SOIMA

Safeguarding Sound and Image Collections

11-29 July 2011 Riga, Latvia and Vilnius, Lithuania

ICCROM

LATVIJAS ARHĪVI

BAAC
Baltic Audiovisual Archival Council

COURSE INFORMATION DOCUMENT

Partners and Cooperating Institutions

International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property, Italy

Baltic Audiovisual Archival Council

National Archives of Latvia, Riga, Latvia

National Library of Latvia, Riga, Latvia

Archives of Latvian Folklore, Riga, Latvia

University of Latvia, Riga, Latvia

Lithuanian Central State Archives, Vilnius, Lithuania

Centre de Recherche sur la Conservation des Collections, (CRCC), France

Masters Degree Program in Moving Image Archiving and Preservation, New York University, USA

National Film and Sound Archive, Australia

Introduction

Sounds and images comprise a major portion of the world's memory encompassing diverse cultures, languages and creative expressions. Yet most of the world's twentieth century audiovisual heritage is at risk of being lost. In the current phase of transition from analogue to digital formats, cultural institutions worldwide are facing serious difficulties due to the lack of knowledge, skills and resources. Many sound and image collections are held in institutions that do not specialise in this area and therefore, lack the competencies or the necessary support to manage and preserve such collections. Unless action is taken now, most of the sound and image heritage of the past century will disappear.

As a response, ICCROM has introduced an international programme, SOIMA (Sound and Image Collections Conservation) to emphasize conservation training for mid-career professionals in charge of conservation and archiving of sound and image collections in cultural institutions. Activities include creation of instructional and reference materials, training of professional staff, and encouraging collaboration between professionals in different countries. The focus is on sound and image collections residing in institutions that primarily care for non-audiovisual materials (libraries, museums, archives, cultural centres, etc.)

The Course

SOIMA 2011: Safeguarding Sound and Image Collections is the third international course of the SOIMA programme. It is being organized in partnership with the Baltic Audiovisual Archival Council and the National Archives of Latvia. A number of cultural heritage and educational institutions have contributed to the development of the course. SOIMA 2011 has received support from the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Lithuania and the Association of Lithuanian Archivists.

The course brings together over 30 professionals from 20 countries around the world. Introductory topics focus on the significance and use of sound and image collections in diverse institutional contexts. Exploring the potential of sound and image media in transmitting knowledge and cultural traditions, the course provides an overview of issues related to the preservation and access of sound and image materials e.g., photographs, films, video, audio and digital materials. Practical sessions include identification of various formats and the playback equipment, repair and handling of media, filed recording and digitization. Course topics cover issues such as current knowledge and practices for documenting and cataloguing, storage and risk assessment of collections, emergency preparedness and response, criteria and technologies for migration, planning preservation projects, outsourcing options, digital preservation and management. Other issues such as curating and access, copyright laws, legal deposit, and institutional and national preservation policies will be discussed in context with the participants' working realities. Adaptation to technological changes and related cost-effective preservation strategies also form a key component of the course.

Learning Outcomes

At the end of the course, participants will be able to:

- increase the awareness of the value of sound and image records
- recognize various media types and carriers
- identify risks to sound and image collections
- make informed and ethical choices for preservation and access
- communicate effectively across disciplines and work in a team

Venue

Keeping in view the specialized nature of the course, the working sessions of SOIMA 2011 will be organized at different locations in Riga (LATVIA) and in Vilnius (LITHUANIA). The University of Latvia, National Library, Archives of Latvian Folklore and the National Archives will host sessions during the first week and the third week.

In the second week, the course will move to Vilnius in Lithuania. The organizers have made arrangements for the transfer to Vilnius. The course sessions will be organized at the Lithuanian Central State Archives during the second week.

Participants

The 18 participants selected for SOIMA 2011, come from 15 countries. They represent a broad range of conservation and heritage professionals in charge of sound and image collections in museums, archives, libraries and other cultural institutions. The selection of the participants is based around the impact they are likely to have in training others in their home country, and in the importance of the collections that they manage.
Refer to Participants' list and profiles.

Course Team

Recognized experts from Australia, France, Guatemala, Lithuania, Latvia, the Netherlands, and USA comprise the international team leading the course. Staff members from ICCROM and partner institutions complete the project team.

Refer to the Information on the course team profiles.

Working Language

The working language of the course is English.

Course Structure

The emphasis of the course is on the preservation and the management of small to medium size mixed SOIMA collections. Following an introductory module on history, significance and management of sound and image collections, it is structured into 5 modules namely, Media and Formats; Preservation Planning; Digitization; Digital Preservation; and Preservation Management Strategies for SOIMA Collections

Each module includes 5-10 topics e.g., media/format identification, physical composition, risks to specific media types, handling and repair, storage etc. Some of the overarching topics will be discussed all through the course as underlying concepts and principles for archiving different types of sound and image materials are quite similar.

The overall course structure is linear and progressive. However, the participants will have the necessary time to revisit, discuss and refine key concepts at various stages and especially, during module 6 that emphasizes cost-effective strategies for managing SOIMA collections. The course map given below illustrates the flow of modules and topics during the three weeks.

<u>A more detailed course schedule based on time units will be provided prior to the beginning of the course.</u>
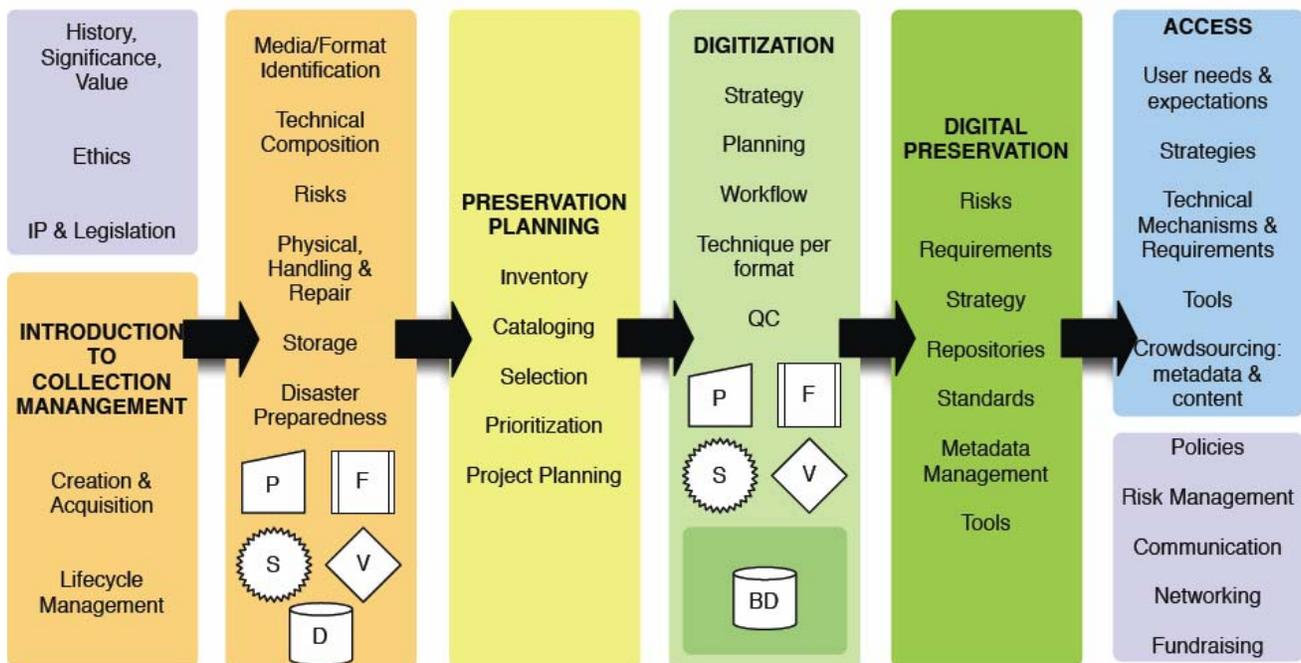
P: Photo; F: Film; S: Sound; V: Video; D: Digital; BD: Born Digital

Pre-course Reading

To familiarize participants with terms and concepts used in the course, we have selected some reading materials as pre-course reading. Referring to these will help in preparing for discussions on relevant topics throughout the course.
See attached Pre-course Reading document.

Follow-up Projects

We encourage each participant to think in advance of an idea or a project related to the theme of the course, which they can initiate and possibly carry out within six months of their return. Results will be collected, reviewed and shared after this period.

During the course, the participants will also have the opportunity to discuss with the resource-people and colleagues their ideas for improving the conservation conditions of audiovisual collections in their institutions and beyond.

Learning Activities

In order to draw upon and to develop the participants' learning and communication skills, the course offers a variety of teaching and learning activities. It includes a balance of illustrated lectures, practical work, group works, seminars and discussions. Most sessions promote interactive learning. The course features in particular:

A "Mini conference": At the end of the first week, a mini-conference on **Sound and Image collections: Current Challenges and Strategies for their Conservation and Long-Term Use** will include presentations from participants and the teaching team.

Study visits: During the course, study visits to various institutions will be organized. The aim is to review and assess the key course ideas and concepts within live institutional contexts.

SOIMA Website: As a resource for the SOIMA community, ICCROM has set up a website (http://soima.iccrom.org) with case studies and a select bibliography of the online content on audiovisual preservation. The primary aim of this website is to present examples where the professionals in charge of sound and image collections have employed innovative strategies to overcome certain management or preservation issues. The website also has information on the SOIMA programme and its activities. Before, the start of SOIMA 2009, all the relevant information related to the course will be posted on the website.

Participants' Contribution to the Course

The course will bring together a group of professionals from very diverse backgrounds. The past experience and the challenges they face in their work will be an important contribution to the course content. The exchange of experience, concerns and ideas is also a major aim of this project. A separate document "Participants' contribution to the course" describes a variety of items that participants are invited to collect or prepare in view of their contribution to the course.

Course Evaluation System

As for all ICCROM courses, a formal evaluation will be carried out during and after the course. It will address course content and approach as well as the learning environment. It will involve the participants, the coordinating and teaching team, as well as the partners. In practical terms, the course evaluation will consist of questionnaires to participants and teaching team, during and after the course. One year after the course, participants will be asked for feedback, and to report on their follow-up projects in their respective institutions.

With the support of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Lithuania
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