

PRESS RELEASE

Finding historical film gems online

25,000 films from 18 European archives are accessible for research on www.filmarchives-online.eu

Frankfurt am Main (January 2009) - A groundbreaking project sees its successful completion in January 2009: three years ago, the EU-supported MIDAS project took up the challenge to integrate catalogue information from 18 film archives from across Europe and to make these resources accessible online via a single site. Now this outstanding project is realised. Via *filmarchives online*, about 25,000 cinematographic works are available fast and direct for research via the internet. And the portal keeps on growing: information, images and digitised films are added successively, as further archives are invited to join.

The film archives of Europe hold extensive collections that contain unique historical records of the 20th century and the development of film as a form of art. The "Mitchell & Kenyon" collection held by the *British Film Institute*, for example, contains more than 800 films showing everyday life in Great Britain during the reign of Edward VII., but also lesser known items such as newsreels produced under the Soviet regime in Latvia. *filmarchives online* includes countless rarities which have previously only been accessible with some difficulty to the public, since many film archives did reserve their catalogue information for internal use. If you wanted to find out the location of a historical film document, you often had to resort to troublesome and time-consuming analysis of film-historic publications and the assistance of experts in the field.

In January 2006 the project partners began the complex preparations for the construction of a joint database. In February 2007 the internet portal *filmarchives online* was introduced at the *Berlinale*, offering world-wide access to the catalogue information and data of, initially, five archives. By now, the database contains information on more than 25,000 films from 18 archives and is accessible in eight different languages. Besides filmographic references and film-copy related information, short summaries are available for the individual films. *filmarchives online* gives you the location where each copy of a film is stored and provides contact to the respective archives, which handle viewing, lending and licensing requests. If available, information on the rights owners is also provided.

The portal includes unique, previously rarely seen material of great historical value and the variety of filmmaking in Europe is reflected in the specific compilation. The focus of *filmarchives online* is remarkable, covering non-fictional material such as documentaries and educational films, newsreels, commercial, industry, travel and sport films, as well as animated films. As historical records, these films offer impressive information on life in Europe in the 20th century.

For anyone interested in historical films – filmmakers and scholars in particular – researching the catalogues of European film archives is fast, straightforward and free of charge via *filmarchives online*.

MIDAS (Moving Image Database for Access and Re-use of European Film Collections), which initiated *filmarchives online*, was launched in January 2006 as a pilot project of the “MEDIA Plus” Programme of the European Commission and was coordinated by Deutsches Filminstitut – DIF.

The following archives and institutions have contributed catalogue information to the joint database:

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

Further information at <http://www.filmarchives-online.eu>

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