006: 146). In 1984, for example, the institute organised a Lubitsch retrospective in which each of the films had a musical accompaniment. The highlight was the screening of LADY WINDERMERE'S FAN (Lubitsch, 1925), accompanied by the Residentie Orkest.[115] A year later, in 1985, the Filmmuseum again organised screenings accompanied by music, in the context of the programme, *A Homage to Jean Desmet* (mentioned in Chapter 8), which took the performance history of silent film as its central theme. Remarkably, although the Filmmuseum generally announced these events by referring to the titles of films by famous directors such as Lubitsch, the accompaniment of the Desmet films was presented as merely part of the

reconstruction of the old cinema environment. This corresponded to the Filmmuseum's programming strategies at that time, in which it promoted the canonical films it screened as artistically valuable and intrinsically interesting, in contrast to its unknown silent films, which it presented as historical artefacts.[116]

In 1992, the institute wrote that film museums had, until 1990, presented silent films in a historically incorrect way: namely, in silence, in black and white, and using inferior prints. Interestingly, this ignored the developments that had taken place in the 1980s.[117] It is, of course, correct to say that the Filmmuseum screened almost all its silent art films without music during a certain period – this was during the time when the idea of the Invisible Cinema held sway, with its emphasis on minimising any elements that could distract the spectator's gaze from the experience of the film. In this kind of setting, it seems obvious that the Filmmuseum would not add music or explanations of the film. However, in the preceding period, it experimented with music and film. One example is a programme in December 1958 called *Francesca Bertini en Asta Nielsen*, which was accompanied by Pim de la Fuente on the piano.[118] According to the Filmmuseum, the combination of silent images and music presented in this programme was intended to produce a distinctive atmosphere, with a very different audience effect.[119] This performance was one of its earlier experiments in linking film and music in order to provide the audience with an exciting new experience.

Other film museums experimented in similar ways. For example, in 1945, in Paris, the famous film composer, Joseph Kosma, composed the accompaniment to Langlois' projections after Jean Renoir introduced them to one another (Mannoni, 2006: 214). Film museums also released well-known silent films with soundtracks, although, in 1958, the Filmmuseum explicitly announced that the screening of DIE NIBELUNGEN (Lang, 1922-1924) would be the 'original' silent version rather than the new version with music.[120] It seems that, in the 1950s and 1960s, film museums had an ambivalent attitude towards the combination of silent film and music.

In the period before 1970, the Filmmuseum mainly showed the silent films it considered to be works of art silently. This was in contrast to the historical-romantic programmes, in which it presented unknown silent films as 'curiosities', and accompanied with music. In some cases, the Filmmuseum even introduced lectures or reconstructed entire performances. For example, the 1961 reconstruction of a travelling cinema (referred to above), called *Images Fantastiques*.[121] This consisted of objects from the Willigers Collection, which, besides old films, also contained 'many attributes that belonged to the equipment of the former "travelling cinema" of Mr. Riozzi'.[122] The result was an 'authentic' travelling cinema, with an 'authentic' musical accompaniment

17: The front of the reconstructed travelling cinema, Images Fantastiques, 1961 (Collection EYE Film Institute Netherlands)

played on the Hupfeld Phonoliszt Violina, also one of Riozzi's artefacts. Dirk Huizinga, the Filmmuseum's vault-keeper, acted as lecturer.

The Filmmuseum constantly pointed out to journalists (and other commentators) that this reconstruction comprised authentic archival artefacts. The fact that these were *objects* from the archive was emphasised to enhance their aura of authenticity and historical weight. This resulted in a very particular form of in-context presentation, in which films and objects were placed side by side; they were not isolated but were part of a larger whole: the reconstructed fairground cinema. The way the films resonated with the objects meant the display environment was reconstructed in a similar way to that of the Cinema Parisien decades later. The reconstruction framed the films in such a way as to denote them as 'fairground films'.

In the same year, Charles Boost wrote *Biopioniers* (1961) to accompany the *Images Fantastiques* exhibition. In the book, he reinforces and legitimises the epithet, 'fairground films'. Boost describes the history of three showmen from the Netherlands, and justified his choice of subject by proposing that film was

born in the fairground. By claiming this as an historical fact, he enhanced the importance of fairground cinemas in film's historical narrative. Boost was aware that those who passionately advocated the idea of film as an art form would find his assertion that the fairground was the cradle of film hard to accept; nevertheless, he stated that even they would have to accept this historical fact in the end. Boost (1961: 5) advised these 'friends of film' to 'watch the noisy, spectacular introduction of a new art form with mild appreciation',[123] because the art form could never have emerged without this initial period as a fairground amusement. Indeed, he claimed that it was due to these fairground pioneers that art film was finally able to separate itself from the commercial side of film. Boost gave the travelling cinema a place within the dominant film historical discourse by arguing that these pioneers allowed film to develop and, in this way, he transformed this part of film history into a vital step in the classical historical timeline that traced the evolution of film towards its emancipation from its commercial origins and its emergence as an art. Huizinga,

18: Filmmuseum vault-keeper Dirk Huizinga (left), informs the audience about the films (Photo by Anticapress Haarlem, Collection EYE Film Institute Netherlands)
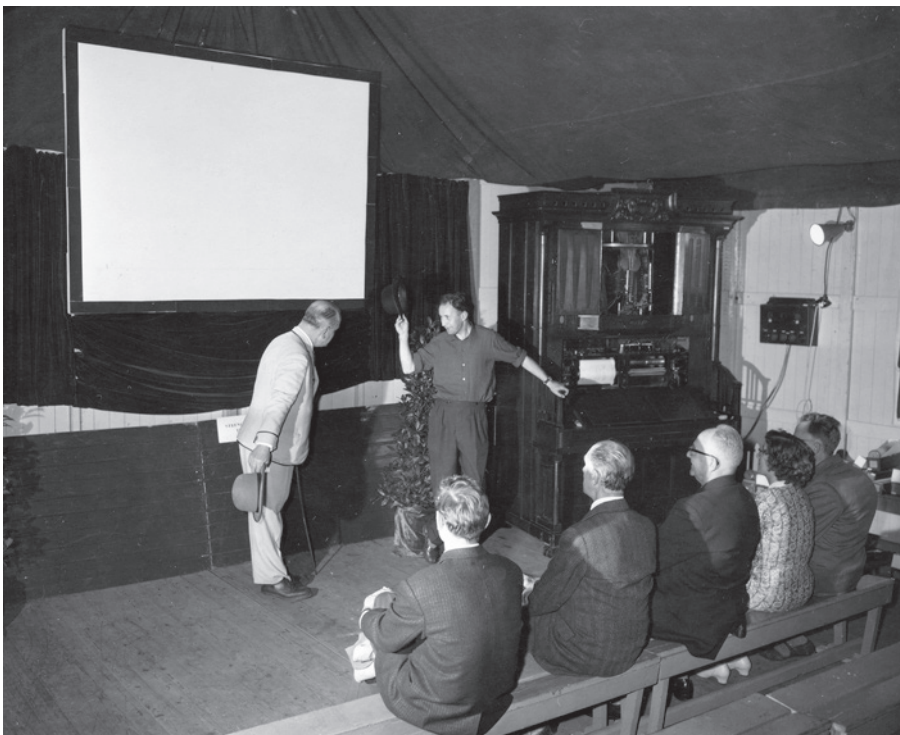
in his lectures, also guided the audience in the direction of a historicising reading by drawing attention to his uncle, 'the famous Leiden professor Johan Huizinga'.[124] In this way, he embedded himself, as a film lecturer, firmly in the academic discipline of history, and imbued his presentation lecture with serious, historical connotations.

All in all, the Filmmuseum presented the *Images Fantastiques* as a historical reconstruction, even though this revival of early films also contained a high degree of entertainment. For example, Huizinga's comments were comical and amusing, and he even turned a melodrama such as Een telegram uit Mexico (Chrispijn Sr., 1914) into a highly comical performance.[125] Yet, the Filmmuseum most especially wanted to give its audience the impression of travelling back in time.[126]

The show was praised for its special atmosphere – one that also characterised other historical-romantic programmes. At least one, if not several, of the performance elements that had characterised the screenings of that early period was always present.[127] Once, in 1953, the Filmmuseum even presented 'authentic' musicians and lecturers to accompany the screening of four of its so-called 'curious' films. The films were introduced by Henry Wessels, who had been a lecturer at the Rembrandt Theatre in Haarlem from 1912 to 1922, and the trio that provided the musical accompaniment also dated from the period of silent film. The Filmmuseum emphasised the 'authenticity' of the lecturer and the music in its announcement of the programme.[128] Here, we see another example of a show that programmed its audience into adopting a historicising reading of the films by presenting them within a nostalgic, historical frame. The Filmmuseum, however, was not the only institute to present early films with a musical accompaniment: a similar example can be seen in 1936 at the MoMA Film Library, which showed six early films accompanied by music from that era (Wasson, 2005: 159).

The Filmmuseum's presentation of its historical-romantic programmes strongly differed from that of its silent art films, which it showed mostly without music or spoken explanation. With these films, the Filmmuseum did not celebrate the history of film culture; instead, it stripped them of their past by presenting them as separate, unique entities. This was reinforced by presenting these films in screening rooms such as the auditorium of the Stedelijk Museum and, later, in the institute's imitation of the Invisible Cinema.

MATERIALITY AND PROJECTION

Film museum practice has always displayed a special interest in the technological side of film projection. Because nitrate film is flammable, its projection can endanger both the projectionist and the audience, and consequently the projection of this material was prohibited in the mid-1950s. However, the prohibition did not apply to film museums, which were allowed to continue to project nitrate into the 1970s. This was also the case for the Filmmuseum: it even screened nitrate films inside the Stedelijk Museum, in close proximity to the museum's valuable paintings, statues, and other artworks (Hendriks, 1996: 72). However, although this meant that the Filmmuseum screened vintage nitrate prints until the 1970s, there was no mention of this, even in the *Mededelingen*. Yet, it presented the screenings of preservation prints as special film museum events; for example, its *Images Fantastiques* project. The institute had 16mm preservation prints made specifically for these performances – a fact it brought to the attention of the press.[129] By contrast, it stressed the authenticity of the objects it used to reconstruct the travelling cinema. It appears that the materiality of the film prints played no role in this game of authenticity; the Filmmuseum used other objects to produce an 'authentic' presentation of the old footage.

In the mid-1970s, the Filmmuseum stopped its practice of projecting nitrate prints. According to former employee Arja Grandia, it switched to the projection of acetate after it moved into the Vondelpark Pavilion.[130] During this period, the international film archival community increasingly emphasised the vulnerability of nitrate prints, and stressed the need for their preservation. Hence, film archives started to prioritise film preservation over other activities, and this, in turn, enabled them to cease the projection of nitrate prints. It is striking that the Filmmuseum also began to emphasise the aesthetic qualities of its preservation prints, pointing, for example, to the artistic value of the images, which, due to the institute's preservation techniques, had become visible once more. One example of this is the 1994 programme *Joris Ivens – de nitraatcollectie* (*Joris Ivens – The Nitrate Collection*). The Filmmuseum had new preservation prints made of all Ivens' films, using nitrate prints of the best possible quality as starting material – even if it had to borrow these from foreign archives – in order to do justice to the 'pictorial qualities' of his work.[131] As such, these preservation prints were supposedly able to safeguard the aesthetic qualities of the films and, hence, Ivens' genius.

The Filmmuseum also spoke of 'beautiful, often newly preserved colour prints' when discussing the screening of early films.[132] The institute believed that, by projecting these 'dazzling', clean new prints, it could reveal these unknown films' 'pictorial qualities'. The screenings also helped to stimulate

a reaction of wonder in the audience. The absence of explanation about the restorers' interventions confirms the institute's emphasis on the aesthetics and beauty of early film. In contrast, some film museums added explanatory titles with information about the restoration of these prints. The reference to restoration automatically drew attention to the toll time had taken on the vintage print. As a result, these film museums presented the films more as archival objects than aesthetic ones. The Filmmuseum did not do this – it appeared to consider the restoration of silent films and the screening of the new prints as primarily a means of reproducing the aesthetic experience of these films.[133]

Interestingly, in the period after 1988, the Filmmuseum often screened older preservation prints of canonical films. A clear example is INTOLERANCE (Griffith, 1916) – the institute showed a particularly bad 16mm print of this film at least until the beginning of the 21st century. There was a practical reason for this: the films from the existing canon were often already available on old acetate prints[134] and, as a result, it was not necessary to make duplicates in order to project them. However, what is remarkable is the fact that the Filmmuseum (and film historians who watched these prints) apparently accepted lower-quality prints of well-known titles. This shows that, after 1988, presentation strategies aimed at inducing a sense of wonder seemed less important in the case of canonical films than for the unknown, newly discovered silent films, confirming my hypothesis that, in this period, film museum practice interpreted films from the canon more as film historical objects than aesthetic ones. In addition, there was not much need to convince the audience that these films, which had already been established as art films at an earlier stage, were beautiful; it was hardly necessary to make an extra effort to persuade audiences to come and see them.

Sometimes, however, the projections of older and worn-out prints also resulted in audiences producing other kinds of readings, interpreting these films as 'old', 'historic', and 'from the past'. In 1961, for example, journalists responded to the screening of the reconstruction print of THE ROBBER SYMPHONY (Feher, 1936) by claiming they were charmed by the imperfection of the images on display. The *Haagsche Courant* noted that a certain imperfection seemed somehow intrinsic to this film, providing it with its own allure;[135] a 'hygienic version' would strip the THE ROBBER SYMPHONY of its particularity. Apparently, the projection of this crumbly nitrate print gave it a 'charm' that evoked a sense of history. Another newspaper explained this 'healthy need for a friable projection' as a reaction to the perfection of the latest film technology: 'Nothing is a better cure for the stupid glorification of Cinema-Scope than the first Lumière newsreel.'[136] As the 'friable' projection was apparently the antithesis of what could be seen in the commercial cinema, an imperfect projection seemed to have become synonymous with 'non-commercial'. The

connotation carried by these nitrate projections was therefore two-fold: anti-commercial and historicising. In this way, the patchwork restoration print of THE ROBBER SYMPHONY was granted an authenticity that the Filmmuseum itself probably did not have in mind.

From the 1980s on, film museums and archives only exhibited nitrate prints on exceptional occasions – for example, during the FIAF conference held in London in 2000. Whereas, initially, the projection of nitrate prints was seen as quite normal, even a necessity, it became a rarity during the 1990s, a museum event to be cherished. In addition, stories about the projection of nitrate took on mythological proportions: the image was thought to be clearer, the depth of field of a higher quality, and the blacks deeper than could ever be accomplished with an acetate print. In 2015, the George Eastman House even started a yearly event called 'The Nitrate Picture Show', during which it shows nitrate prints from its archives, which implies the institutionalisation of its celebration.[137]

Meyer (1997) also commented on the additional value of viewing an 'original' film print. He claims that nitrate material possesses an immediacy and directness that a preservation copy could never have, describing, among other things, how the nitrate image produces the feeling of almost being in direct connection with the people who once stood in front of the camera. This is in contrast to the preservation print that, because it is one generation removed from the 'original', draws the curtain of time across the 'original', blocking access to the immediacy of the photographic image and the feeling that you might be able to touch the past (Meyer, 1997: 59-60). In fact, Meyer describes Huizinga's historical sensation in relation to the researcher who feels the touch of the past through the source material he or she studies.

The specific viewing experience Meyer refers to, of course, takes place in the archive, behind the editing table. This connects the nitrate experience to another *dispositif*, one that differs greatly from the experience of watching a film in a screening room. Within this *dispositif*, the spectator not only watches the images, but is also responsible for their projection. This gives the spectator the possibility of intervening in the projection either to accelerate the film or reduce its speed. It is also possible to watch fragments of a film, to watch it in a totally different order, to rewind and watch part of a film again, or to watch it backwards. In short, it is possible to discover a film in a unique way. All of this contrasts with the experience of the passive spectator sitting in a movie theatre. Meyer declares that it was often difficult for him to accept the latter position:

> Frequently, I sit in the auditorium and experience the same restlessness
> as I feel behind the viewing table; I want to be able to experiment with the

film, slow it down, run it back, stop it, or run it fast forward. (Meyer, 1997: 59-60)

Because Meyer wished to share this 'editing table experience' with the audience, he searched for a way to transpose the experience into the movie theatre, and he discovered it in the found-footage film. He believed that this genre of films presents film footage in a way that is similar to the way in which film museum employees experience nitrate prints. Found-footage films are comprised of film fragments deriving from the archive that are presented in different ways: delayed, accelerated, sometimes even backwards. This produces an 'archival reading' of a film. However, I believe that found-footage films only partly evoke this type of reading because, even with such a film, the ultimate spectator is passive. It remains a film, even though it was made by a curator or filmmaker as evidence of his or her own experience in the film archive. This is different from the archival experience itself.[138]

Video and DVD offer another entry point into archival reading. Indeed, these carriers can also be slowed down, accelerated, and played backwards. Moreover, in the case of video and DVD, viewers can also, if they so choose, watch fragments or assemble their own 'programme'.[139] The difference between the curator watching nitrate films on an editing table and the visitor watching a video or DVD is that films on digital carriers have lost their material connection to the nitrate prints in the vaults, eliminating the nitrate experience that Meyer defines. However, the dream of a *dispositif* that allows the spectator to experiment with the material in a similar way to the person behind an editing table has come a step closer with the emergence of digital technologies. A good example is the 'scene machine', a digital installation that allows the user to choose from a number of topics or series of films. This machine is available on the EYE website. Furthermore, the EYE basement contains various presentation formats, which guide the viewer to an archival reading, using digital images.

THE MUSEALISATION OF PROJECTION TECHNIQUES

Of course, archival films have been watched on carriers other than analogue film for some time now; the advent of video, DVD, and the internet has made early films increasingly accessible. At the same time, however, this easy digital access threatens the survival of the cinematic experience, as well as that of analogue film projection. The transition of cinemas to digital projection, led by the commercial cinemas, began in the 1990s and became an established fact by 2011. In anticipation of a time during which digital projection would

be the only future, the Filmmuseum decided to maintain and collect analogue projection for all the films that were originally released on film material in an attempt to preserve the historical cinematic experience. This decision has also been reflected in film restoration practice: analogue projection requires the production of preservation prints on cellulose acetate or polyester. In the case of a digital restoration, the Filmmuseum started to transfer the final result onto photographic film material so that 'in a projected form [it would] retain a quality that rivals that of the current film projection'.[140] However, because large amounts of film were already digitised for the *Images for the Future* project, it was no longer possible to transfer all the archive onto analogue film material and, as a result, a large part of it is now only accessible on digital carriers. Moreover, digital projection has become more commonplace in the film museum world and, even festivals such as Le Giornate del Cinema Muto, no longer avoid using it.

Although the Filmmuseum initially tried to retain analogue film projection as part of its duty as a museum, this ideal has proved unattainable. Still, this was the moment that analogue projection began to be recognised as valuable and in need of preservation – it was only when the traditional cinematic projection technique appeared to be under threat that film museum practice declared these technologies part of 'cinematographic heritage'.[141] This response can be explained by our habit of regarding any endangered art form as 'heritage' (Kuyper De, 1999: 23). Once film museums started to consider analogue projections in this way, archivists began thinking about projection practices: for example, the idea of projecting films from the 1930s with mono sound rapidly gained momentum (Meyer, 2000b: 3). Yet, there were also elements of historical projection techniques that the Filmmuseum did not want to reconstruct. During the earliest period of film, the projector was manipulated by hand, meaning that the speed of the screening could vary considerably. This variable component, so common in the early screenings, was not revived in the institute's presentations. It also almost never showed films with the authentic projection equipment, because that would require a different projector for each period in film history: for example, the Lumières' films should be projected using an authentic Cinématographe, and the films of the Mutoscope and Biograph Company needed 68mm projection equipment with transportation rubbers. Clearly, the Filmmuseum decided that this level of diversity in projection techniques was impracticable; instead, it chose to limit projection technologies to 35mm and 16mm.

This limitation, of course, impacted restoration practice: film museums generally duplicated films in these two formats, which meant that, when the Filmmuseum preserved the 68mm films of the Mutoscope and Biograph Company, together with those of the National Film and Television Archive (NFTVA)

in London, it had to restore the 68mm film as 35mm. As a consequence, it was impossible to project the films with the same sharpness and in the same size as in 1900. Conversely, in the case of the restoration of small films, 16mm was generally used, resulting in restoration prints of, for example, 8mm and 9.5mm films that could no longer be screened using the original projectors. Film museums had to resort to projecting these films with 16mm equipment, using a stronger light source and a larger screen, thus creating a fundamentally different projection and cinematic experience.[142]

Another reason why film museum practice did not reconstruct historical projection techniques to the letter was that the standard of acceptable film screening in the 1990s was a lot higher than for example in 1900. Cherchi Usai compares a film screening with a performance of music by Bach. In some of his compositions, Bach used the sound of a hunting horn,

> [...] whose performance was so uneven that it could not be played with precision even by a proficient musician. What sense would it make then, nowadays, to feature an early eighteenth-century hunting horn in a performance for original instruments? In our case, this would be like demanding a projector which could not guarantee the steadiness of the projected image or an even intensity of light on the screen. (Cherchi Usai, 2000: 161)

If films were to be shown in exactly the same way that they were at the time of their premiere, the screening (and therefore the performance) would probably seem intolerable to a present-day audience. The Filmmuseum emphasised that it wanted to enable a new experience of early cinema, aimed at creating an appreciation of these films among a new, 'modern' audience. It saw this as the only possible way of reviving these films (Roumen, 1996: 156). This corresponds to what film historian Nicholas Hiley said during the 1995 Filmmuseum workshop, 'Disorderly Order: Colours in Silent Film', mentioned in Part II:

> [T]he level of restoration that we carry out will reflect our own sense of history. It won't be an exact recreation of the original, because none of us wants bad projection and bad music, we don't want scratched prints and talking audiences, we don't want to go back to that; we want to create something which satisfies our needs, as historians approaching a period that interests us. (Hiley in Hertogs and Klerk de, 1996: 22)

Film museum practice opted for the quality projection and display of these early films, which, as a result, only resembled the original way they were shown in some respects. As such, these screenings referred to the history of

the film but clearly were not exact reconstructions. The aesthetic aspect of the screening and, therefore, of the film images, remained a priority; the cultural historical aspect took second place.[143]

In conclusion, then, the 1980s witnessed a crucial transformation in attitude: films were no longer considered as individual art objects; rather, film was defined as a performance art, which entailed a change in approach to film history. This shift in the definition of film was evident in the programming of unknown films as 'curiosities', presented in an event-based setting. By contrast, the canonical films were presented as 'art', whereby little was allowed to distract from the focused experience of the film. However, as soon as film began to be seen not only as an art form but also as a performance art, a new understanding of cinema arose, and other elements of the cinematographic performance, such as music and lectures, started to become an integral part of film museum screenings. Interestingly, film museums always returned to the elements that were part of the film performances of the past. As a result, this 'new style' film screening fell somewhere between a contemporary experimentation and a film historical reconstruction.

Overall, the canon was no longer central to film museum philosophy, and it had to make space for the film performance as an event. This also made it possible to present unknown films artistically; films that the Filmmuseum, for example, had selected for its 'new style' museum collection – that is, films that did not (yet) have the status of film art. These new ideas, however, also filtered into the approach to film as an art form, and allowed for the combination of contemporary classical music alongside the projection of unknown silent films. Film museums placed films not only literally, but also figuratively, side by side culturally deified modern music, increasing the perception of their artistic value. This strengthened and legitimised the screening of silent films as museum artefacts.

This was contrary to the previous way the Filmmuseum used reconstructions of the environment in which early films were historically screened – for example, in the case of the *Images Fantastiques*, the central focus was placed not on the films but on the reconstruction of the travelling cinema. In this way, the Filmmuseum contrasted its 'curious' films with the art films it presented in the Stedelijk Museum auditorium. This also shows that, when the museum staged a reconstruction of the 'original' screening of an early film, it not only used the mimetic code to generate meaning and to guide its audience's reading of the film, but also to position these reconstructions within its whole presentation strategy and, therefore, within the film historical discourse it helped to propagate.

After the 1980s, the Filmmuseum adopted another way of enhancing the artistic value of these unknown films by increasing the projection quality. The

institute was more than ever devoted to ensuring that the projection of its films was of the highest quality, in order to enable its audience to have an aesthetically pleasing experience when viewing these newly discovered treasures from the archive. This concern for the quality of the projection paralleled the increasing care lavished by film museum practice on the restoration of early films. Both these elements ensured that the films became more attractive to modern audiences and made their 'beauty' even more apparent. Film museums thus enabled these films to become more visible, and, as a consequence, they have made a far more emphatic mark in the pages of film history.

Coda: Past Futures, Future Pasts

The 2012 celebration of Unesco's annual World Day for Audiovisual Heritage, held by EYE Filmmuseum in its newly opened venue on the banks of the IJ in Amsterdam, was a remarkable event. The celebration consisted of a programme of newly restored films, dating from exactly 100 years earlier. Before the screening started, however, a dazzling display of pink, green, and blue light was projected onto the walls of the institute, suffusing them with colour. Then, a strange pattern began to appear, which slowly resolved itself into a full-colour projection of an art-deco interior, complete with lacquered wood panelling. This was a reproduction of the 1924 screening room of the Cinema Parisien, the film theatre launched by Jean Desmet in 1910, which had been carefully recreated in 1991 in the Vondelpark Pavilion, EYE's former location. When the institute moved to its new home, it wanted to take the historical interior with it, but the wall panels proved too large to fit into the new building and they ended up in storage.

However, because EYE wanted to include the interior in the new institute, it created a digital reproduction of the room, which it still occasionally projects onto the walls of Cinema 4.[1]

The projection of this interior can be read in several different ways, giving an insight into the main problems raised by the musealisation of films discussed in this book. In the first place, it is part of the history of silent film and, by recreating this historical object in the Vondelpark Pavilion, this history became part of the museum's presentation strategy. Secondly, in its present-day recreation, the screening room also refers to EYE Filmmuseum's own past. The projection is not just any interior, but a very particular one: the screening room formed part of the Desmet Collection that put the Filmmuseum's archive on the cultural map at the beginning of the 1990s. Finally, the screening room's two new functions as historical reference points differ great-

ly from its original, more commercial purpose at the Cinema Parisien. This is exactly what happens when a mass-produced commercial object is archived: it changes from a commercial object into an historical one.

However, these referential functions were not the only new meanings bestowed upon the screening room. The colour experiments in 2012 demonstrate the care with which the film institute created a high-quality projection of the wall panels in order to present the interior in the most attractive way possible. Apparently, the screening room also possessed an aesthetic value, alongside its function as an historical object. As we have seen throughout this book, EYE has always attached great importance to beauty and aesthetic value, not only in relation to old cinema interiors, but also to the films in its collection.

For the majority of film museums, the use of visual reproduction techniques to present the objects in their collections is part of exemplary curatorial practice – one that has been facilitated by the way digital technology has taken wing over the last few decades. It was, however, a practice born of necessity: historical film material is very vulnerable and hazardous, and this forced museums to project duplicates rather than the old nitrate films themselves. The decision to make a visual reproduction of Desmet's wood-panelled interior and to project it digitally seems to be a logical consequence of this way of thinking.

Cinema 4, however, is not alone in referring to the past of EYE Filmmuseum: the entire building's design and construction highlights many aspects of both the history of the institute and the progress of film historiography. For this reason, I am using it as the starting point for this conclusion.[2] In doing so, I will argue that the past carries the future within it, and that the future can never escape the past.

For this, I would like to guide you on an imaginary tour through EYE's four screening rooms, each of which boasts its own distinctive interior. As I argue in Chapter 7, the interior design of a screening room is part of the *dispositif* that allows the audience to adopt certain modes of reading the films presented there. Interestingly, EYE's screening-room interiors are visual reminders of the various different spaces we have encountered throughout the history of the institute, and so the diachronic shifts in presentation strategies reemerge as a synchronous eclecticism in EYE's new building.

The first screening room we visit is Cinema 3, which is designed along the lines of the Invisible Cinema discussed in Chapter 7 – that is, it is a completely black room where films are presented as aesthetic objects. The purpose of the Invisible Cinema was to starve the senses of any stimuli except those needed to perceive the film, an approach inspired by a modernist conception of art. As a consequence, Cinema 3 can be placed in the tradition of experimental

cinema, alongside the canon of the avant-garde, which is represented in EYE by the films in the Uitkijk Collection. Modernist ideas were, of course, integrated into the classical historical perspective on the value of film as an art form, which was often combined with theories about what comprises a film's artistic essence. However, the silent films that were 'rediscovered' during the emergence of the new film history (discussed in the introduction) also have a place in this type of room. When these films were newly discovered, restored, and shown, academic attention focused, for the most part, on the material's formal, aesthetic qualities and its 'strangeness' – two elements that, like the Invisible Cinema, are strongly rooted in the traditions of formalism and modernism. This leads to the conclusion that the link to the modernist tradition persists in film historical discourse as defined by film museums. By contrast, the actual writing of film history is much less inclined to accept this stance.

As mentioned above, Cinema 4 stimulates a rather different reading of the films it screens – an historical-sensual one. As Chapter 7 recounts, EYE recreated the interior of the Cinema Parisien's screening room in the Vondelpark Pavilion in the early 1990s, presenting it as a cultural monument. Although the institute did not include the physical interior in its new waterfront building, it decided to reconstruct the interior visually with the help of LED lighting, in order to summon up the atmosphere of the old Parisien. Despite the fact that the lack of the original wooden panels somewhat diminishes the historical sensation, its visual reconstruction means that silent films can still be presented in an interior that refers back to the history of Dutch cinema. To add to the sense of authenticity, EYE acquired a Weber Aeolian piano from 1912 to accompany the screening of the silent films; by retaining the historical interior and by combining the screenings with a live piano accompaniment, EYE has continued to propagate the history of Dutch film culture. In this way, the idea of film as a performance art reemerges and, by extension, this means that EYE approaches film history not only as the history of film culture but also of film screening. This is directly related to the history of restoration practices, which often reveals the choices behind the presentation of certain versions of films, in terms of both images and editing. In addition, the decision to preserve the Desmet and the Uitkijk collections in their entirety was based on the assumption that they both reflect part of the history of Dutch film culture. The emphasis of the museum's film historical discourse on the history of screening shows striking parallels with the way academic research in film history, since the 1980s, has also focused on the context in which films are experienced.

The interior of the Cinema Parisien screening room itself has found a new role. It has been reconstructed in one of the screening rooms (Room 7) of the Filmhallen in Amsterdam, which opened in 2014.[3] EYE is responsible

for the programming in this screening room, which concentrates on showing restored versions of the film canon and special art house films. As a result, the institute is now able to refer to Desmet's history and, as a consequence, to its own history, in two different places in Amsterdam.

To recap, the visual references to the Invisible Cinema and the Cinema Parisien are both rooted in the history of EYE. Moreover, they also symbolise two angles of the film museum's approach to film historical discourse.

The combination of film with other art forms – a presentation strategy that the Filmmuseum adopted several times during the course of its history – continues as a feature of EYE's new building. Cinema 1, the largest room in the building, with 300 seats and a built-in cinema organ, can be used for large events such as movies with orchestral accompaniment or other theatrical additions. This enables EYE to present museum films as performance art on a more or less continuous basis. In such a setting, there is space to show both canonical and unknown films from the collection. The screening of these films principally activates an aesthetic reading (as outlined by Roger Odin). Indeed, the aesthetic theories developed by film museum discourse have influenced the institute's overall collection, restoration, and presentation practices over the years, resulting in a collection of 'beautiful' films. In some cases, showing these aesthetically pleasing films in combination with other art forms gave them an added artistic *cachet*. The new main screening room provides the ideal environment in which to continue this presentation strategy. It is interesting to note, however, that the academic study of film history during the 1990s rejected this type of normative attitude to early film, and the two opposing perspectives comprise one of the major distinctions between the film historical discourses emerging from academia and those that developed out of film museum practice.

Finally, EYE contains a fourth room, Cinema 2, which contains a flexible stand and the equipment required to display projections on all the walls, enabling it to show films and other media products in various different ways. In 2007, when the plans for the new building were still under development, this room was known as the 'laboratory', since it was intended as a setting for experiments with different apparatuses and programming strategies. Indeed, such discoveries are now a central feature of the cinema, in an apparent continuation of the experimental programming strategies and workshops the Filmmuseum introduced in the early 1990s. It is also a space where film and other arts – namely dance, performance art, video, and multimedia art – can be easily combined. The arrival of this 'laboratory', therefore, offers the possibility of experimenting with many different sorts of collaborations and film performances.

The desire to combine film with other art forms is also reflected in the

way EYE presents its new building on its website, flyers, and other types of publicity. The prominence given to the architects responsible for its design, Delugan Meissl of Vienna, is striking: the institute portrays the new building as an example of architectural art, emphasising the strong connections between this discipline and film.[4] In this, EYE follows its own historical precedents: first, film was presented alongside the other modern arts at the Stedelijk Museum; then, in combination with music, literature, and poetry in the Vondelpark Pavilion; and now, by linking it to contemporary architecture, EYE reaffirms the belief that film belongs among the established arts.[5] Architecture in particular appears to have a permanent and very prominent presence – there are regular tours of the building showcasing its architectural features. In addition, EYE now features an exhibition space, where it organises displays about and with film. In this way, it has positioned itself, its building and its film collections in the tradition of art museums and, thus, within the category of 'art'.

Besides the various rooms, which contain a multitude of different types of technological apparatuses, EYE has also found other ways to display its diversity and stratification. To prevent any overlap and to keep the programmes as rich and varied as possible it presents diverse but highly complementary programmes in the different screening rooms. At the same time, this strategy reflects the history of the institute, which is strongly characterised by a hetero-chronic cacophony. EYE's programming shows many similarities to the screenings in the Vondelpark, except that the museum has four (rather than just two) rooms, where better projection facilities and larger screens offer wider programming opportunities. In some respects, the programming is also more diverse: for example, short films are shown in a more structured way. EYE often precedes official screenings with shorts and unknown films from its archive that are crowded out of the programme elsewhere. In this way, a larger proportion of films that are usually difficult to programme can be shown in the screening rooms.

In 2007, the institute drew up plans envisioning a much larger transformation in its programming format. These described two different formulae: one for daytime and one for evening. The evening programme would be similar to its current integrated one; the daytime programme, however, was intended to be ongoing, echoing the period of early film and the Cineac. The aim was to enable the public to walk in and out of the different cinemas. The films shown were supposed to 'contaminate' each other, not only on a vertical or programmatic level, but also horizontally (between rooms). The audience would also be able to move from one screening room or apparatus to another and directly experience the ways the interiors induced different modes of reading the films. The programming strategy, therefore, introduced a novel concept: it

assigned the spectator a role that mirrored that of the moviegoer at the turn of the 20th century, while also exhibiting similarities to today's internet surfer, with the viewer changing rooms and activities in much the same way as we move between sites and pages online. Finally, this apparatus corresponded to the museum display of video art: again, the visitor would be able to walk from one installation to another and produce his or her own 'assemblage' of images. Unfortunately, this idea, whereby visitors buy a ticket for admission to the whole building, after which they can wander at will through the screening rooms and other spaces, never materialised.

Finally, we reach the basement of the new building where the collection can be seen in entirely new ways. This novel viewing experience is related to another important development: digital technology. The use of digital media and technology has represented a momentous change for film museums, and it continues to hold great importance, opening the way for many new opportunities in the collection, restoration, and presentation of film museum material. The Filmmuseum has indeed always been at the forefront of the latest developments in museum practice, as displayed in curator Giovanna Fossati's 2009 book, *From Grain to Pixel: The Archival Life of Film in Transition*.

Initially, these technologies appeared to be particularly useful for the restoration of photographic images. Over the past fifteen years, film archives have frequently experimented with new techniques, resulting in new kinds of restorations that have given museum collections' restoration prints even more diversity: prints from the early days of analogue restoration differ from later ones, which, in turn, differ from the digital restorations produced in recent years. The museum collections thus reflect the history of restoration techniques. Moreover, ideas about which versions should be reproduced are themselves in continuous ferment. Film museum collections offer a multitude of film historical interpretations, turning them into a reservoir of information about the different ways film historians have perceived museum films in the past.[6]

Digital technology also offers new ways of providing access to archival films. For example, the digitisation project, 'Images for the Future', which ran from 2007 to 2012, has changed the way in which the EYE archive is handled. The project's original aim was to digitise the entire collection of Dutch films, consisting of both restored and unrestored films.[7] Currently, EYE makes this material available through digital media – for example, via the EYE website, which includes a movie database containing films made in the Netherlands.[8] Digitised films from the collection can be viewed in digital format, provided that rights arrangements do not present an obstacle. The selections made by film museum staff for the museum collection in the (recent) past, therefore, play a much smaller role in this format, but all the other past collection activi-

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ties that formed the archive, such as its active and passive acquisition practices, or the shedding of unwanted or badly deteriorated prints, will be sustained in future presentations, including the digital ones.

Presentation and projection practices have also changed under the influence of new technology and media. Digital projection, for example, is available in all of the new building's screening rooms, while film festivals such as Le Giornate del Cinema Muto now also show digital versions of archive films. This has advantages and disadvantages as not all digital versions of archive films are of a high enough quality. The 2007 plans for EYE recognised this, explicitly mentioning that future digital projection should be used exclusively for digitally released movies, while analogue projection should remain the screening preference for archival films. In addition to the problems of print quality, which persists despite recent improvements, the main reason for the analogue projection of silent films was and is a similarly practical one: digital projectors cannot project film at 16 or 18 frames per second. This is a problem the international film archive world has been trying to solve for some time now, and it has been much discussed at the FIAF level. The solution has to (but probably will not) come from the industry.[9]

In addition, many filmmakers and archivists still cherish the idea that analogue projection plays a key part in strengthening the authenticity of the cinematic experience. The question is, however, to what extent can analogue projection be considered an indispensable part of the cinematic apparatus? What makes the experience a cinematic one if it is not, for the most part, the act of simply watching a film in the dark in a large screening room as part of a group? Besides which, the conclusion reached in Chapter 9 – that film museum practice has never been able to fully reconstruct 'original' experiences – raises the question of whether it is essential to maintain analogue projection at all costs. And yet, the view that analogue projection distinguishes film from other media retains strong support. This also forces us to think of it as a part of our audiovisual heritage – one that includes many types of exceptional formatting and projection techniques, such as 8mm, 70mm, Sensurround, Odor-rama, and Cinerama. Remarkably, film scholars do not seem particularly rigorous when it comes to the techniques used to show films. For example, they often use video, DVD, or YouTube to illustrate their lectures and presentations. However, there is a growing interest in studying the screening situation or taking the cinematic apparatus as a subject for research. For example, Annie van den Oever and Andreas Fickers (2013: 272-278) in their article, 'Experimental Media Archaeology – A Plea for New Directions', propose an experimental methodological research approach that makes use of reenactments and focuses on how the media archaeologist experiences the material constraints of media technologies. Perhaps this relatively new focus

in film historical research has been stimulated by the imminent disappearance of analogue film-screening in cinemas, film museums, and even archival film festivals.

EYE also presents digitised archive material in a new *dispositif* that is a cross between a cinema situation, a museum *dispositif*, and one that displays similarities with the way we perceive digital images in everyday life. This form of presentation can be experienced in the basement of the new building. There, the visitor first encounters a couple of yellow viewing devices called 'pods', which can accommodate up to three people at a time. On examination, it is possible to place this *dispositif* within a number of existing presentation traditions. At first sight, it reminds us of the Invisible Cinema: the seats are comfortable and the interior is darkened. However, the pods are placed in a fairly busy area that includes some media art installations, which are often accompanied by sound. This disrupts the similarity with the experience of the Invisible Cinema, in which absolute silence is required, ensuring that no noise (other than the sound of the film) can intrude on the cinematic experience. Besides, these pods stimulate ongoing encounters with other visitors, as people regularly look into them to search for a free spot. Some visitors find a place in an already occupied pod, and end up watching a film chosen by a stranger. Because of the arrangement of the pods in a room with passersby and various media art installations, the apparatus provokes a similar response to that created by a piece of installation art in a museum – that is, it replicates the experience of the *flaneur*, the passerby who moves from one artwork to another, while he or she is both looking and being looked at. Meeting other visitors and hearing the sounds of other media installations is often part of the whole experience. However, there is one major difference: a visitor to a pod sits in a comfortable chair in semidarkness, while a visitor to a museum predominantly walks around the galleries (Rebentisch, 2003: 189).

Finally, the pod *dispositif* displays elements of the current digital cultural field, with the corresponding 'pull model':[10] the digitised images are made easily retrievable so that the user can determine what he or she is going to see by means of a search engine or system. Fossati (2009: 17) explains that, as the advent of digital technology has allowed for the development of other approaches to archival material, it has changed spectators into 'users' 'who expect to participate actively and have open access to archival collections'. But, of course, the archival collections that are opened up digitally do not contain the material objects themselves, only the moving images these objects carry.

The pull model is also reflected in a number of the web pages EYE has developed, such as filminnederland.nl. As with surfing the web, the visitor can search for and watch the films of his or her choice. This again creates a new *dispositif*, comprising a one-to-one relationship between the visitor and

the images, which encourages them to select the images they want to view. The experience and the reading mode are fundamentally different to the traditional cinematographic experience, not least because the passive film viewer has now become an active image user.

Remarkably, these ways of presenting the digitised archive mimics the functioning of a material one: for example, in the multitude of images it contains and in the presence of a database that makes them available to the viewer. However, the big difference is that the digital images are dematerialised, or maybe even rematerialised as buttons, pods, and screens. As a consequence, the digital does not so much reflect the material characteristics of the archive as mimic its theoretical approach, including the questions of access and lack of access, information, knowledge, and discovery. Still, these new ways of presenting archival material with the help of digital technology give film museum practice greater depth at various levels. It enables the creation of projects that lend a fresh impulse to the relationship between audience and film archive material: for example, by integrating the archive into the presentation, by encouraging the user of the archival material to be proactive, or by making use of digital formats offering archival film fragments for the public to make their own films with.[11] This dovetails with recent developments in academic research into the new media, which focuses on the distinction between the positions considered traditional for spectators of film and those adopted by new media users of digital images.

A final example of a format in which EYE presents the pull model is the Panorama, another installation in the basement. This consists of a rectangular space, with projections on each wall. There are seven larger projection devices, where several preselected movie clips can be watched. Numerous smaller ones that repeat archival footage in horizontal rows frame these larger projections. There are only a few seating areas, which makes the *dispositif* similar to that of installation art – that is, it reflects the experience of the museum visitor. There are seven different touch screens on which visitors can indicate which images they want to see, and each console allows them to select from a series of fragments connected by themes – colour, conflict, exploration, film stars, the Netherlands, slapstick, and magic – which label and frame the pieces offered in much the same way as the programmes discussed in Chapter 8. For example, by presenting a colour clip with the theme, 'the Netherlands', the viewer will be directed towards an historical rather than an aesthetic reading. Besides the fact that these themes direct the reading of the fragments, they also refer to the history of EYE and the development of film history. Themes such as 'the Netherlands', 'colour', and 'exploration' are particularly closely intertwined with the institute's history. They are also strongly linked to themes that have received a great deal of attention in new film history: the theme of 'magic',

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for example, has been studied by scientists such as Tom Gunning, Vanessa Toulmin, and others. In addition, it is one of the central themes in Gustav Deutsch's history series of found footage, FILM IST... (1998-2002), which uses a lot of material selected from the EYE archive. Within these themes, EYE has once again opted for beautiful, special, unknown, or, in some cases, already canonised fragments.

The Panorama only shows fragments of films. The preservation and display of fragments is part of a long tradition at EYE – for example, through its series Bits & Pieces. The Panorama, therefore, appears to refer to this earlier presentation strategy. I analysed these fragments in Chapters 3 and 7 and described how they made visible the incompleteness of the film archive and, thus, the incompleteness of film history. The Panorama equally confronts the audience with gaps in the archives. In similar fashion to a film curator who discovers a fragment of a long-lost film, and then immediately regrets that he or she cannot see the rest because it is quite simply absent or lost, the visitor to the Panorama also notices the lacunae in the remains from the past. In this way, the presentational format visually reproduces the archive, whose amputated state is displayed in all its beauty.

The Panorama also gives an impression of plurality and diversity similar to the plurality, diversity, and breadth of accumulation so characteristic of an archive. Moreover, the installation could almost be seen as a visual representation of this book's conclusions: it replicates the diversity that has found its way into the archive over the years as a result of a multitude of different perspectives, a diverse conservation policy, and a broad outlook on film history. Showing so many fragments at the same time within an immersive panoramic setup renders these aspects clearly visible.

The shift in the mode of presentation from a cinematic one to one that also evokes the archive experience parallels current trends in media culture. Arguably, such trends appear close to comprising a new paradigm, in which the 'user' 'pulls' the images towards him or herself. An interest in databases and digital disclosures is also growing in academia. Media researchers are developing research projects whose sources are presented in new and different forms: for example, websites such as The European Film Gateway (part of Europeana), EU-Screen, Inventing Europe, or The Timeline of Historical Film Colors, present database projects in combination with (media) historical research.

In terms of further developments, the potential exists to place critical editions of archival films on digital carriers, presenting the archival versions – the digital duplicates of titles the way they were found in various archives – next to the final restorations. Another option might be a presentational format that combines the various preservations and restorations of a particular film.

In this way, film museum practice could provide access to the history of film reconstruction and restoration, which, in turn, reflects the various film historical interpretations. Subsequently, visitors could also choose which version(s) they want to view, and maybe even compare them. This way of presenting film titles would fit perfectly with the diversity that characterises the history of film museum practice in a synchronic and diachronic way, a diversity that is already explicitly reflected in EYE's building, programme, and basement, which refer to both the diverse history of the Filmmuseum and historical taste.

In view of this diversity, however, it is remarkable that EYE has permanently focused on only one medium: film. Traditionally, the archiving of Dutch television has been the task of the Institute for Sound and Vision in Hilversum, while photography is principally housed at the Fotomuseum in Rotterdam. Internationally, too, the different media remain segregated – for example, film museums and television archives have separate international umbrella organisations: FIAF and FIAT (Fédération Internationale des Archives de Télévision), respectively. In this respect, the plans put forward at the end of the 20th century for an Institute of Visual Culture – a serious, even radical, attempt to accommodate the three different media of photography, new media, and film in one building – were unique. It is highly regrettable that the plans were never realised, because they forced the institutes involved to think about how certain problems affect different media in similar ways. For example, many facets of new media have not been (and are not being) collected or archived. Obvious gaps in the current collection culture include, for example, game consoles and digital art installations, both of which featured in the plans for the Institute of Visual Culture. Given the active role of the new media user, it is obvious that such equipment is an essential element of digital culture; a shooting game played with replica guns in an arcade provides a very different media experience and meaning to that offered by the same game when played on a PC at home. With the Institute's cancellation, all the plans and new ideas were put on ice – or were, so to speak, 'archived'.

As a consequence, the present-day archiving of digital media products shows striking similarities to that of film at the beginning of the 20th century. Media art, for one, is much favoured over other more popular media objects such as games; for example, the acquisition practices of the Netherlands Media Art Institute (Montevideo) (NIMk) before it was forced to close in 2012 by severe cuts in funding. NIMk collected all the digital art it had exhibited since its inception in 1978; however, given this institute's artistic angle, the result was that most of these products derived from the *champ de production restreinte*. In some respects, this is reminiscent of the history of film museums: art films in particular found their way into the collections in the 1920s and 1930s. The result is that several series of media objects have escaped

attention, not only the aforementioned games but also a huge amount of amateur video material from the 1980s and 1990s. The plans for the Institute of Visual Culture anticipated these problems – learning from the mistakes of the past, its aim was to ensure the acquisition of these less artistic media objects. In the future, therefore, new media archives are likely to encounter similar problems to the ones film museums and film historians currently experience. These institutes will form a similar patchwork of various collections gathered together by a range of institutions and private collectors, and containing similarly obvious omissions. This will, in turn, mean that media history will always reflect the history of film museum and archival practices.

However, EYE's eclecticism, in relation to the interior design of its screening rooms and its various contexts for digital presentation, summarises all that is most remarkable about the institute's new building. In fact, the four screening rooms and, of course, the basement reflect its eclectic way of dealing with the films themselves – their collection, restoration, and presentation. This demonstrates that the institute's pluralistic historical tastes have stabilised over time, partly due to shifts in the debates on film history. As such, EYE materialises the continuation of old patterns alongside new ones in its archival practices, and this has led to an accumulation of film historical and aesthetic perspectives and ideas that have resulted in a variety of presentational formats.

Yet, there is also an element that is missing in the new building, namely, the physical collections. For example, the library, with its impressive collection of books (both old and new), is not located in the new building, and neither are the photographs, personal archives, nor poster collections. As a result, its research facilities are separated from its film screenings, unlike the situation in the 1970s. The decision not to include a library or knowledge centre in the new building, excluding written sources from the presentation space, seems to fly in the face of an increasing trend in collaboration between film museums and universities. Initiatives such as Domitor (an association that includes film archivists and film historians), the film festivals in Pordenone and Bologna, and the cooperation between film archival institutes and universities in training upcoming young media archivists have served to bring film museums and the academic world closer together. In addition, student internships have often led to the production of dissertations yielding new historical insights. This has given rise to a new audience of professionals, one that experiences film museum practice on a different level – from within the field. A library and study centre could have accommodated this new dynamic.

Fortunately, however, the institute has recently opened a Collection Centre, located in Amsterdam North at the Asterweg, 'within walking distance of the museum building, allowing for improved synergy between Collections

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and Presentation'.[12] All the collections are housed here, which means that films prints (except, of course, nitrates), photos, posters, film equipment, and paper archives are stored in one building. The library is also located in this new building, which implies that the collection centre will have a public function as a facility where researchers and other interested parties will be able to study this beautiful, rich, and fascinating material. In addition, the new building functions as an area for research, exchange, and education, for example, by hosting the students of the MA course in Preservation and Presentation at the University of Amsterdam, of which EYE Filmmuseum is a partner.

Remarkably, a small exhibition containing historical objects such as magic lanterns, film projectors, and a Mutoscope has also been added to EYE's basement, which – until recently – had mainly consisted of digital presentations of archival films and media art. The question is whether this shift is related to the opening of the new Collection Centre or to the increasing interest in materiality and imperfection on a broader international scale.[13]

In conclusion, we can see that, whereas the writing of film history has turned from its previously more normative and aesthetic critical perspective, the Filmmuseum has continued to regard the aesthetic qualities and artistry of film as paramount, reintroducing the notion of 'beauty' in the film historical debate through the back door. The presentation of film as an aesthetic object, an art form, has always been one of the main principles of the institution. In the Filmmuseum's early days at the Stedelijk Museum, film was surrounded by modern art, design, and photography; now, EYE's media installations, architecture, and exhibition space continue to frame film as an artistic medium or art form. As long as the collection is largely shaped by selection and restoration policies that focus on the aesthetic, the institute will continue to display the surprising and the beautiful, presenting a gilded narrative of the history of film.

NOTES

1   For more general information on the Jean Mitry Award, see: http://www.cineteca
     delfriuli.org/gcm/giornate/jeanmitry.html
2   In 1938, the four pre-war film archives that founded FIAF were the Reichsfilm-
     archiv, the Cinémathèque française, MoMA, and the BFI (Borde, 1983: 72-73).
3   Boleslaw Matuszewski (1898) had already pointed out in the late-nineteenth
     century the opportunities that film and photography offered as sources for
     historical research, and the need to store these visual documents securely in an
     archive.
4   In an interview with André Habib, Dominique Païni (2013: 14-17) explains the
     tight connection between cinémathèques and the 'museum'.
5   Other names for this institute have been the Filmmuseum and the Nederlands
     Film Museum (NFM).
6   In her book *Film Preservation*, Karen Gracy explains that the term 'archive' was
     probably chosen strategically with regard to the difficult relationship with the
     film industry. However, this problem was much more present in the United
     States, with all the big Hollywood studios, than in Europe, which had a different
     film-industry infrastructure (Gracy, 2007: 17-20).
7   I will use the different names for the institute according to the course of its his-
     tory: Nederlandsch Historisch Filmarchief (NHFA) for the period 1946-1952;
     (Nederlands) Filmmuseum for the period 1952-2009; and EYE for the period
     from 2010 to date.
8   Filmmuseum Annual Report, 1988: 7
9   For more recent publications on this topic, see: Wolfgang Ernst (2012); Wolf-
     gang Ernst (2002); Mary Ann Doane (2002); Beatrice von Bismarck, Hans P.
     Feldmann, Hans U. Obrist (eds.) (2002); Charles Merewether (2006); Alessandro

Bordina, Sonia Campanini, Andrea Mariani (eds.) (2012); Francesco Federici and Cosetta Saba (eds.) (2014).

10   The historical data mostly derive from the annual reports that can be found in the EYE library. Additional research was based on correspondence and other documents in the company archives of the Filmmuseum. Information about the films from the archive was found in the various database systems EYE has built and used over the course of its history. The former database containing information concerning the vault proved an especially rich source of information as it contained data on the acquisition of nitrate prints, information about the donors, and the date a print arrived at the archive. Furthermore, this old file often mentions where and when duplicates of archival prints were made. Whenever necessary, I have compared this information with the information management system that was in use during the period of this research.

11   EYE is in possession of some 36,000 titles. This means that there are about 62,000 km of film material stored in its vaults, of which about 7,000 km is nitrate material. Given the size of the archive and the collection, a reduction is certainly desirable.

12   See: http://www.unesco.org/new/en/communication-and-information/memory-of-the-world/register/full-list-of-registered-heritage/registered-heritage-page-2/desmet-collection/ (Accessed: 22 August 2016)

13   See: the discussion in Paolo Cherchi Usai's edited book, *Film Curatorship* (2008: p. 21), concerning video, the 'digital turn', and the expected loss of the opportunity to 'show a work in its original medium'. Here, Cherchi Usai refers not to nitrate prints, but to the projection of acetate duplicates of the nitrate prints. All prints and the way they are shown have now become valuable resources. This was before the George Eastman House set up the annual festival, *The Last Nitrate Picture Show*, in 2015, which celebrates the projection of nitrate prints.

14   Prior to this period, there was already a lot of activity in the field of film collection. Klaas de Zwaan (2011) introduces the term 'pre-archival practices' for activities in this period, taking into account the fact that these collections originated from the time before the opening of official institutes.

15   Logically, all these activities led to the emergence of a film canon. Scholars who have written comprehensively about its emergence include Peter Wollen (1993), David Bordwell (1997), and Janet Staiger (1985).

16   See, for example: Haidee Wasson (2005)

17   In *Scenes of Instruction* (2007), film historian Dana Polak explains that, by making this claim, Iris Barry erased an entire period of film education in American universities before 1935. One of the better-known earlier examples of a course on film history is the one taught by Terry Ramsaye in 1926 at the New School for Social Research, which he based on his book, *A Million and One Nights*. There were also many other initiatives before 1935, all described in detail in

the 376 pages Polan wrote on the beginnings of film studies in the United States.

18   See: Coissac (1925); Moussinac (1925, 1929); Charensol (1930); Rotha (1930); Jordaan (1932); Arnheim (1932); Bardèche and Brasillach (1935); Domburg van (1936)

19   According to this view, one example is Georges Méliès, who discovered stop-motion and all sorts of other tricks using cinematographic techniques. Another is Edwin Porter, who took a first step in the direction of a typical cinematic narrative structure, made possible by means of editing. This period, which is generally characterised as 'primitive', ended with the work of D.W. Griffith, who entered the chronicle as the first significant film artist. Griffith also played a key role in the film museum world. The MoMA Film Library intensively collected his films and, in 1940, Iris Barry organised a Griffith retrospective (Barry, 1940).

20   Because a film is always the product of several people's work, famous writers or well-known cameramen were often appointed in order to provide artistic value. In addition, classical film historians often link the artistic value of films to specific actors such as Asta Nielsen or Charlie Chaplin.

21   See: Sadoul (1962); Bardèche and Brasillach (1935); Jean Mitry (1967-1980).

22   One example is the 'birth-maturity-decline dynamic', which comes from the tradition of art history. It seems likely that the parallels between classical film history and art and literary historical discourses have arisen as a result of the training in literature or art history that film historians often enjoyed (Bordwell, 1997: 43).

23   According to film historian Ansje van Beusekom (2001: 10), similar ideas about cinema smoothed the way for the acceptance of film studies within the Dutch arts faculties at a later date.

24   See: Arnheim (1931); Münsterberg (1916).

25   Newspaper clippings from the EYE library: 'Het nieuwe parool. Een archief van kunstfilms' (1930); Cannegieter 'Film Archieven' (1932).

26   Filmmuseum Annual Reports.

27   The idea that the director has artistic responsibility for a film had been current since the 1910s, which means that it was not introduced by the *Cahiers du cinéma*. However, the *Cahiers* critics generalised this perspective. Directors such as Eisenstein, Buñuel, Ivens, and others were canonised, and as such, are historically seen as '*auteurs avant-la-lettre*' (Bordwell, 1997: 21).

28   This 'pro-Americanism' seems to have been a response to the 'anti-Americanism' that had been prevalent since the 1920s. Anti-Americanism preached that the increasing mechanisation and mass culture emanating from the United States were a threat to European culture. Examples include Johan Huizinga's 'Mensch en menigte in Amerika' (1918). This discourse was generally accepted in the Netherlands and the rest of Western Europe (Beusekom van, 2001; Schoots, 1999).

29   This preference was most certainly influenced by the Cinémathèque française, where Langlois often screened films of this director, and where Musidora (Irma Vep in *Les Vampires*) worked behind the counter (Roud, 1983: 71-72).

30   It is striking that it was in the vicinity of these two institutes that the first university film studies departments emerged: namely, at the Sorbonne in Paris and at New York University (NYU).

31   See: Lameris (2012).

32   A key figure in this development was Jay Leyda. Apart from his archival work for MoMA and FIAF, he was also a lecturer at NYU. Among his pupils were Tom Gunning, Charles Musser, Steven Higgins, Roberta Pearson, and William Uricchio, film historians who have played prominent roles in the development of film historical research.

33   Thomas Elsaesser (1986: 247) uses this term literally in his eponymous article, 'The New Film History', comparing it with what he calls 'old film history'. Because the term 'revisionism' has a more unpleasant meaning in relation to the history of the Second World War, I prefer to use the phrase, 'new film history' instead.

34   Nowadays, this accessibility has been expanded by the innovation of DVD and the internet as media on which (archival) films can be made available. The more responsible use of films as film historical sources also has to do with the fact that film historiography has found a firmer position in the academic world. This implies that film historical research has to be conducted in an academically sound manner. It has also meant that students could be trained in the newly developed research methods and techniques.

35   The term 'paradigm' is best known from Thomas Kuhn's book, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (1962). A feature that has been attributed to paradigms over the course of time is that they should all be considered to have the same value. They differ from each other in character, not importance. The fact that new film history introduced this term was also a strategic move in the discussion about the possible value of film production before 1914.

36   Although early film would continue to dominate new film history for a long time, new film historical research was not exclusively limited to this corpus (Bordwell, Staiger, and Thompson, 1985; Jacobs, 1991).

37   As a consequence, classical film history was more akin to film criticism, a position that the new film historians strongly objected to because they considered it to be unscientific.

38   See: Gunning (1991a).

39   A period of great activity followed, which reached its high point in the proposal for an Institute for Visual Culture, in which institutes for new media, film, and photography could be combined in one building. The plans to move to an old warehouse in Rotterdam, however, were never finalised. The subsequent period

was characterised by a rapid change of management and the digitisation of large parts of the collection. In 2012, EYE moved into a new building on the northern bank of the IJ, where digital and analogue images from the collection are on display.

PART I

1   The French philosopher Jacques Derrida starts his book, *Le mal des archives*, with a brief etymology of the term 'archive', in which he explains that the Greek word '*arkhe*' meant both beginning and order. Originally, 'archive' referred to the home, as well as to the place where the documents that underwrote legitimacy (and thus the beginning of power) were kept (Derrida, 1996: 1-3).

2   See: Baudrillard (1968); Hooper-Greenhill (2000); Pomian (1988); Pearce (1995).

3   On a material level, we can almost literally see this happen: the film acquired by the museum is taken out of its original can, given a film museum leader, and put into an archival can. After this, it is labelled and numbered, to allow identification by means of the data stored in the computer system. Finally, it is moved to the vault, where it is stored among countless other museum films in similar cans with similar labels, as part of the same system.

4   Besides securing the original prints, the process of film preservation includes the production of new film prints. Generally, these so-called 'preservation prints' are made by external laboratories, and, in this sense, this is another form of active acquisition.

5   This is just one of many meanings that have been given to the term 'Collectie Nederland' ('Netherlands Collection') over the course of time. In a broader context, for example, the term refers to the entire set of collected and archived objects in the possession of all the official museums and archival institutions in the Netherlands. There is even an official Netherlands Institute for Cultural Heritage or Instituut Collectie Nederland (ICN). Within the domain of film archiving, the term also means the total of collected and archived Dutch films, which not only includes films from the archive of the Filmmuseum, but also from the archives of the Institute for Sound and Vision (Filmmuseum Annual Report, 1998: 17).

6   BA – legbord 27 box 324: 'Richtlijnen voor de ontwikkeling van het NEDERLANDS FILMMUSEUM,' 1956: 6.

7   Filmmuseum Annual Report, 1989: 37.

8   Elif Rongen told me that among Joop van Liemt's collection, for example, there was a can that contained fragments of film exclusively showing trains and ships. Here, the question is whether van Liemt systematically collected film clips of trains and ships, or whether he gathered these clips together later.

9   BA – legbord 24, ordner aanschaf, conservering, schenkingen 1958: 'OPGAVE VAN FILMS GEKOCHT VAN HR. SYLVESTER, LEIDEN, September 1960'.

10   BA – legbord 24, ordner aanschaf, conservering, schenkingen 1958: 'NIEUWE AANWINSTEN – Van Ch. Huguenot van der Linden'.

11   BA – legbord 24, ordner aanschaf, conservering, schenkingen 1958: 'Opgave van de films uit de op 1 juni ontvangen zending van Cuperus'.

12   Filmmuseum Annual Report, 1989: 38. In this text, the Filmmuseum remains unclear as to what materials it considered to be part of the Desmet Collection. For example, should they include the written materials that Jean Desmet bequeathed to the institute as well? In cases in which the Filmmuseum wanted to refer to more than just the collections of films, this ambiguity has caused misunderstandings. It has certainly led to assumptions about the composition of the film collection and the way in which the films in the collection reflected the Dutch film culture of the time.

13   Filmmuseum clippings: 'Vader bewaarde alles', *De Telegraaf*, 24 May, 1958.

14   With thanks to Alessandra Laitempergher.

15   This moment coincides with the disappearance of most of Desmet's cinemas (Blom, 2003: 332).

16   Jean Baudrillard writes that an object always has two potential functions: on the one hand, it can be used; on the other hand, it can be owned. These two functions can occur simultaneously. For example, Desmet rented and sold his films, while, at the same time, he also owned, kept, and cherished them. However, an object can only be possessed as well. Baudrillard (1994: 8) says: 'Conversely, the object pure and simple, divested of its functioning, abstracted from any practical context, takes on a strictly subjective status. Now its destiny is to be collected. Whereupon it ceases to be a carpet, a table, a compass, or a knick-knack, and instead turns into an "object" or a "piece".'

17   In 1987, only ten of the 300 films that were shown at Le Giornate del Cinema Muto were in colour, eight of which were from the Desmet Collection. According to Peter Delpeut, this proved that the greatest part of the remaining 290 conservations probably consisted of incorrect black-and-white prints of original colour films (Delpeut, 1987). The question remains as to whether this imbalance does not also imply the possibility of a disproportionately high number of colour films in the Desmet Collection.

18   The interrelationship between the avant-garde exhibition practices of the 1920s and 1930s took place on a more international level, as Malte Hagener (2011) convincingly argues in his article, 'Inventing a Past, Imagining the Future'.

19   BA – legbord 4: 'Beleidsnota Stichting Nederlands Filmmuseum' 1976, annex I: 4.

20   The research undertaken within the framework of this project shows that this connection was much looser than the Filmmuseum had initially assumed (Muis, 1999).

21 In order to find out the state of play in the field in various countries, the Filmliga made use of consultants. Mannus Franken, for example, specialised in the French avant-garde, while Simon Koster and Joris Ivens kept an eye on Germany. During the first years of the CBLF, these consultants brought a number of now well-known titles to the attention of the Filmliga, including films made by Germaine Dulac, Walther Ruttmann, Oskar Fischinger, Viking Eggeling, Ivan Mosjoukine, Man Ray, and Hans Richter.

22 Filmmuseum – 095 Ter Braak: Letter from Ed. Pelster to the Board, 7 October 1928

23 A Filmmuseum policy paper from 1976 states that the Filmliga also showed 'Dutch film experiments' in addition to the Soviet films and the French and German avant-garde works they were known for (BA – legbord 4: 'Beleidsnota Stichting Nederlands Filmmuseum' 1976, annex I: 4).

24 This production company was also managed by Ed Pelster, and produced films from foreign filmmakers such as Henri Storck and Oskar Fischinger ('De Nederlandsche Avant-Garde', 1931: 5).

25 Filmmuseum – 0024 Schuitema Catalogue CBLF. Catalogue title: MAX EN HET SPOOKKASTEEL

26 Ter Braak wrote in *De Absolute Film* (1930) that RASKOLNIKOV (Wiene, 1923) was a commercial monstrosity, and that he thought Fritz Lang's NIBELUNGEN (1922-1923) lied in many ways. Apparently, he considered these films to be part of *cinéma-d'avant-guerre* or pre-war cinema as well. This way of judging a large part of silent film production might be one of the main reasons why so many silent films from the 1930s that now belong to the canon are absent from this collection (Schoots, 1999: 198).

27 The term *cultuurfilm* probably derives from the UFA Kulturfilm-Abteilung, which indeed mainly produced documentaries (Bock and Töteberg, 1992: 68).

28 This concept of the 'ideal self' as an individual who surrounds him or herself with property dates from the seventeenth century and is predominantly a Western construct (Clifford, 1988: 217).

29 This was one of the reasons behind the decision of the NHFA and CBLF to start a separate foundation. The films could be disconnected from the 'commercial' side of the CBLF and its non-commercial use guaranteed (Lameris, 2001).

30 Stichting Nederlandsche Federatie van Filmkringen, Annual Report, 1946: 15

31 Filmmuseum – 052 Filmliga, Cover Film d'Art: Letter P.J. Moock, 15 October 1949. The exact date of establishment was 17 March 1949. The creation of an independent foundation also prevented the NHFA being liable for the CBLF's debts.

32 Filmmuseum clippings: 'Attractie in Vondelpark het filmmuseum'.

33 BA – Correspondence 1947-1948: Letter De Vaal to Sandberg, undated.

34   BA – Correspondence: Letter to the Minister of O,K&W [education, art and sciences] – Annex, 23 December 1947.

35   Filmmuseum Annual Reports: 'Verslag van de werkzaamheden van het NEDER-LANDS HISTORISCH FILM ARCHIEF over de periode van April 1948 tot Juni 1949': 1

36   In 1949, for example, Jan de Vaal sent FIAF members more films from the Uitkijk Archive than from the collection of the NHFA. France took advantage of seventeen films from the Uitkijk Archive, and only three from the NHFA. From the seven films that the Filmmuseum sent to Denmark, only one was part of the NHFA collection (Filmmuseum – 052 Filmliga, cover Film d'Art: Letter P.J. van Moock, 15 October 1949).

37   Filmmuseum Annual Report, 1960: 24-25

38   Filmmuseum Annual Report, 1965: 28

39   Despite the fact that only a few canonical films ended up in the FMF, the film pool functioned for over ten years. A number of prints from the FMF are still part of the Filmmuseum collection. In this way, the Filmmuseum initiative did not only result in a virtual expansion of the archive, but also a material one.

40   The Filmmuseum also possesses a nitrate print of this film. However, this print was donated to the museum in the 1980s. There are more mentions of 'classic' films donated by other FIAF archives in the Filmmuseum Annual Reports. For example, on page 2 of the 1959 Annual Report we see the following titles: OUR HOSPITALITY (Keaton & Blystone, 1923); MUTTER KRAUSENS FAHRT INS GLÜCK (Jutzi, 1929); VARIETÉ (Dupont, 1925); KLOVNEN (Sandberg, 1926); ŠPALÍČEK (Trnka, 1947). Indeed, the Filmmuseum holds acetate prints of all of these films.

41   My translation. This reasoning only makes sense if the film text is considered as the actual artwork instead of the film print. I will elaborate on this in Chapter 4.

42   Filmmuseum Annual Report, 1958: 2.

43   My translation.

44   De Vaal was also in contact with the National Film Board of Canada, travelling to Canada in 1950 as part of a joint venture. Grierson was strongly involved in the founding of the NFB. See: Filmmuseum Annual Reports: Report of activities, NHFA, 1950: 4.

45   The general aim of duplicating fragments was to make them available to third parties. Most of the educational and other institutions that rented films from the Filmmuseum used 16mm equipment. Furthermore, in 1959, the Dutch Cinema Association (NBB) released new fire regulations, which prohibited the projection of nitrate prints by film circles and ciné-clubs (Filmmuseum Annual Report, 1959: 8). Over the years, various rental catalogues for 16mm films were released, one of which probably dates from 1968 (BA – legbord 28 box 328: 'Filmbeschrijvingen Catalogus 16mm plannen 1966, 1968'). Two other catalogues from the 1950s classified the film fragments in the category as '*film-*

vorming', which was similar to film education. Apparently, the fragments were given an educational function. (Het Nederlands Filmmuseum – Filmcatalogus Amsterdam: Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, 195?; Catalogus 16mm Films Amsterdam: Stedelijk Museum/Stichting Nederlands Filmmuseum, 1958).

46 Filmmuseum Annual Report, 1974: 7.

47 BA – legbord 4: 'Beleidsnota Stichting Nederlands Filmmuseum' 1976: 6.

48 Filmmuseum Annual Reports, 1978-1979.

49 Filmmuseum Annual Report, 1960: 2.

50 Filmmuseum clippings: Piet Mulder, 'Bunker in duinen bergt archief van film-museum' *Het Parool*, 24 March 1961.

51 BA – Correspondence: Letter from Jan de Vaal (NHFA) to the Director of Hotel 'Noordzee', Vlissingen, 31 May 1948; Filmmuseum clippings: 'Levend verleden' *Olie* 11, 3, 1958; Barten (2002a).

52 Filmmuseum clippings: 'Levend verleden' *Olie*, 11, No. 3, 1958.

53 Desmet also provided for the donation of his collection to the Filmmuseum after his death in 1957.

54 BA – Correspondence: Correspondences between the Filmmuseum and C.W. Willigers, 1959-1960. The collection consisted of a few film prints, a Hupfeld Violina with ± 150 rolls, and some other curiosities.

55 Baudrillard illustrates this phenomenon with a story about a book collector who discovered the existence of a second copy of a book he possessed that he had thought to be unique. Apparently, the man booked a plane ticket, bought the other copy, and then burnt it in public. In this way, everyone could witness the fact that his book was once again unique and valuable (Baudrillard, 1994: 14).

56 My translation.

57 The difference between films and most other archival objects, however, is that, in the case of films, it is often not the age of the material that is considered rel-evant but the age of the images that are kept on this material. As a consequence, what was important was not the projection of a contemporary print of a film but of the images that were seen in the silent period.

58 Filmmuseum Annual Report, 1990: 9.

59 Due to the delayed preservation of this collection, some of the films were lost before the Filmmuseum was able to make preservation prints. Gaps in the current collection of silent films are thus partly due to the limited budget for preservation and the limitations of the technological resources and knowledge in the past.

60 That same year, FIAF indicated that all countries should install a mandatory deposit to facilitate the attempt to secure these films. Such a deposit would have made it much easier for the archives to save their national film heritage. Unfor-tunately, in most countries, this demand led to nothing. Even in 1980, when UNESCO (34 years later) took up the request, it proved impossible to introduce

such a law in every country (Borde, 1983: 101, 148). In the Netherlands, there is no obligatory deposit of national film productions.

61   See: Sadoul (1949); Bardèche and Brasillach (1935).

62   It was clearly not taken into account that the existence of different film cultures in the various countries meant, for example, that films were shaped into national versions. Versions of films with changes ordered by the Dutch censors and intertitles in the Dutch language were sent to film museums in countries not accustomed to viewing films in this format. The problems concerning the close connection of certain versions of films with specific national film cultures will be discussed in more detail in the section on preservation.

63   BA – Correspondence: Letter Jan de Vaal (NHFA) to Malewsky-Malevitsch (FIAF), 2 January 1947.

64   Filmmuseum Annual Reports: 'Rapport betreffende activiteit van het Nederlands Historisch Film Archief October 1946 tot Maart 1948': 1. At that time, the NHFA also wanted to gather together '[s]cientific films for universities and other scientifically interested parties'. However, this ambition was never achieved.

65   *NRC*, 9 October 1919 (http://kranten.kb.nl/index2.html). The NCF collected the negatives of these feature films as documents rather than display items. Apparently, the accessibility of the material was of less importance, illustrating that the archive's main aim was to keep the images in store for the future. Such collections, in which records of history on film were kept in storage, were not unique to the Netherlands. In 1896, Englishman Robert Paul made a serious attempt to set up a similar archive in Britain. However, he met with little success, and, as a consequence, only one film was stored at the British Museum. Brussels saw a similar initiative, collecting and storing films about the city from 1911. Such initiatives were at one with the ambitions of Boleslaw Matuszewski, who wrote an article in 1898 in which he made a plea to save such films and photographs as the bearers of unique information about (world) history (Bottomore, 1995: 291-296; Hogenkamp, 1984: 60; Matuszewski, 1898).

66   Another indication of the emphatic desire to acquire this collection is the fact that Jhr. Dr. D.P.M. Graswinckel had a seat on the board of the NHFA (BA -correspondence: Jan de Vaal letter to the Minister of Education, Arts and Sciences, 23 December 1947). Graswinckel was the general archivist at the Dutch national archive in The Hague, where the NCF collection was stored after the archive ceased to exist in 1933 (Hogenkamp, 1984: 64).

67   The NHFA also initiated other partnerships – for example, with the Nederlands Instituut voor Oorlogsdocumentatie (National Institute for War Documentation) or NIOD – to allow the acquisition of historical film material on the Netherlands (BA – correspondence: NHFA Letter to Minister of Education, Arts and Sciences – Annex 23 December, 1947).

68   Filmmuseum Annual Report, 1961: 2.

69 The early period of cinema was characterised by an explosion of film formats and perforations (Cherchi Usai, 2002b).

70 Filmmuseum Annual Report, 1961: 4, 17. Haghefilm had already duplicated a selection of these films on 35mm material in 1948, which was then used for the compilation film, UIT DE OUDE DOOS (Mullens, 1948).

71 Joris Ivens even celebrated his birthday in the upstairs hall of the Vondelpark Pavilion.

72 This combination of experimental and scientific film fits within a broader international tradition.

73 De Vaal started his first archival work in cooperation with Multifilm (Filmmuseum clippings: 'Attractie in het Vondelpark het filmmuseum', *WW*, 1 February 1968). He had worked for Multifilm during the war, which is why he had such good connections with the company. For more information about de Vaal's period at Multifilm, see Stufkens (2016).

74 On some occasions, de Vaal even approached commercial companies that had hired 'film artists' to make advertising films. For example, he wrote to the tobacco factory, Van Nelle NV, asking whether it would be possible to redistribute '[those] advertising films produced by Van Nelle Factories with a strong artistic character, which were mostly the work of the well-known artist Joop Geesink' (BA – Correspondence: Letter Jan de Vaal (NHFA) to the management of De Erven the bet. J. van Nelle V., 11 March 1948).

75 Its 1976 policy shows that the Filmmuseum was already prepared to take FIAF's advice seriously. However, it did not put it into practice until later (BA – legbord 4: 'Beleidsnota Stichting Nederlands Filmmuseum' 1976: 3). The reason for this delay was a lack of funding. De Vaal also fell ill and left the museum. His departure was followed by a period of interim management. In the late 1980s, when a stable management was installed once more, the Filmmuseum implemented its previous targets.

76 Filmmuseum Annual Report, 1989: 37.

77 Filmmuseum Annual Report, 1988: 5.

78 Filmmuseum Annual Report, 1996: 2.

79 See Chapter 4 for more about preservation and duplication.

80 During the same period, several changes in management took place in other film museum institutes such as the Centre National de Cinématographie, where Michelle Aubert took office in 1990, and the Cinémathèque française, where Dominique Païni became director in 1991 (Mannoni, 2006: 465-466).

81 Filmmuseum Annual Report, 1989: 5.

82 Filmmuseum Annual Report, 1988: 7.

83 Filmmuseum Annual Report, 1989: 37.

84 Filmmuseum Annual Report, 1989: 37.

85 Filmmuseum Annual Report, 1989: 37 (my translation).

86 When the Filmmuseum recognised a fragment from a canonical film, it added it to the series, Bits & Pieces.

87 Filmmuseum Annual Report,1989: 37.

88 'Resonance and Wonder' started out as the last chapter of Stephen Greenblatt's book, *Learning to Curse* (1990). In 1991, this section was included as a stand-alone article in the collection, *Exhibiting Cultures*.

89 There was also a change in national politics at the time, whereby the government was clearly willing to spend more money on film heritage. This seems to have coincided with the 'cultural turn', which resulted in a shift of interest away from the canon towards lesser-known films. This shift also occurred in fields other than film history (Eagleton, 2006).

90 Peter Delpeut took over artistic policy at the Filmmuseum in late 1991.

91 To ensure clarity about the origins of a fragment, the first and the last frames are always kept on the original film reel. In addition, the catalogue indicates the compilation that a particular fragment was taken from. Fragments that come as separate pieces of film piled up in a can are a different case. In these situations, it is usually impossible to trace either their origins or the sort of state they were in when they arrived in the archive.

92 Jan Svankmajer (2011), a collector who reconstructs present-day wonder cabinets, explains what he considers the differences between a museum and a cabinet of wonders: 'Museums are objective; a cabinet of wonders is subjective. Museums are organised rationally; a cabinet of wonders is organised emotionally. Objects in a museum are classified by the principle of identity; in a cabinet of wonders, the arrangement is directed by the principle of analogy.' According to these definitions, the term 'cabinet of wonders' is certainly a fitting name for the Bits & Pieces collection.

93 Filmmuseum Annual Report, 1989: 37.

94 Filmmuseum Annual Report, 1989: 37.

95 My translation.

96 See also: Delpeut's forthcoming article, based on his lecture, which is due to appear in the collection of essays, *The Colour Fantastic*, in 2017.

97 The interest in colour in early film also grew among academics. See: Gianati (1993); Dall'Asta and Pescatore (1994); Dall'Asta, Pescatore, and Quaresima (1995); Aumont (1995); McKernan (2004); Yumibe (2012); Brown, Street, and Watkins (2012).

98 In *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (1962), Kuhn writes that such (what he calls) anomalies are one of the reasons scientific revolutions begin. The new way the archives presented early colour film put previous assumptions in a different light, and this caused a significant shift in the film historical statements about such films.

99   It should be noted that nonfiction or documentary has always been regarded as a 'good object' in the film field because it is seen as a product of the *champ de production restreinte*.

100 The Filmmuseum also initiated other similar research activities, which ranged from cooperation with film historians to study days where film scholars and film archivists could discuss museum films. The workshop remained a recurring part of the programme.

101 Because this definition of resonance should be seen in light of Greenblatt's views on the 'new historicism', the complex and dynamic cultural forces he mentions are different than those that are central to this study. Whereas Greenblatt examines the constant interaction between all products from a particular culture, I specifically focus on the Filmmuseum when defining resonance – that is, on the complex and dynamic cultural forces that play a role in the history of film. For a self-reflective discussion of the new historicism, see Gallagher and Greenblatt (2001).

102 Similar processes occur in the history of archaeology. See, for example: Pomian (1987).

103 Filmmuseum Annual Report, 1991: 13. In the same year, FIAF writes that '[a]ll film archives should try to make some provision for private study by scholars and researchers, especially to the degree that the archive holds films that are unobtainable elsewhere' (cited in Bowser and Cooper, 1991: 171).

104 In 1996, the Filmmuseum reported that its video collection was one of the main sources for film historical research (Filmmuseum Annual Report, 1996: 5).

105 Currently, the position is once again shifting with regard to the canon, and it has slowly been transformed into an object of study in itself. For example, it was the central theme at the XVII International Film Studies Conference in Udine (Bianchi, Bursi, and Venturini, 2011).

106 Lecture given by Nick Merriman, 'The Future of Encyclopaedic Collections', on Friday 7 November 2003 at the conference, *Collections, Culture, Change*, held at the Museum of Manchester.

107 My translation.

108 'The collection of films from the Uitkijk is fundamentally different from other collections, such as the Desmet Collection. Within the Uitkijk Collection there was a conscious qualitative choice that was supposed to form a counterweight to what was usually offered in ordinary cinemas. As such, this group of films is somehow a forerunner of the later distribution collections of the Filmmuseum (Filmmuseum Annual Report, 1989: 3 [my translation]).

109 This idea is so strong that Greenblatt felt that he had to add to his definition of wonder to the statement that, according to the standard view prevalent in Western thought, the aesthetics of an artwork is always connected to a genius or artist (Greenblatt, 1991: 52).

110 From this perspective, the films in the non-collection remain potential museum films.

111 Over the past decades, a new trend has been discernible both at EYE and other museums: the increasing need to divest themselves of material. This undoubtedly has to do with the abundance of material in the archives, but also with the enormous amount of information that comes to us via the internet and television. This has resulted in a different attitude towards archive material, which demands a new form of selection. Whereas the postmodern era promoted an equal appreciation of all the material and all possible readings of this material, there is now a call to return to a more discriminatory approach.

112 New film history aligns with this kind of postmodern thinking, which was in its heyday around this time. Postmodernism rejected the existence of one 'true' story about the past. 'There is not one story, there are only images of the past from different perspectives' (Vattimo, 1998: 19).

113 Until now, it has mainly been material from the museum collection, such as films from the Desmet Collection, material from the Dutch Indies Collection, and Dutch material ('Images for the Future'), that has been digitised. The Filmmuseum, however, wants to make an increasing amount of its material digitally accessible, which also means that a large portion of its non-collection will become available for research purposes.

PART II

1 To this day, Brandi's book still plays a major role in the debate about restoration ethics. This is evident from the 2005 English translation of his collection of essays (Brandi, 2005). Some of the essays are also included in translation in an edited book on restoration released by the Getty Conservation Institute (Price, Kirby Talley Jr., and Vaccaro, 1996).

2 See: Cherchi Usai (2000b); Comencini and Pavesi (2001); Lenk (2006); Meyer (2000a).

3 Operations that change the nitrate are only used in the service of duplication. For example, perforations and joints need to be restored so that the laboratory can safely run nitrate material through the duplication equipment.

4 What is striking is that Hiley mixes film texts that have a material existence with virtual reconstructions of film texts that no longer exist.

5 Nowadays, this idea that the original is mostly imaginary is commonly accepted by both film archivists and scholars (Cherchi Usai, 2001: 39; Jones, 2012: 147). However, the various interpretations of what this imaginary original refers to remains debated (Fossati, 2009: 106-107).

6   'Vintage' connotes something that is 'ancient' or 'old'; it is a term that refers to both quality and age, hence, to age is to increase in quality. In photography, the term 'vintage print' also refers to a print that was created in the period when the photograph was taken (Marshall, 2007).

7   Because these prints form the material that comprises the basis for the production of later preservations and duplicates, some film archivists also call them the '*copies mères*' or 'master copies'. However, this term positions film archiving practice within a context of gendered and Darwinian notions of history.

8   There are also other categorisations of the terminology: preservation, restoration, reconstruction, and duplication (Bohn, 2013: 48-52, 73, 95).

9   This is done by either adding material found in other archives or setting aside material that disrupts the narrative logic.

10   BA – legbord 27 box 324: 'Richtlijnen voor de ontwikkeling van het NEDERLANDS FILMMUSEUM', 1956.

11   Filmmuseum clippings: 'In Castricum sluimert het Filmarchief', *De Rotterdammer*, 14 September 1963.

12   Filmmuseum Annual Report, 1958: 19.

13   Filmmuseum Annual Report, 1959: 1.

14   Filmmuseum Annual Report, 1960: 19.

15   Filmmuseum Annual Report, 1961: 15.

16   Filmmuseum Annual Reports, 1963, 1964, 1966.

17   Filmmuseum Annual Report, 1965: 1.

18   Filmmuseum Annual Report, 1969: 31.

19   Filmmuseum Annual Report, 1970: 28; Filmmuseum Annual Report, 1973: 23.

20   Filmmuseum Annual Report, 1958: 22.

21   Preservations – the duplicate negatives of the films – were struck by external laboratories in this period. In the late 1950s, this was Cinetone (BA – Correspondences: Correspondence between the Filmmuseum and Cinetone Studios).

22   These were films such as DE BRUG (Ivens, 1928), INFLATION (Richter, 1927/1928), MARKT IN BERLIN (Basse, 1929), POLIZEIBERICHT ÜBERFALL (Metzner, 1928), ZÉRO DE CONDUIT (Vigo, 1933), LA PASSION DE JEANNE D'ARC (Dreyer, 1927/1928), and BERLIN. DIE SINFONIE DER GROSSSTADT (Ruttmann, 1927). See Part I for more information about these films.

23   The Filmmuseum even struck a second negative print of a number of the films in the Amsterdam Collection. These were films that were so popular that new positive prints had to be made on a regular basis (Filmmuseum Annual Report, 1958: 2).

24   The construction of the nitrate vaults in Overveen monopolised the energy and knowledge of the institute's technical department. The situation was so serious that all the funding for the regular acquisition, preservation, storage, and control of films was diverted into the construction of the vaults (Filmmuseum Annual Report, 1970: 28).

25 The material composition of film literally carries this dichotomy within it. Film material consists primarily of two layers. First, there is the plastic carrier or the surface of the film, which is similar to the canvas of a painting. Second, film consists of a layer of emulsion, a light-sensitive material, in which and through which the photographic image is made. From a material point of view, this literally means that the film is located on the carrier, but this is, of course, another, more material film than the more abstract film *text* that is referred to here.

26 Cherchi Usai (1994: 19) dubbed the title of this article the 'catch-phrase' of the film archives.

27 For example, Marguerite Engberg (1968); Lamprecht (196-); Winquist (1967); Fritz and Gesek (1967).

28 Filmmuseum Annual Report, 1975-1976-1977: 63.

29 Filmmuseum Annual Report, 1975-1976-1977: 16.

30 BA – legbord 4: 'Beleidsnota Stichting Nederlands Filmmuseum', 1976.

31 Filmmuseum Annual Report, 1980: 2.

32 Filmmuseum Annual Report, 1984: 1. – Between 1980 and 1984, 57,961 metres of sound film and 52,414 metres of silent film were actively preserved. The preservation orders mainly went to Cineco, the Colour Film Centre in The Hague, and occasionally to Cinetone. In 1984, the Filmmuseum limited its preservation work almost entirely to Haghefilm (Filmmuseum: D base-kluisbestand). Haghefilm was the old film factory of Willy Mullens, which, by this time, had developed into a film laboratory specialising in the preservation of old film material. The Filmmuseum's expertise in making film restorations through duplication resulted in international fame, especially after it exhibited its colour preservation of the film, FIOR DI MALE (Gallone, 1914), at Le Giornate del Cinema Muto in Pordenone in 1986 (Filmmuseum Annual Report, 1986: 2).

33 Filmmuseum Annual Report, 1988: 6-7.

34 Fossati calls the physical prints of films in the archives 'material artefacts', and the films as text, 'conceptual artefacts'. The emphasis of traditional film museums on film as a conceptual artefact has allowed the smooth transition from analogue to digital restoration. After all, if it is the film images that count in the first place, then the films as 'objects' are of less concern (Fossati, 2009: 105).

35 Léger probably used this print to illustrate his lectures at Yale University in 1938.

36 Note that this indexical reference function is different from the indexical relationship between the photographic image and its referent, as Roland Barthes describes in *La Chambre Claire* (1980). Instead of the relationship between the image and the depicted, I am concerned, in this case, with the relationship between an object and its maker. I have based this on the ideas of Charles Sanders Peirce, who defines an 'index' as a sign that has been touched or caused by the direct presence of the referent. The most common example comes from

Robinson Crusoe. The protagonist, Crusoe, finds a footprint on the beach of what he thought to be an uninhabited island where he was washed ashore. This print is proof that he is not alone: another human being has been on the beach, leaving a trace that functions as an index. Because there must have been someone on the beach to have made the footprint, this trace refers to the former presence of a human being (Barthes, 1993; Driel van and Staat, 1987; Luxemburg van, Bal and Weststeijn, 1988).

37   Cherchi Usai has written about the information found on film prints, which enables archivists to identify a film's title, year of production, country of production, and other data (Cherchi Usai, 1987).

38   The question arises of why it took so long for vintage acetate prints to receive archival status. Was this due to the discourse surrounding the urgency of preserving the nitrate? Was it because acetate was used for preservation, and, therefore, it was not deemed necessary to make clear that this material is also very fragile? Or was it perhaps because nitrate carries the connotation of danger? This discourse is slowly changing. For example, Mark-Paul Meyer (2004: 423) writes that 'by damage, discolouration, altered editing, duplication, etc., no print is identical to the other anymore'.

39   For example, we encounter these ideas about the uniqueness of prints in an analysis by Paul Cuff (2011) of the film LA ROUE (Gance, 1922): '[T]he gradual reshaping of *La Roue* has meant that there has never been a definitive print to show, be saved, or to restore; rather, it is a case of numerous unique prints scattered around the world.'

40   For more information about stencils, and Pathecolor in particular, see: Fossati (1998), Lameris (2003), Yumibe (2012), Yumibe (2016).

41   In Chapter 5, I discuss in greater detail the differences between starting material and restoration prints, which occurs with the restoration of coloured silent films.

42   The relationship between colour and the uniqueness of a print can be found even in the writings of academics. For example, Caspar Tybjerg (2002: 17) says: 'The fascination of working with original materials should not be underestimated. I remember how striking it was to see a roll of tinted nitrate film for the first time, looking not black, but strangely multi-coloured, the tints having dyed the whole width of the film strip including the edges. The past becomes palpable.'

43   This opinion seems typical for film museum practice. Outside of this context, however, the idea that every film text is a stand-alone entity, separate from its carrier, is still prevalent. This is partly because the past decades have seen the emergence of a large number of potential new carriers on which film texts can be distributed. In addition to the cinema, films can now be watched on television, video, DVD, Blu-ray, and on numerous websites (Kessler and Verhoeff, 2008).

44 Moreover, this is in stark contrast to the rest of the article, in which Walsh (2008) pleads for digital duplication as the cheapest and most practical way to store images for the future.

45 In fact, to get the best results, every new restoration project should be preceded by an investigation into which photographic material best matches the nitrate that is to be duplicated. For example, Kodak 5302 was considered the most suitable material for duplication of film from the 1920s. With today's digital technology, this problem has become even more complicated. The scans of 'vintage negatives' are often of a far better quality than the prints used in the early 20th century. The question here is whether this kind of quality should or should not be pursued (Meyer and Read, 2000: 194; Walsh, 2008: 39).

46 Unlike films, non-film artefacts in film museums are often put on display because of the 'aura' they possess. For example, one of the suits with white strips that Étienne-Jules Marey used to give the impression of human movement in his films is on display at the National Technical Museum in Prague. Part of the display is a letter that guarantees the authenticity of the suit (with thanks to Frank Kessler).

47 I elaborate on this subject in Chapters 5 and 6.

48 Film museums have also increasingly come to realise the importance of nitrate material for researchers outside of the institutes. Meyer (2001: 55) believes that the nitrate should not only be passively preserved for future restorations, but also in order to give researchers the opportunity to use the vintage prints as source material.

49 One of the reasons why the Filmmuseum became a frontrunner in the international film field was because of the importance it attached to coloured films from its silent collection.

50 The Filmmuseum sent the nitrate prints to Film Clinic Renovo (Meyer and Read, 2000: 88).

51 BA – Correspondence: Letter from Jan de Vaal to the Dutch Laboratory for Film Technique, November 12, 1968.

52 'F1343 (former G87) in black and white rejected for wear, F408 also black and white, replaced by another print, expired' (Filmmuseum: D-base vault file). The fact that this black-and-white print was rejected due to wear indicates that the film had been projected and watched many times.

53 For more on the BALLET MÉCANIQUE, see: Lameris (2012) and Catanese, Edwards and Lameris (2015).

54 The Filmmuseum database shows that the black-and-white print of the film was only withdrawn from distribution in 1997, illustrating that it is not just film historical ideas from other periods that linger, but the objects that reflect these ideas often stay in use for a long time.

55 In this respect, the restoration of the colour image is also important for the reconstruction of the narrative structure of the film. I discuss the problems surrounding 'reconstruction' in more detail in Chapter 6.

56 This answer is confirmed by the eminent film archivist Harold Brown. He writes that coloured films were preserved on black-and-white material because there was a lack of affordable, good quality film material in colour (Brown, 2001: 101).

57 This is remarkable because, during the 1920s and 1930s, many artists experimented with film and colour – not only Léger, but also Walter Ruttmann, Vikking Eggelink, Oskar Fischinger, and other artists who used film as an artistic medium.

58 This aesthetic principle has survived until recently. For example, Benoît Noël (1995: 25) remarks that, as late as 1995, young photographers still thought that they were more likely to forge a successful career using black-and-white photography. Also, the black-and-white image is still valued in digital photography. This is shown, for example, by the fact that, in 2012, Leica introduced the M Monochrom with a sensor that only produces black-and-white images (http://en.leica camera.com/home. Accessed 22 May 2012). Its extremely high price makes this camera an exclusive, if not snobbish piece of equipment (http://www.popphoto.com/2012/05/first-impressionsleica-m-monochrom-black-and-white-digital-range-finder. Accessed 22 May 2012).

59 The books used by Filmliga members, which are now part of the Filmmuseum collection, show that they read many foreign authors, such as Rudolf Arnheim (1932) and Béla Balázs (1924), who assumed that art film was defined by its black-and-white photography. It may have been through this literature that these ideas entered Dutch writing on the aesthetics of film.

60 Henri Langlois of the Cinémathèque française, for example, was someone who considered the moving photographic image as film's distinctive artistic element. Jacques Aumont noted, during the 1995 Filmmuseum workshop: 'I personally was raised in the archive of Henri Langlois, who believed only in black and white [...] He had a taste for photographic reality, for a touch of surrealism, for a very content-oriented approach toward this material and, of course, for an auteurist approach' (cited in Hertogs and Klerk de, 1996: 52).

61 For more background on the BALLET MÉCANIQUE and the tradition of using colour, see: Hans Fuchs (1990-1991).

62 For more details, see: Catanese, Edmonds and Lameris, 2015.

63 As late as 1990, Noël Burch still equated black and white with art films. He writes about Georges Méliès' special devotion to black and white in his sets. Burch sees the artistic genius of Méliès confirmed in this careful use of black and white. Later research, however, shows that Méliès actually put so much care into the black-and-white decor in order to achieve a better surface for the subsequent addition of different hues (Kessler, 2000: 17-18).

64   The Filmmuseum was not attempting any pioneering work here. By this time, as Elliott Stein (1981: 21) testifies, it was already the fashion in Paris, Berlin and London to restore colourised films – like those he saw at the Bundesarchiv.

65   This image of the 'original version' did not change for everyone simultaneously, and this resulted in a conflict between the Filmmuseum and the heirs of Fernand Léger. They could not believe that Léger wanted the film to be coloured, and were convinced that the Filmmuseum's nitrate copy was a forgery (Moritz, 1988: 132).

66   An internegative is always colour material.

67   'The photographic referent is not the same as the referent of other systems of representation. I call "photographic referent" not the optionally real thing to which an image or a sign refers, but the necessarily real thing which has been placed before the lens, without which there would be no photograph' (Barthes, 1993).

68   This does not apply for 'photomontage'.

69   Ross Lipman (2009: 5) calls this area of interpretation and subjectivity, 'the gray zone'.

70   An 'answer print' is the very first print that is struck from a negative. Based on these prints, laboratories can make corrections to the projection prints they produce, ensuring the highest possible image quality (www.loc.gov/rr/mopic/mppresdf.html).

71   This remark was made before the Filmmuseum workshop in 1995. During the workshop, Tom Gunning commented about the difficulty of reproducing the pinks (cited in Hertogs and Klerk de, 1996: 57-58).

72   Around 2000, it became known that Fuji's negative film material could reproduce magenta and pink. However, by that time, a major part of the hand-coloured and stencilled films had already been restored (from an interview with Johan Prijs in October 2002).

73   For information on sustainability and standards for passive preservation, see: the website of the Image Permanence Institute (www.imagepermanence institute.org).

74   Another disadvantage of this technique is that camera negatives cannot be used as starting material for restorations because they are in black and white.

75   Quoted in Fossati (1996: 16).

76   The various types of projection equipment and lamps meant that different audiences would always see a film in different ways.

77   Hypothetically, it should be possible to investigate the way certain colours and chemicals react with nitrate (Hertogs and Klerk de, 1996: 78).

78   See: Coustet (1913); *Le Film Vierge Pathé* (1926); *Agfa Handbuch Für Kinofilm* (1930?).

79   In addition to the current digital restoration techniques, the imitative method is still used, albeit sporadically. The latest restoration of KEAN OU DÉSORDRE ET GÉNIE (Volkoff, 1924) is a very beautiful example of how the imitative method can be used. It was made by the Cinémathèque française in collaboration with Narodni Filmovy Archiv, and presented at the Pordenone Giornate del Cinema Muto in 2016.

80   Interview with Johan Prijs, October 2002.

81   In view of the uncertainty concerning the concentration of the dyes, it is difficult to determine whether the colours on the vintage prints have actually faded or whether lower concentrations of dyes were used at that time.

82   This way of working has been professionalised in the practice of so-called 'living history', in which museums reconstruct old techniques in order to discover new facts about the past. In media studies, this practice is also known as 'experimental media archaeology' (Oever van den and Fickers, 2013).

83   There are several exceptions to this, such as MAUDITE SOIT LA GUERRE (Machin, 1914). On the vintage nitrate print of this film in the Filmmuseum archive, the different hues follow each other without any splices (with thanks to Joshua Yumibe). The film, BALLET MÉCANIQUE (1924), is another example.

84   With thanks to Giovanna Fossati.

85   Noël Desmet was the film restorer at the Cinémathèque Royale in Brussels.

86   In a panel discussion on digital restoration during the Filmmuseum's 2005 Biennale, Giovanna Fossati mentioned that, in the 1990s, the institute experimented with setting up a database in which to store all its information on coloured vintage material. However, the amount of detailed information required meant that it proved too bulky. In addition, the database was not compatible with other systems, and the Filmmuseum did not pursue the experiment. Paul Read, however, continues to research the possibility (Read, 2009).

87   Hand-coloured or stencilled films were excluded; these films were always restored in colour.

88   In these cases, it is only possible to restore the coloured parts on colour material. This avoids the problem of the black-and-white sections showing brownish and bluish blacks. However, such a decision entails more splices in the restoration print. An example is the 1998 restoration of the BALLET MÉCANIQUE.

89   This practice is reflected in the archive of the Filmmuseum, in which one can find, for example, one coloured and two black-and-white nitrate prints of the Pathé film LA VOIX DE ROSSIGNOL (Starevitch, 1923).

90   With thanks to Alessandra Laitempergher.

91   Email from Elif Rongen, 22 January 2015.

92   This presentation was made during *The Colour Fantastic* conference held at EYE Filmmuseum in 2015.

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93 This is similar to philology, which, as part of literary studies, aims to reconstruct 'original' texts that have largely been lost. Philology also attempts to discover the historical explanation of the texts and the interpretation of old words and phrases that are no longer current (Luxemburg van, Bal, and Weststeijn, 1988: 113).

94 This not only applies to the film restorer. In art, literature, and architecture, curators and historians are confronted with similar problems. An example from the field of architecture is the Curia Julia in the Forum in Rome, the building in which the Roman senate resided. In the seventh century AD, the Curia was converted into a church, which subsequently went through various transformations, until it was destroyed in 1930. In the 20th century, the Italian government decided to restore the building, but a choice had to be made between the various appearances and functions the building had manifested throughout its long life. Ultimately, it was decided to reconstruct the building as it was in the Roman period.

95 Given this perspective, I agree with Vincent Pinel's assertion that every reconstruction is a new version of a film, and that the date and nature of a restoration should always be mentioned on the credits of a restoration print. I would like to add that the name of the restorer should also be credited. In my opinion, every film restorer has his or her own style, and puts his or her proverbial signature in between the splices. The mention of the restorer in the credits would also allow researchers to request information about the choices that were made for the reconstruction (Pinel, 1989b: 80).

96 Borde wrote this book based on 20 years' experience of film museum practice.

97 My translation.

98 Filmmuseum clippings: 'Films van de week – Loflied op een symfonie'.

99 Another example of a film that saw frequent attempts at reconstructing the director's version is METROPOLIS (Lang, 1927). The director's version of this film was withdrawn from cinemas in Germany soon after its release and replaced by new versions made by Paramount and Ufa. The director's version has not been preserved. Fritz Lang himself called METROPOLIS a film that no longer existed. Since then, many attempts have been made to produce reconstructions that are 'better' – that is, more complete – than the versions made by Paramount and Ufa (Koerber, 2001: 75-76). Even in the present day, the idea of the director's version remains in vogue. For example, films released on DVD are sometimes called the 'director's cut'. This has stretched the idea of the director's version: whereas the concept was initially employed when discussing the different versions of a film with the studio, for example, or when the auteur or filmmaker wanted to give proof of his or her integrity as a filmmaker, now it has mostly become a marketing strategy.

100 Charles Huguenot van der Linden did not make the film alone. His co-director was Heinz Josephson. Josephson's disappearance from the credits was due to

the activities of Jan Teunissen, who removed the names of all Jews from Dutch film credits during the Second World War (Barten, 2002b).

101 Filmmuseum clippings: 'Ook Nederland heeft zijn filmmuseum', 13 August 1955.

102 In light of this perspective, we may question whether Trauberg's observations about the fragments in the reconstruction of his film were quite correct.

103 Martin Koerber used to work as a freelance film restorer and included the Film-museum among his clients. He mainly worked on the reconstruction of German films, and was involved in a partnership with several FIAF archives. He is the former professor in photography and film restoration of the 'Fachhochschule für Technik und Wirtschaft' in Berlin. He currently heads the film archive of the Deutsche Kinematek in Berlin.

104 Another example of a recent reconstruction of a director's version is the restoration of the film ERDGEIST (Jessner, 1923) in 2003. In this case, the Filmmuseum made the reconstruction according to the 'original' order and titles of the film as based on the German intertitles recovered from the German censors. Carel Blotkamp gave a vintage print of this film to the Filmmuseum in the early 1980s. Blotkamp had received the print from his friend, the painter Pyke Koch, who was a big fan of Asta Nielsen (with thanks to Carel Blotkamp).

105 My translation; Pinel's emphasis.

106 Interview with Giovanna Fossati, 9 November 2005.

107 Martin Koerber, for example, refers to his reconstruction of MENSCHEN AM SONNTAG (Siodmak, 1929) as 'the original German version'. Luciano Berriatúa, in his case study of FAUST (Murnau, 1926), speaks of 'the reconstruction of the original version of *Faust*', and the difficulty of reconstructing this 'original version' due to the diversity of the surviving vintage material from this film (Meyer and Read, 2000).

108 Filmmuseum Annual Report, 1988: 38. What is called 'preservation' here should be read as 'active preservation', which, in the Brandian sense, can be understood as 'restoration'.

109 Since most films from the Uitkijk Collection are well-known avant-garde titles, many of the films were already preserved elsewhere in different versions.

110 The word 'restored' in this context implies that the Filmmuseum still considered the shown versions as incomplete, which indicates that the versions that predated the interventions of the censors or exhibitors were considered to be complete.

111 Meyer provides a similar list of possible reconstructions. He prefers to use more descriptive definitions, such as 'the film as it was seen by its first audience' and 'the film as it was seen by later audiences' (Meyer and Read, 2000: 71).

112 This is certainly a point of discussion on archiving websites. But websites vary from day to day. Whoever wants to keep an archive of websites in an adequate

way should store a version of every page, every day (Voerman, Keyzer, and Hollander, 2001).

113 A film museum will generally decide in advance which version is to be reconstructed, after which the structure of that specific version is investigated. In November 2005, Fossati told me that restorers use reviews, brochures, photographs, title lists, advertisements, continuity scripts, musical scores, and test cards for this purpose. In addition to providing the narrative continuity and structure of films, these sources possess information about the original length, descriptions of film fragments that might have been removed from the film by the censors, the length of these fragments, and information on what the missing parts of the film might have looked like (interview Giovanna Fossati, 9 November 2005).

114 The idea of securing a film in its different versions is reminiscent of postmodern thought. Postmodernism rejects the belief in one central starting point (in this case, the creator or the artist), but takes all kinds of starting points into account. Contrary to modernist thought, which put the 'grand narratives' centre stage, postmodern thinking questions the idea that there is just one 'truth' or one 'genius' (Vattimo, 1998: 19).

115 This is similar to an internegative restoration of a tinted or toned film, which, in fact, produces a direct photographic imprint of the material state of the vintage print. The same happens at a syntactic level when a film museum makes the choice to preserve an incomplete print or remnant in its ruined state.

116 'Reconstruction is the editorial process of reassembling, for public presentation, authoritative versions of productions by deriving footage from preserved versions that are incomplete or editorially disarranged. As custodians, film archives respect the editorial integrity of each production and – as far as is technologically possible – preserve its content and continuity without alteration' (Bowser and Kuiper, 1991: 12).

117 Remarkably, when making these duplicates, restoration and cleaning was undertaken at the level of the photographic image, with the aim of keeping the editorial structure intact, before the process of reconstruction.

118 This recalls Walter Prevenier's remarks about ruins, which he compares to traces of something that was once complete. According to Prevenier, a ruin refers to the object it was once part of, the larger whole of which these stones form the remains. In the same way, film fragments refer to the bigger picture: the entire film texts of which they were once part (Walter Prevenier, 1992: 2).

119 Peter Delpeut (1997: 7), who worked for the Filmmuseum at that time, and who was one of the creators of Bits & Pieces, writes in retrospect: 'From the first day in the film archive one thing became clear to me: the history of film books, cinémathèque programs and film cycles on television do not much resemble the history that a film archive reveals. In an archive, film history is constantly falling

apart into jigsaw pieces that just will not fit together. The marginal is the norm. Moreover, the film history is fragmented in a most astonishing way. No film is still quite intact or without damage.'

120   In addition to new versions of films produced as a result of reconstruction, there are also new versions that originate from *de*construction. The aforementioned Odessa Steps sequence from Bronenosets Potyomkin (Eisenstein, 1925) that was isolated on 16mm is an example of deconstruction (BA – legbord 24 'Purchase, conservation, donations in 1958).

121   The film was a huge success, something that might have been due to the nostalgia for an old Amsterdam. It was sold out night after night. When I was present at one of the screenings, I noticed the audiences enjoyed themselves by trying to recognise the various places represented in the film.

122   This type of (re)construction is similar to so-called 'alternate history', which also takes a historical possibility as a starting point and then develops a hypothesis. In this way, an alternative is created, a potential replacement for history as we know it. For example, Thomas van der Dunk (2005) describes a potential history of the Netherlands, had William van Oranje not been murdered.

123   The results of such reconstructions are similar to restored frescoes or other spatial objects in which the missing parts always remain visible, due to the characteristics of the material.

124   During the 2005 Biennale, this version did elicit some protests from the audience.

125   See: http://www.edition-filmmuseum.com/product_info.php/info/p16_Carl-Theodor-Dreyer--Es-war-einmal.html

126   See also: Fossati's *From Grain to Pixel* (2009: 114-116) on the importance of movement in film restoration.

127   Spelling reform also took place in Flanders in 1946.

128   Interview with Giovanna Fossati, 9 November 2005.

129   The same applies to other forms of restoration. Brandi (2005: 49) remarks that when the artistic nature of an artwork disappears due to its restoration, nothing much remains apart from a relic.

130   This term derives from Eric De Kuyper.

131   An example of such a film is Faust (Murnau, 1926), whose production is explained and clarified in the documentary, *Los 5 Faust de F. W. Murnau* (Berriatúa, [1995]). See also: Berriatúa (1996).

132   This difference is visible once the multiple prints are assembled into a new version. Prints always differ from one another, including vintage prints of the same film title.

133   A 'master' is an intermediate element with an extremely fine grain that lowers the contrast. It is not suitable for projection but was used to preserve much of the detail.

134   'The technique of pre-flashing duplicating or print film, giving a small overall exposure to white (or coloured) light by a separate pass through a printer, is [...] widely used to reduce contrast' (Meyer and Read, 2000: 164).

135   This objective is in line with the restoration tradition in the arts. Restoration, says Brandi (2005: 57), assumes that the object once possessed a unity that has subsequently been lost and needs to be recovered.

136   Another example of this is the found-footage film, or the remix culture that uses archival material. As a result, Dino Everett (2008: 28) considers that these kinds of new compilations of film materials are also new versions.

137   'The bulk of academic writing on the cinema is textual analysis – that is to say, work that one would presume must be dependent upon the prior existence of a fixed text – yet textual analysis in film rarely acknowledges that the physical film text may be problematic. Much of the most careful and interesting writing in the field does not indicate the specific sources of the specified prints used as objects of study, nor does it take time to describe the features or the antecedents of those prints' (Routt, 1997: 2).

138   See: Bertellini (1995); Routt (1997); Gunning (1998); Kessler (2002a); Musser (2004); Verhoeff (2006); Jones (2012). Kessler and Routt in particular discuss the differences that may occur between prints of the same film title and what this means for the analysis of a film text.

139   This does not mean that film historical practice should directly copy the methods applied in the literary field to produce critical editions. It is important to develop a 'film-specific' method (Loiperdinger, 2002).

PART III

1   The most common English translation of the term '*dispositif*' is 'apparatus'; however, I prefer to use the French term because it is more precise. See: Frank Kessler's 'Notes on Dispositif' online: http://www.hum.uu.nl/medewerkers/f.e.kessler/Dispositif%20Notes11-2007.pdf.

2   Metz puts this problem in a psychoanalytic perspective.

3   My translation.

4   Roger Odin (1991: 47) describes Metz's approach without hesitation as 'pragmatic', even though Metz never used this term.

5   I do not consider the Kriterion as a museum screening room because the institute under investigation was an archive and not a film museum at that time. This implies that no museum screenings were organised there.

6   Annual Report of Amsterdam, 1952: 235.

7   Annual Reports of Amsterdam, 1952, 1953, 1954.

8   The auditorium was designed by Frits Eschauzier (1889-1957), a renowned
        Dutch architect. Sandberg repeatedly hired Eschauzier to redesign parts of the
        Stedelijk Museum. Eschauzier also designed other museums, including the
        Van Abbe Museum, the Gemeentemuseum (now the Museum of Modern Art) in
        Arnhem, and the Rijksmuseum (Werf van der, 1999: 98-101).

9   Filmmuseum Annual Report,1953: 266.

10   The NHFA and the Uitkijk Archive showed their films to the national *filmligas*
        and *filmkringen* in the late 1940s in this screening room.

11   What Franken describes here is very likely the interior of Abraham Tuschinski's
        theatre. Tuschinski was in the business of promoting commercial film and was
        engaged in a verbal war with the members of the Dutch Filmliga.

12   Filmmuseum Annual Report: 'Report of activities NHFA, 1951: Overdruk uit
        "Mededelingen van het Departement van Onderwijs, Kunsten en Wetenschap-
        pen"', nr. 11 and 12/1951: Nederlands Film Museum: 1.

13   BA – legbord 27 box 324, 'Richtlijnen voor de ontwikkeling van het NEDER-
        LANDS FILMMUSEUM', December 1956: 15. In this article, film is indicated as
        potentially dangerous due to the great potential this medium holds for influenc-
        ing society. This is most likely a response to the Nazis' use of film as a tool of
        propaganda during the Second World War.

14   At the time, culture and the arts were part of a single ministry, together with
        education and science. After the Second World War, film was added to the min-
        istry's responsibilities (Smiers, 1977: 111).

15   Filmmuseum Annual Report, 1969: 37.

16   Filmmuseum Annual Report, 1973: 26.

17   Information about the appearance and design of the cinema in the Vondelpark
        Pavilion was obtained from Jan-Hein Bal, who worked for the Filmmuseum
        from 1973 until 2014.

18   This design was inspired by the so-called 'Pentonville system'. The prison's
        chapel was designed in such a way that, when the prisoners attended a service,
        they were unable to see each other due to the partitions that separated them.
        Lincoln Castle is the only remaining example of such a chapel. See: http://www.
        historyhome.co.uk/peel/laworder/penton.htm (accessed 3 February 2015).

19   See: http://anthologyfilmarchives.org/about/essential-cinema (accessed 3 Feb-
        ruary 2015).

20   In addition to the Invisible Cinema, built at the Anthology Archive, Kubelka's
        design was also realised in Austria. 'For the institution's 25th-year anniversary in
        the autumn of 1989, the "Invisible Cinema"', based on a concept by Peter Kubel-
        ka, was inaugurated: a screening room with a black-on-black design, a 'viewing
        and listening machine', which permits viewers to focus their concentration
        with utmost intensity on the film being shown (https://www.filmmuseum.at/en/
        about_us/history, accessed: 3 February 2015).

21 Another major difference with the dominant cinema institution is that it denied the collective nature of the audience. In a similar fashion to the Pentonville chapel, the visitors were assembled together without being able to see each other.

22 The proverbial 'falling off your chair with laughter', for example, was physically impossible in the Invisible Cinema (Thoms, 1974: 33).

23 Eilean Hooper-Greenhill writes in *Museums and the Interpretation of Visual Culture* (2000) that modern thought developed alongside a greater appreciation of visual perception, which increased in importance from the invention of the printing press onwards. The general opinion was that the rational and objective production of knowledge depended on visual perception. The visual senses were thought to be directly connected to the brain, whereas all the other senses were much more closely linked to the rest of the body. In order to come to a rational observation, it was necessary to eliminate the other bodily senses. According to Hooper-Greenhill (2000: 112), there was also a gender element in this distinction: the visual was supposedly the more 'masculine' sense, while feeling and listening carried the connotation of being more 'feminine'.

24 We could ask whether the idea of wonder and Greenblatt's interpretation of it is not also a typical modernistic ideal.

25 With thanks to Jan-Hein Bal.

26 With thanks to Rommy Albers.

27 Langlois made a distinction between a *musée du cinéma* and a *cinémathèque*. He understood the first to represent the space in which the history of cinema was exhibited with the help of museum objects, while the second referred to a space in which films from the collection were screened. Sabine Lenk (2006: 320) uses the same distinction in her article 'Collections on display: Exhibiting artifacts in a film museum, with pride'.

28 Filmmuseum Annual Report, 1990: 28.

29 BA – box 162: NFM programme, 8 December 1988. These ideas are propagated by Eric De Kuyper until recently. This can be traced back to his film programme, *Imaginaires en Contexte*, in which he screened early films in locations that exemplified nineteenth-century culture. He intended to show that 'early cinema is deeply rooted in the culture of that century, and that is why it is there that we must look for the key to understanding these films and for the key to the possibilities of making it accessible to an audience' (Kuyper De, 2012: 57).

30 Filmmuseum Annual Report, 1991: 19.

31 BA box 162: NFM program, 8 September 1991.

32 With thanks to Ivo Blom and Egbert Barten.

33 My translation.

34 My translation.

35   Filmmuseum Annual Reports: 'Rapport betreffende de activiteit van het Neder-
      lands Historisch Filmarchief in de periode van October 1946 tot Maart 1948': 2.

36   Filmmuseum Annual Report, 1958: 11. These courses were organised for teach-
      ers, nursery teachers, and other 'educators', so that they could pass on their
      knowledge to the youth of the Netherlands.

37   BA – box 159: '19th program: AMERIKAANS REALISME', *Mededeling* no. 10,
      1960/61, Nederlands Filmmuseum, 14 February 1961.

38   BA – box 159: '19th program: CABIRIA', *Mededeling* no. 10, 1958-59, Nederlands
      Filmmuseum, 12 February 1959.

39   BA – box 159: '15th program: DE RUSSISCHE FILM', *Mededeling* No. 10, 1954-55
      season, Nederlands Filmmuseum. 28 January 1955.

40   BA – box 159: '18th program: FRANSE AVANTGARDE' *Mededeling* no.10, Season
      1956-1957, Nederlands Filmmuseum, 28 February 1957.

41   BA – box 159: '24th program: AMERIKAANSE HUMOR' *Mededeling* No. 15, 1954-55
      season, Nederlands Filmmuseum, 1 April 1955.

42   This discourse on comedies was not specific to the Filmmuseum: the MoMA
      Film Library also categorised comedies as film art (Wasson, 2005: 158).

43   This was a habit the Filmmuseum also shared with the MoMA Film Library
      (Wasson, 2005: 153).

44   BA – box 159 '24th program: AMERICAANSE HUMOR' *Mededeling* No. 15, 1954-55
      season, Nederlands Filmmuseum, 1 April 1955.

45   For the occasion, Marie Seton gave Jan de Vaal an autographed copy of her book,
      which is still in the Filmmuseum library (Seton, 1952).

46   Some of these programmes built out of film fragments also existed as compila-
      tion films. As such, they formed found-footage films *avant la lettre*. One example
      was a compilation entitled DANISH RETROSPECTIVE, with fragments 'that gave
      an idea of the highlights from the history of the Danish film'. Another example
      of such a compilation film is CLASSICS FROM SWEDISH FILM (BA – box 159:
      '17th program Denmark and Carl Th. Dreyer' *Mededeling* no.9, 1958-1959 sea-
      son, Nederlands Filmmuseum, 29 January 1959; Filmmuseum Annual Report,
      1959, Annex film programming). The Filmmuseum itself also produced two
      films using excerpts from the archive, namely EERSTE STAPPEN (1954) and DE
      GEBOORTE VAN EEN NIEUWE KUNST (1954) (Filmmuseum catalogue).

47   TIME IN THE SUN is the title of the film that Seton made based on material
      Eisenstein shot for the planned film QUE VIVA MEXICO in 1931.

48   My translation.

49   My translation.

50   The retrospective in 1988 led to a multitude of publications and activities
      around these films, including at the Filmmuseum (Tsivian, 1988; Meyer, 1993;
      Kuyper De, 1993).

51 BA – box 159: '19th program: CABIRIA' *Mededeling* no. 10, Nederlands Filmmuseum, 12 February 1959.

52 BA – box 159: '25th program: MENSEN GEOBSERVEERD', *Mededeling* no.14, seizoen 1956-1957, Nederlands Filmmuseum, 26 April 1956.

53 BA – box 159: '5th program: DE DUITSE FILM II *Mededeling* no.3, Season 1960/61, Nederlands Filmmuseum, 25 October 1960. In the 1960 version of the book, which can be found in the Filmmuseum library, the cited passages are underlined (Kracauer, 1960: 60-61).

54 BA – box 159: '5th program: VAN FILMDRAMA TOT ABSOLUTE FILM, *Mededeling* no.3, Season 1957-1958, Nederlands Filmmuseum, 8 October 1957.

55 The Filmmuseum *Mededeling* records the date as 1913.

56 BA – box 159: '33th program: the 'Western' *Mededeling* no.21, Nederlands Filmmuseum, 4 June 1954.

57 See: Chapter 5.

58 BA – box 159: '7th program: OUDE MISLUKKINGEN EN JONGE HARTEN', *Mededeling* no.5, Nederlands Filmmuseum, 19 november 1953. The programme was introduced by Charles Huguenot van der Linden.

59 BA – box 159: '23 program: UIT DE OUDE DOOS' *Mededeling* no.12, Season 1955-56, Nederlands Film Museum, 9 March 1956.

60 BA – box 159: '23 program: UIT DE OUDE DOOS', *Mededeling* no.12, Season 1955-1956, Nederlands Filmmuseum, 9 March 1956. The films were MADAME TALLIEN (Capellani, 1911) and MARRIAGE AUX FLAMBEAUX (1911).

61 In this issue, the hope was expressed that the screenings would no longer take place in the Stedelijk Museum in 1971/1972. Ultimately, however, it would take until 1974 before the Filmmuseum had its own screening room. This was mainly because Amsterdam City Council was restoring its wedding hall at the time, and had decided, in the meantime, to temporarily use the room in the Vondelpark Pavilion that the Filmmuseum was intending to use to screen its films. This considerably delayed the construction of the screening room (BA – box 160: *Filmmuseum · cinemateek*, 1 October 1970; *Filmmuseum · cinemateek – 25 jaar Filmmuseum ALARM*, 1971: 12-13).

62 In 1974, the year of the Filmmuseum's move the Vondelpark Pavilion, the magazine was renamed *Filmmuseum · cinemateek · journaal*, and the numbering started at 1 again.

63 BA – box 160: *Filmmuseum·cinemateek*, nr.6, 1971: 16.

64 BA – box 160: *Filmmuseum·cinemateek*, nr.9, 1971: 2.

65 BA – box 160: *Filmmuseum·cinemateek*, nr.15, 1972: 1.

66 BA – box 161: *Filmmuseum · cinemateek · journaal*, 46, January/February 1982.

67 In 1984, two years after the Filmliga programme, the Filmmuseum presented Ruttmann's film again, this time as a unique, rediscovered work of art in a programme on film preservation.

68 BA – box 161: *Filmmuseum · cinemateek · journaal*, 46, January/February 1982.

69 In 1986, the Filmmuseum presented a similar programme in a more elaborate form, entitled *De invloed van de Filmliga – De geschiedenis van een filmcultuur* (BA – box 161: *Filmmuseum cinemateek journaal*, 75, October/November 1986).

70 BA – box 160: *Filmmuseum · cinematheek · journaal*, 20: 19.

71 The films and the programme came from MoMA, and many of the descriptions in *Filmmuseum · cinemateek* were written by Eileen Bowser, Iris Barry, and Richard Griffith, who all worked at the Film Library.

72 BA – box 161: *Filmmuseum · cinemateek*, 21: 2. The films were: THE EXECUTION OF MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS (Clark, 1895); THE DICKSON EXPERIMENTAL SOUND FILM (Dickson, 1895); THE IRWIN-RICE KISS (Heise, 1896); FEEDING THE DOVES (1896); MORNING BATH (White, 1896); BURNING STABLE (White, 1896); THE BLACK DIAMOND EXPRESS (White, 1896); NEW YORK STREET SCENES (1897); FATIMA (1897); A WRINGING GOOD JOKE (1899); DEWAR'S SCOTCH WHISKY (Porter, 1897). Usually, the emergence of a growing interest in 'unknown films' is connected to the Brighton conference that took place seven years later.

73 In 1955, it accidentally presented the film VOYAGE À LA LUNE (Méliès, 1902) as a film from 1898.

74 http://www.create.humanities.uva.nl/results/desmetdatasets/ Accessed: 6 March 2017.

75 BA – box 161: *Filmmuseum · cinemateek · journaal*, nr. 71, November 1985: 16-17.

76 It is remarkable that, at the same time, film historians also started to view film in a new light as a historical source. Allen and Gomery, for example, were very suspicious of film as a historical source, but others moved in the direction of archaeology, tracking down, studying, and analysing every available print of a film title. However, many film historians remained blind to these new ideas, perhaps because of the discomfort caused by a full realisation of the lacunae in the source material. Indeed, this realisation automatically led to the awareness that film historians are never able to know and understand fully (film) history (Allen and Gomery, 1985: 28-36; Lagny, 1992: 134).

77 BA – box 160: *Filmmuseum·cinemateek*, nr.3, December 1970: 3.

78 BA – box 161: *Filmmuseum·cinemateek·journaal*, nr.71, November 1985: 29-31. My translation.

79 BA – box 161: *Filmmuseum·cinemateek·journaal*, nr.71, November 1985: 36. My translation.

80 Filmmuseum Annual Report, 1989: 37.

81 This series comprised 33 parts, which, to a large extent, ran parallel to the programming in the screening rooms. The series ran from October 1991 to November 1996.

82 BA – box 162: *Nederlands Filmmuseum programma*, July 1993.

83 BA – box 162: *NFM programma*, nr.3, March 1991.

84 BA – box 162: *Nederlands Filmmuseum programma*, March 1992.

85 BA – box 162: *Nederlands Filmmuseum programma,* February 1995.

86 BA – box 162: *NFM programma*, vol. 3, March 1990.

87 BA – box 163: *Nederlands Filmmuseum programma*, July 1994.

88 The bundle 'Uncharted Territory: Essays on Early Non-fiction Film' was the result of the Filmmuseum workshop in 1994.

89 BA – box 162: *NFM programma*, vol. 4, nr. 3, March 1991.

90 BA – box 162: 'Zomermenu', *NFM programma*, 7 July 1989.

91 This period in film history is also the subject of film historical research. See, for example: Charlie Keil and Shelly Stamp, *American Cinema's Transitional Era* (2004).

92 BA – box 162: *NFM programma*, 8 December 1988.

93 BA – box 162: *NFM programma*, 8 September 1991: 6.

94 BA – box 163: *NFM programma,* December 1991.

95 BA – box 162: *Nederlands Filmmuseum Krant*, nr.3, June 1988: 4.

96 BA – box 160: *Filmmuseum · cinemateek · journaal*, 12 November/December 1976.

97 BA – box 163: 'Alfred Machin: De Visconti van de jaren tien', *NFM programma*, December 1991; 'HERONTDEKT LÉONCE PERRET', *Nederlands Filmmuseum programma*, March 1992; 'Jevgeni Bauer,' Nederlands Filmmuseum, January 1993.

98 Eric De Kuyper (1991b) had already noticed the survival of the auteur in the revisionist programming of Le Giornate del Cinema Muto in Pordenone in 1991.

99 BA – box 162: *NFM programma*, No. 6, June 1991.

100 My translation.

101 In 1994, De Kuyper (1994: 108) wrote about the same theme for an international audience: 'What we need is a more polyphonic approach, where the discrepancies, the holes (once I compared the history of film to a Swiss cheese with many holes) [...] are [...] taken into account.'

102 The rest of the article shows that De Kuyper was responding to the state of revisionist discourse, and not to the classical film historiography that was no longer dominant in 1991. On the basis of the findings in this study, I would add that the source material is not only fragmentary, but that its structure is also a legacy of years of selection and restoration politics, wherein the incompleteness of individual films was still the main problem facing the film museums' reconstruction and restoration activities. The film museum institution was therefore partly responsible for any presuppositions film historians made about the source material.

103 As already mentioned, the Filmmuseum presented these fragments in long, numbered series, similar to the way in which museum films were stored in the vaults, numbered and lined up haphazardly. The presentation strategy of Bits & Pieces referred to the archive from which the fragments originated.

104 BA – box 162: *NFM programma*, vol. 2 nr. 9, September 1989.

105　BA – box 162: *NFM programma*, No.1, January 1989. '[...] de óf minder bekende, óf wellicht wat over het hoofd geziene titels van belangrijke regisseurs'.

106　These films were also offered as a distribution package to art cinemas in the Netherlands.

107　BA – box 162: *NFM programma*, vol. 2, nr.7, July 1989.

108　BA – box 162: *NFM programma*, nr. 8, September 1991.

109　BA – box 162: *NFM programma*, vol. 2, nr.9, September 1989.

110　Film museums have, for a long time, played an important role in the transmission of this knowledge. For example, the former director (now honorary president) of the Cinémathèque Suisse, Freddy Buache, learned to appreciate the canon thanks to Henri Langlois (Roud, 1983: 60-61).

111　BA – box 163: *Nederlands Filmmuseum programma* October 1993.

112　BA – box 162: *Nederlands Filmmuseum programma*, March 1992.

113　A truly authentic reconstruction was practically impossible, because a performance in a film museum was a museum show and not a screening in a commercial cinema. In that respect, a viewer's experience in the Pathé de Munt probably had more in common with that of a spectator at the Cinema Parisien in 1910.

114　In 1996, Filmmuseum employee Frank Roumen wrote that the institute wanted to show film in a way that compared with the exhibition of other art forms (Roumen, 1996: 156).

115　Filmmuseum Annual Report 1984: 5.

116　BA – box 161: *Filmmuseum Cinematheek Journaal*, No. 7, November 1985, 2. Jean Desmet's heirs paid for the musical accompaniment to these films.

117　BA – box 162: *Nederlands Filmmuseum programma*, March 1992.

118　In fact, Francesca Bertini also caused a stir in the audience, as the *Filmmuseum Mededelingenblad* of 4 December 1958 reveals. This Italian diva, a movie legend from the silent era, had also visited the Cinémathèque française in Paris in 1954 (Mannoni, 2006: 216).

119　BA – box 159: *Mededeling* nr. 5, 1958-59, Nederlands Filmmuseum, 4 December 1958.

120　BA – box 159: *Mededeling* nr.2, Season 1958-59, Nederlands Filmmuseum, 17 October 1958.

121　*Images Fantastiques* was presented for the first time during the Arnhem film week during the Holland Festival.

122　Filmmuseum Annual Report, 1959: 3, 7.

123　The films shown in the travelling cinema were not presented as art films. This is illustrated by the headline 'Travelling cinema at Vredenburg: have a good laugh at old film tragedies' (Filmmuseum clippings: 'In reisbioscoop op Vredenburg, Smakelijk lachen om oude filmtragedies', 10 September 1962).

124　Filmmuseum clippings: 'Reizende bioscoop opent vandaag op Amstelveld zijn fluwelen poorten'.

125 The film Images Fantastiques (Crama, 1962) contains recordings of the travelling cinema, followed by excerpts of the films shown, accompanied by a recording of the Hupfeld Phonoliszt Violina and Huizinga's voice commenting on the films.

126 Filmmuseum clippings: 'Eén week goeie, ouwe tijd', *De Volkskrant*, Tuesday, June 13, 1964.

127 BA – box 159: '10e programma: Images Fantastiques' *Mededeling* nr.6, Nederlands Filmmuseum, 7 December 1961.

128 BA – box 159: '29e programma: uit de oude doos', *Mededeling* nr.17, Nederlands Filmmuseum, 8 May 1953.

129 Filmmuseum Annual Report, 1961: 17.

130 Arja Grandia worked at the Filmmuseum from 1968 to 2005. I discussed this matter with her in 2002. She passed at the beginning of 2017.

131 BA – box 163: *Nederlands Filmmuseum programma*, December 1994.

132 BA – box 162: *NFM programma*, 8 December 1988.

133 In 2007, these topics were increasingly discussed internally. In this respect, there is a shift in perspectives on early film and how it should be presented.

134 This was true both for the period until 1970, in which well-known titles were the first to be transferred onto 16mm, and from 1970-1987, during which many avant-garde films were preserved.

135 Filmmuseum clippings: *Haagsche Courant*, 15 July 1961.

136 Filmmuseum clippings: 'Films van de week – Loflied op een symfonie'.

137 See: http://eastmanhouse.org/nitratepictureshow/ (accessed 2015).

138 In 'Le texte introuvable' (1979), Raymond Bellour begins with a vision of the future. He hopes that, one day, the possibility will exist for the film 'scientist' to manipulate a film as if it were laid before him or her on an editing table, without having to go to the archive. 'We can imagine, even if it is hypothetical, that the film one day will reach a status which is analogous to that of a book, or rather to those of long-playing records with respect to a concert' (Bellour, 1979: 35).

139 A very good example of an institution that constructed a *dispositif* that guided the spectator towards an archival reading was the Vidéothèque de Paris. The visitor could order films on-demand via Minitel, the French precursor of the Internet. Then, he or she could see how a robot took a Umatic videotape from its shelf and placed it in the recorder, which then started to play the film. Overall, the archive was presented in two ways: first, the user could access the archive by means of a computerised database; and secondly, he or she could watch the physical archive of Umatic tapes from behind a glass window.

140 Filmmuseum Annual Report 1992: 8. Another important element is that very little is known about the sustainability of digital carriers, making them unsuitable for preservation.

141 For such a discussion, see: Chapter 5, 'Presentation and Performance', in *Film Curatorship* (Cherchi Usai et al., 2008).

142 Because Haghefilm does not have the technology to transfer the information of a digital restoration onto 16mm film, the Filmmuseum even preserved digitally restored small films on 35mm film. The best example I saw of this was a digital restoration of a Pathé Baby film. This 9½ mm film was coloured using the stencil technique. Because of the extremely small photograms, which were also projected on a small screen, the number of colours used was limited to three. The projection of such a film with a Pathé Baby projector is suitable. This strongly contrasts with the display on the enormous screen of the Zancanaro Cinema in Sacile during Le Giornate del Cinema Muto. Due to the enlargement of the image, the film's colours no longer looked special, but a bit clumsy.

143 This is an aspect that distinguishes museological institutions in the art museum tradition from historical museums, for example, where an object primarily functions as a historical reference.

CODA: PAST FUTURES, FUTURE PASTS

1 Interview with Giovanna Fossati, 22 January 2013.

2 The information on the 2007 plans for EYE comes from Geke Roelink and Rommy Albers, as well as internal documents, 'Film Programming and Events' and 'Delivery and Design of the New Film Museum'.

3 See: http://dehallen-amsterdam.nl/gebruikers/filmhallen/ (accessed 19 January 2015).

4 See: https://www.eyefilm.nl/en/activities/discover-the-building (accessed June 2016).

5 The same applies to the Cinémathèque française, which moved to the building known as 'La danseuse relevant son tutu' ('The Dancer who Lifts her Tutu'), designed by the architect Frank O. Gehry in 2005.

6 This demonstrates, once again, how much film history was and is related to the three central film museum activities: collection, restoration, and presentation.

7 EYE, unfortunately, was unable to finish this project, due to financial problems.

8 See: https://www.eyefilm.nl/collectie/filmgeschiedenis/film/all/all?f[0]=field_cm_media_filter%3Awith%20film%20fragment (accessed 15 January 2016).

9 Interview with Giovanna Fossati, 22 January 2013.

10 Nanna Verhoeff and Giovanna Fossati introduced the term 'pull model' because it is the user that 'pulls' the images and movies from the system. This can be contrasted with the 'push model', which offers material and movies in a ready-made format, with a framing story (Verhoeff and Fossati, 2007).

11   For a more elaborate analysis of the new pull-models that have been implemented by EYE, see Grazia Ingravalle (2015).

12   EYE Collection Policy 2014-2017: 2-3. See: https://www.eyefilm.nl/en/about-eye (accessed 9 February 2015).

13   Examples include Giuliana Bruno (2014); Jonathan Walley (2012); Giovanna Fossati and Annie van den Oever (2016).

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