

Mission Statement

The Austrian Film Museum (OeFM) has two fundamental missions:

- 1) to preserve, research, enrich and relate to the public the collection of films and objects which the Museum has acquired since its foundation;
- 2) to exhibit the medium of film in all its dimensions and historical forms, working with the collection as well as with loans from other sources.

The Film Museum is a specific exhibition space (*film as a time-based event, the experience of a performative act*), a collection site and archive (*film as an artefact, as local and global memory*), a research and study centre, as well as a place for public debate and reflection (*film as a nodal point of discourse on culture and society*). Financially supported by the Austrian government and the City of Vienna as well as by private sponsors and through income from membership and admission fees, the Film Museum's double role in Austrian cultural life is that of an art historical museum as well as a museum of 20th century history – both in relation to the film medium.

The OeFM is a full member of the International Association of Film Archives (FIAP) and the Association of European Cinémathèques (ACE); it therefore participates in the collective efforts of film preservation and presentation in a global framework. As part of these functions, the Austrian Film Museum also supports the integration of Austrian positions in film art and film studies into an international context, as well as the reception of international positions and discourses on a local level.

The Austrian Film Museum asserts that film itself – as artefact and as an event, in our archival and exhibition activities – takes priority over film's derivatives and facsimiles. Thus, the preservation of films always also implies the preservation of their specific technical and spatial forms of exhibition; in other words, the preservation of the *visibility* and *comprehensibility* of film in its analogue cinematographic exhibition mode.

In regard to documentation, research, publishing activities and educational work, the collections of film-related objects also assume importance – the film stills and technology collections, the writings and posters collection, the collection of facsimile media such as video and DVD, as well as the library, which, as Austria's most comprehensive public library devoted exclusively to film, constitutes one of the core areas of the OeFM.

One of the Film Museum's essential responsibilities is to make all these collections, depending on the preservation status of the objects, accessible to the general public and professionals in the field for their respective needs.

The Austrian Film Museum aims to build a common framework for the history of film and its present-day reality. The activity of collecting and exhibiting films is invariably concerned with both historical *and* contemporary questions, practices and artefacts. This also applies to the continuing development of the collections; the Austrian Film

Museum acquires both historical and contemporary films, film-related materials and objects.

Our collection policy operates on the principle of a representative portrayal of the medium. The representation of film's art-historical development (selected works from all genres and periods) and the representation of film as a historical document (early cinema, anonymous film production, official films such as propaganda films and newsreels, etc.) are supplemented by four special collection areas, which have been established with the museum's foundation and which emphasize the transgressive and inter-disciplinary aspects of the medium:

- the international heritage of independent, avant-garde, non-industrial film
- avant-garde and independent film in Austria since 1950
- film exile, the trans-national film oeuvre of émigrés from Central and Eastern Europe
- films from Soviet Russia made between 1918 to 1945

The OeFM considers itself a partner of all educational institutions in Austria (from elementary schools to higher learning and adult education programmes); we aim to convey the medium of film in the context of aesthetic issues as well as those pertaining to contemporary history and cultural studies.

Contemporary audio-visual culture and the cultural history of the 19th and 20th centuries are the principal reference points which – against a background of other media technologies – enable us to highlight the specific conditions and characteristics of film. Encouraging an *ability to differentiate* is one of the key objectives here, both within film and media culture and regarding their functions in and effect on society.

The Film Museum is opposed to a reduction of film and culture in general to its economic, populist or merely spectacular aspects. It is dedicated to promoting a cultural climate which is based on free access to knowledge and education, respect towards historical and contemporary alternatives to the status quo, a consideration of minority interests, and on democratic forms of debate.

Alexander Horwath

Director (2002 to 2016)

Andrea Glawogger

Deputy Director (2002 to 2018)