

Strategy
for
UK Screen Heritage

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Presentation to Cinema Expert Group

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Introduction

- Background to the Strategy
 - BFI Archive review
- Issues
 - Conservation & documentation
 - Funding
- The Strategy
 - Vision; projects; consultation
- Where we are now

Landscape in UK

- BFI National Archive – 1935
- Network of Regional Film Archives (RFAs) – from 1970s
- Imperial War Museum, BBC etc
- *Film archives are newcomers in the cultural heritage landscape*
- *... and have been under-funded*

BFI Archive Review 2003

- Critical report from National Audit Office
- Change from technically-driven “preservation by duplication” to...
- Preventative conservation
- Curatorial process of research and documentation
- Driving access, interpretation and active conservation work

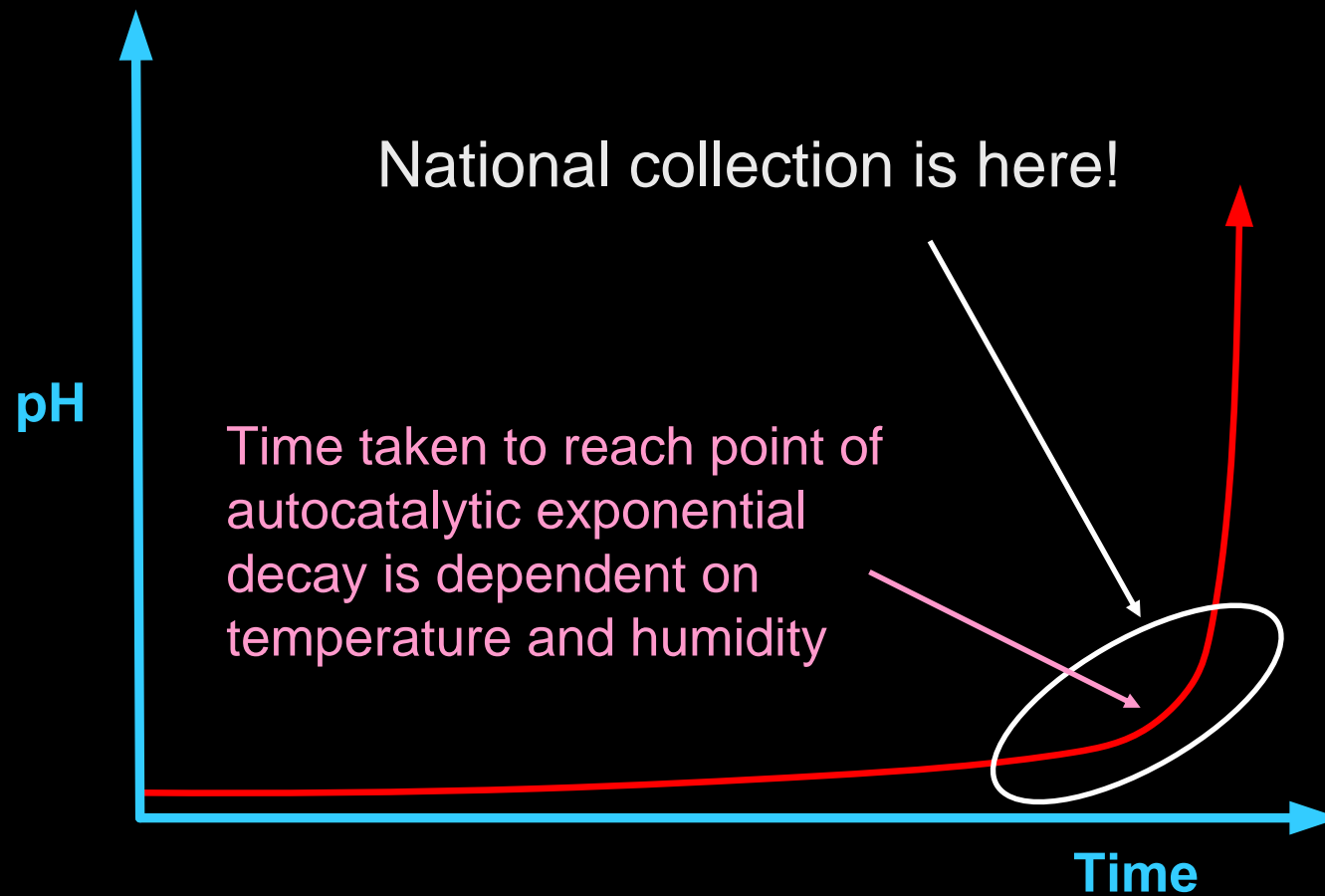
The collections

- BFI National Archive
 - 60,000 fiction, 120,000 non-fiction, 675,000 TV, plus related collections
- Regional Film Archives
 - 260,000 mainly non-fiction & TV
- Broadcasters
 - BBC & ITN hold 2.25m hours
- Other Nationals, universities, record offices, museums, etc.

Conservation issues

- Traditional film materials are not stable in the long term
 - Led to policy of preservation by copying
- Video (and digital) formats become obsolete
- Content must be migrated from one format to another

Deterioration of film



Preventative Conservation

- Careful handling & good environment

Type of material

Environment

Deteriorating cellulose nitrate film
Deteriorating cellulose acetate film

$-5 \pm 2^{\circ}\text{C}$, RH $35 \pm 5\%$

Cellulose nitrate film
Master materials on polyester and
cellulose acetate film

$5 \pm 2^{\circ}\text{C}$, RH $35 \pm 5\%$

Video material
Viewing materials on polyester and
acetate film

$15 \pm 2^{\circ}\text{C}$, RH $35 \pm 5\%$

Active conservation

- Good environment can't cure deterioration
- Repairs when needed
- Migration to overcome format obsolescence
- As part of cultural programme
 - New viewing prints & restorations
 - In support of digitisation
- Costs are high

Storage crisis

- None of the BFI storage facilities met these requirements
- Nitrate film was stored in WWII bunkers
- 30% of acetate film collection was at risk of loss
- No more space – film stored in warehouses and corridors

Documentation issues

- BFI has built information resources
 - eg filmographic database
- Innovative products and services
 - Screenonline, Mediatheque, downloads

BUT

- Inventory documentation is poor
- Scholarship and curatorial process was weak
- Intelligent decisions on storage compromised
- Access restricted

Gathering momentum

“The BFI should take the lead within the UK film and TV archive community and champion the whole sector...an over-arching national strategy promoting both good curatorship and increasing accessibility should be vigorously pursued”

(CMS committee on film industry 2003)

- UK Film Heritage Group formed
 - BBC, BFI, MLA, NCA, RFAs, RSAs, UKFC
- Paper to James Purnell, Minister for Film at DCMS (2005)

Regional funding crisis

- Core funding inadequate
- Balance is high-risk
 - commercial activity, restricted project funds
- Network is unstable
 - struggles to realise public value

The vision

“The public is entitled to access, learn about and enjoy its rich screen heritage wherever they live and wherever the materials are held”

(UKFHG 2006)

- Screen heritage collections everywhere
- Access – especially online
- Realise and demonstrate value
- A coherent plan to guide funding

The strategy document

- Public value
 - Richness of our heritage
 - Serving agendas for creative engagement, inclusion & identity
- The opportunity
 - Presented by digital world
 - Building on awareness & appetite
- A two-phase plan
 - National Collection & RFAs
 - Other nationals (BL, BBC, IWM, Nations...), regional collections, commercial, private...

The Projects

- Securing the National Collection
- Revitalising the regions
- Delivering digital access
- Demonstrating educational value
- Screen heritage steering group

Bid - cost summary

Initiative		One-off Ongoing	
		£m	£m
Revitalising the regions			3.42
Securing the National Collection	25		0.5
<i>(£13M store; £12M curatorial work)</i>			
Delivering digital access	8		2
Demonstrating educational value	1		
Screen heritage steering group			0.1
Totals		34	6.02

Consultation

- Consultation launch 13 June 2007
 - Launch event; strategy circulated; promoted via websites and FOCAL
 - Meetings facilitated by RSAs
 - Presentations to BSAC, MeCCSA, NCA, FAF
- Good response
 - 200 individuals; 114 written
- ... has informed development

The Bid to Government

- Bid to CSR made late summer
- £25m award announced November 2007
- Efforts since have focussed on setting up programme
 - Compliance with OGC & Green Book
 - Governance structure
- Project teams formed
 - Fleshing out projects in detail
 - Options appraisals

Securing the National Collection

- Storage
 - New sub-zero facility at Gaydon
 - Refurbishment and upgrade of existing facilities to achieve optimum conditions for moving images
 - Improved stores for other parts of the collection
- Curatorial work as part of process
- National Collection safe

Revitalising the regions

- Regional Screen Heritage strategies
 - Survey of regional collections
 - Selection of Nominated Archives
 - Strategies for preservation & access
- Curatorial work
 - In partnership (RFAs, BFI, HE...)
 - Select, catalogue, interpret and digitise material
- Regional collections part of a national network

Delivering digital access

- Union catalogue of Screen Heritage
- Web access via a shared portal to:
 - The catalogue
 - Digital surrogates (rights permitting)
- Key components include:
 - Setting common data standard
 - Helping archives to map to the standard
 - Cataloguing, interpretation, digitisation
 - Portal

Educational value

- Aimed specifically at schools
- Integrating screen heritage with the National Curriculum
- Tied in to National Education Strategy
- Initiatives such as NEN & RBCs
- Strategic goal is to unlock further funding from DCSF