Collection Policy
1 Introduction
Profile / 5
Collection / 5
Mission / 5
Vision / 6
Motto / 6
Role and purpose of the Collection Policy / 6

2 Management summary
Guardian / 9
Guide / 9
Pioneer / 10
Ambitions / 10

3 Guardian: from -5° to 4k
Collections / 13
Collection formation / 13
Archive function / 13
Museum function / 14
Acquisition policy / 14
Donations / 14
Inventory awaiting registration / 15
Vinegar syndrome / 18
Preservation / 18
Restoration / 19
Analogue photochemical restoration / 20
Digital restoration / 21
Digitisation / 21
The Digital Archive / 23
Intake of digital files / 23
Digital storage and digital sustainability / 24
Eye-D / 24
Collection Eye (CE) Catalogue / 24
Collection Eye (CE) Online / 26
Fiona Online / 26
Certification / 26
The preservation of Expanded Cinema and
digital presentation projects / 26

4 Guide: "open" and curated
Priorities / 29
Curatorial vision / 29
Access to the collection / 30
Target groups (re)using the Eye collection / 33
(Re)use of the collection within Eye / 33
(Re)use of the collection outside Eye / 36
Restoration projects / 37

5 Pioneer: academic function, research,
and collaborations
International expertise centre / 39
Collaboration in a national context / 39
Networks / 39
Partners / 40
Collaboration in an international context / 40
Academic function / 41
Master’s programme Preservation and
Presentation of the Moving Image / 43
Public lecture series This Is Film! Film
Heritage in Practice / 43
Research group Moving Images:
Preservation, Curation, Exhibition / 43
Research Labs programme / 43
Eye International Conference and Meet
the Archive / 43
Publications within the Framing Film
series / 44
Other publications / 46
Research and projects / 46
The Sensory Moving Image Archive
(SEMIA) / 46
Eye Artist and Scholar-in-Residence
programme / 47
Eye Filmmuseum & Haghefilm Digitaal
Film Restoration Traineeship / 47
Oral History programme / 48

6 Ambitions
Guardian / 51
Guide / 52
Pioneer / 55
Notes / 56

7 Appendices
Organogram Eye Filmmuseum 2018 / 60
Floor plan Eye Collection Centre / 60
Who’s Who / 62
1 Introduction

Profile

Eye Filmmuseum is the Dutch national film institute and the only museum for film heritage and the art of film in the Netherlands. Eye was founded in 2010 by merging the Nederlands Filmmuseum (preservation, management, and accessibility of film heritage), the Filmbank (management and promotion of experimental films), the Netherlands Institute for Film Education (national film education) and Holland Film (international promotion of Dutch film).

2016 marked precisely seventy years since Eye’s predecessor, the Dutch Historical Film Archive, had been founded. That same year, Eye celebrated its fourth anniversary in the museum building on the northern bank of the IJ River, and the opening of the new Eye Collection Centre in North Amsterdam, which was officially launched by Minister of Education, Culture and Science, Jet Bussemaker.

Collection

Over the past seventy years, Eye has acquired an internationally recognised collection spanning the entire history of film from the first silent films to the most recent Dutch releases. The collection includes approximately 50,000 films (60% of which are foreign films), 7,000 photographs, 82,000 posters, and 7,000 music scores. Eye also holds nearly 200 archives from filmmakers and organisations, about 1,500 apparatus, and an extensive library collection.

Collection history

The collection originally consisted of films from the Uitkijk archive, compiled by members of the Dutch Filmliga (1927-1933), an association of cinephiles that screened artistic films and wrote about the art of film. After joining the International Federation of Film archives (FIAF) in 1947, the Filmmuseum started collecting and preserving Dutch film productions. Since then, a number of significant collections have been acquired, ranging from Dutch distributors (Desmet, Centra, and UIP); filmmakers (Joris Ivens, Johan van der Keuken, and Louis van Gasteren); and producers (Matthijs van Heijningen and Kees Kasander) to institutions and organisations, such as the Netherlands Film Academy; the Netherlands Film Fund; and the Netherlands Institute for Animation Film (NIAF). Furthermore, the collection has been enriched through the acquisition and distribution of international titles, including many Hollywood classics and work by distinguished independent filmmakers, such as Andrej Tarkovski, Agnès Varda, and Carlos Reygadas. In 1989, Eye acquired the Film International distribution catalogue, consisting of many classics and international arthouse productions.

Aside from donations, purchases, and exchanges, a significant portion of the Eye collection is comprised of films donated to Eye in accordance with the Netherlands Film Fund deposit agreement.

Mission

Eye is a guardian, guide, and pioneer in the world of film and the art of the moving image.

Vision

Guided by the ambition to present its collection in innovative ways, Eye has gained global recognition for its daring approach to presenting film and the moving image in a museum context. Eye preserves and presents film as art, entertainment, cultural heritage, and social document and wishes to demonstrate how vitally important moving image is in experiencing and understanding the world. By connecting past, present, and future film, Eye aims at providing the necessary context and encouraging new and different perspectives.

Eye creates educational programmes and promotes access to and appreciation of Dutch film culture internationally, from new film talent at international festivals to Dutch film history in museums abroad. In addition, Eye fulfills a pioneering role through innovative restoration,
preservation, and presentation. The latter is reflected in, among other things, Eye's innovative exhibition programme and through showing the vast potential of film as a 'hybrid' art form that refuses to be confined by the familiar walls of the cinema.

In addition to serving the general public, film professionals, academics, students, and the educational field both nationally and internationally, Eye actively promotes knowledge dissemination, study, and research and aims to stimulate debate on recent cinematographic developments.

Motto
Eye is committed to keeping up with the latest technological and socio-cultural developments. It prioritises the development of new forms of presentation for film and image culture and makes use of innovative methods of access, restoration, and digitisation of the collection. Furthermore, Eye aims to consolidate the achievements of the previous years: the artistic and public successes, the Eye Collection Centre's state-of-the-art facilities, and a structurally sound financial basis. Accordingly, Eye's motto for the coming four years (2018-2021) is 'to consolidate and innovate'.

Role and purpose of the Collection Policy
This document sets out Eye's Collection Policy for national and international fellow institutions, including archives and museums, as well as sponsors, the film industry, academics, and students. It describes Eye's leading role in preserving, digitising, and restoring (analogous and digital) film heritage and gives extensive insight into its activities.

The Collection Policy is shaped by Eye's mission to be guardian, guide, and pioneer.¹

The Collection department
The Collection department employs 31 (full and part-time) staff members. Additionally, roughly the same number of volunteers helps out at various departments.

The Collection department is divided into four sections: Curators, Film-related Collections, Film Conservation & Digital Access, and Collection Management. Furthermore, curatorial and preservation staff work very closely with the Information Management department and the Chief Curator.

Since 1 January 2017, the government has granted Eye a structural subsidy of €3,250,036 a year for the management of museological cultural objects in accordance with the Heritage Act. This has been increased by an annual project subsidy of €1,000,000 intended for the digitisation of the collection. Eye also receives a yearly subsidy of €5,326,166 from the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science as part of the Basic Infrastructure for Culture 2017-2020.
Management Summary

Eye is guardian, guide, and pioneer in the world of film and the art of the moving image. Eye Filmmuseum collects, preserves, digitises, restores, and provides access to a collection that illustrates film art, culture, and heritage relevant to the Netherlands. This document sets out Eye’s Collection Policy for national and international fellow institutions, including archives and museums, as well as sponsors, the film industry, academics, and students. It describes Eye’s leading role in preserving, digitising, and restoring (analogue and digital) film heritage and gives extensive insight into its activities.

The Collection Policy is shaped by Eye’s mission to be guardian, guide, and pioneer.

Guardian

As guardian, Eye has both a museum function and an archival function. As a museum, Eye carefully selects and presents films and objects that meet content, artistic, historical, cultural, and social criteria. The archival function focuses on managing national film heritage. Due to its persistent efforts over the years to acquire the widest possible range of relevant material, Eye has managed to build up an internationally recognised collection. Covering a range of areas – Dutch Film, International Film, Silent Film, Film-related Collections, Experimental Film, Expanded Cinema, and Animation, the collection spans the entire history of film. Eye intends to research and present both the film and film-related collections together, as they provide context and complement each other. This applies to analogue and digital film, posters, photographs, archives, apparatus, sound, sheet music, books, journals, installations, and other objects. New deposits, donations, and acquisitions are continually added to the collection in support of Eye’s ambition to acquire items that enrich the collection’s focal points, fill gaps, and create new opportunities for programming.

The opening of the new Eye Collection Centre in 2016 marked an important milestone. For the first time in its history, the collection department offices as well as Eye’s entire collection (with the exception of the flammable nitrate material) are housed in the same building. The analogue collections are stored in state-of-the-art climatised depots while the born-digital and digitised collections are safely housed in a sustainable storage environment. Digital material, including accompanying technical and content metadata, is saved uncompressed in a sustainable fashion, which will enable Eye to produce copies according to new formats in the future.

The Eye Collection Centre has a ‘digital street’ with various facilities including a sound restoration and digitisation studio, a digital image restoration studio, and a grading and scanning suite. The type and condition of the film material determine which trajectory a film follows: digitisation (creating a digital copy), photochemical preservation (creating an analogue film print), and/or a comprehensive (analogue, digital, or hybrid) restoration. Films are digitised on a daily basis to support (online) access, preservation, restoration, and exhibition/screening.

Guide

Activities in the fields of digitisation, preservation, and restoration are only considered final once the result is shown to an audience in a cinema, exhibition, or online. Eye uses two presentation strategies: ‘open’ and curated. To reach the widest possible audience, Eye provides ‘open’ access to the collection; the user is free to decide what to see and how to (re)use the material. At the same time, a team of programmers and curators carefully select and present curated material, which provides the user with context and pathways to help appreciate these collections.

Over the past decades, Eye has made great efforts to digitise the collection and make it digitally accessible through various channels. In many cases, however, materials are protected by copyright, which restricts the free online access of film heritage. Meanwhile, large parts of the digital film collection in the public domain have been made freely available through internal and external online platforms.
In working with the collection, curators and programmers regularly discover unique items. Special presentations of these rare and unique items have been programmed throughout the world at film festivals, (film) museums, and cinemas. Also in its museum, Eye presents its collection through a wide range of thematic programmes and series, special events, and educational activities. Temporary exhibitions contain (although not exclusively) items from the collection and are accompanied by related film programmes and exhibitions of posters or photographs from the collection that provide context to the theme of the exhibition. In addition, special film apparatus from the collection and replicas of interactive pre-cinema apparatus are displayed in a permanent exhibition.

**Pioneer**

Eye plays a leading role in the fields of preservation, digitisation, and restoration of film heritage and closely collaborates with various partner institutions and experts in the Netherlands and abroad. Eye actively shares knowledge in the fields of information management, storage, digitisation, collection management, and restoration at both a national level, through specialised network organisations, and at an international level, through worldwide networks of international film archives.

The Eye Collection Centre serves as an international expertise centre for research on and reuse of the collection with its own Artist and Scholar-in-Residence programme and a Trainee programme in film restoration. In the public research centre, the Eye Study, visitors can freely access digitised material as well as books, journals, films, DVDs, posters, photographs, archives of individuals and organisations, scripts, audio collections, sheet music, and film apparatus. It is also possible to consult collection specialists. The building is equipped with a multifunctional cinema, which is regularly used for expert meetings, press screenings, courses, lectures, and workshops.

Eye holds a strong position in the academic field. In recent years, Eye has developed its academic function considerably, due in part to the establishment of the Chair in Film Heritage and Digital Film Culture at the University of Amsterdam (UvA), held by Eye Chief Curator, Giovanna Fossati, whose dual role is unique within the film archival field and forms an ideal link between the activities of Eye and the academic research at the University of Amsterdam. In line with its academic policy, Eye aims to provide scholars and students with optimal access to the collection and expertise within the film archive. Collaboration with the UvA focuses on the Master’s programme Preservation and Presentation of the Moving Image, the annual Eye International Conference, the public lecture series on notable film heritage projects entitled This Is Film! Film Heritage in Practice, and the academic book series Framing Film. Eye is also involved in various national and international research projects that are necessary for the continued application of innovative methods in restoring, digitising, and providing access to the collection.

**Ambitions**

Regarding its role as guardian, guide, and pioneer, Eye has formulated a number of ambitions. In terms of collection management and preservation, Eye intends to further expand its digital ecosystem and monitor and test its policy and practice with respect to digital sustainability. In addition, Eye will make provisions to improve the nitrate film collection’s current storage capacity and conditions. In the coming years, Eye will further professionalise the restoration studios at the Eye Collection Centre and provide suitable training in new disciplines for its team of restorers. In terms of providing access to the collection, Eye aims to undertake two large restoration projects per year and present the full breadth of the collection in diverse and innovative ways. Regarding research and development, Eye will invest in research across all collections, occasionally working in partnership with external researchers and/or guest curators. Finally, Eye seeks to further develop as a leading centre of expertise using knowledge dissemination and collaboration with fellow institutions and universities at home and abroad.

While the budgeting of most ambitions falls within the financial framework of the Eye Policy 2017-2020, Eye will need to seek additional funding in anticipation of the new policy period 2021-2024 to be able to realise a number of additional requirements.
As guardian of film heritage in the Netherlands, Eye Filmmuseum has both a museum and archival function. To fulfil its museum function, Eye makes choices based on content, artistic, historic, cultural, and social criteria. The archival function focuses on the management of national film heritage, from 1895 to the present.

The collection consists of:

- 210,000 cans of acetate film
- 30,000 cans of nitrate film stored in bunkers in the dunes (near the coast of North Holland)
- 50,000 film titles, of which there are registered copies in the collection
- 60,000,000 metres of film
- 8, 16, 35, and 70mm positive and negative film (black and white, and colour)
- 2.5 petabytes of digital data
- 12,000 digital assets
- 82,000 posters
- 700,000 photographs
- 27,000 books
- 2,000 journals
- 1,500 pre-cinema and film apparatus
- 4,500 (magic) lantern slides
- 7,000 musical scores
- 250,000 press cuttings

Collections

The Eye collection consists of different collections: Dutch Film, International Film, Silent Film, Film-related Material, Experimental Film, Expanded Cinema, and Animation. While Eye makes distinctions between analogue and digital film and film and film-related material, its primary ambition is to approach the collection as an integrated whole.

Eye has a team of curators, each specialised in a particular area of the collection, with the exception of the International collection. In addition, Eye has a curator for the special amateur film collection, which is part of the Dutch Film collection.

Animation collection

The Animation collection contains nearly 5,000 Dutch and non-Dutch titles, including large and important collections of animated films by George Pal and Gerrit van Dijk, and films from the Joop Geesink and Marten Toonder studios. Eye acquired the collection of the Netherlands Institute for Animation Film (NIAf), when it was discontinued in 2013. The NIAf acquisition includes the important collection by animator Ton van Saane. In addition to fiction films, the animation collection also contains many commissioned films, advertisements, and an important collection of animation cels.

Collection formation

Archive function

In principle, Eye collects and preserves all Dutch theatrical film productions. All contemporary Dutch titles supported by the Netherlands Film Fund are donated to Eye and integrated into the collection. This includes documentary films and minority co-productions supported by the Hubert Bals Fund.

Dutch experimental and artists’ film, independent animated film, and graduation work by students from the Netherlands Film Academy further supplement the collection. In addition, Eye collects film-related material of these productions (posters, photographs, press materials) and paper archives from major filmmakers.

Dutch Film collection

With more than 20,000 titles, the Dutch Film collection is Eye’s largest collection and an excellent reflection of the priorities and ambitions of the archive to document and safeguard Dutch film culture as completely as possible. In addition, Eye aims to present Dutch film culture in diverse and innovative ways, in cinemas and online, nationally and internationally.
The amateur and small-gauge film collection and the Dutch East Indies film collection form a significant part of the Dutch Film collection with nearly 2,400 titles, many of which are 8mm or 16mm. 550 of these films depict daily life in the former East Indies during the interwar period. To give these unique films the visibility they deserve, Eye regularly provides access to important parts of its collection through in-depth programming and exhibitions. A case in point is the 2013 Looming Fire exhibition for which renowned found-footage filmmaker Péter Forgács drew on several films from this collection to offer an extraordinary peek into everyday life in the former colony.

During the annual Home Movie Day, amateur and family films of all formats, including 8mm and 9.5mm material – the oldest small-gauge format, which came onto the market in 1922 – are shown on the big screen. Aside from highlighting a unique collection, the annual Home Movie Day plays an important role in tracing unknown, but historically valuable, material.

The Netherlands has no legal deposit legislation, a legal obligation for copyright holders to submit copies of their work to Eye. Consequently, the Dutch collection lacks a number of significant works. Using available resources and staff, Eye will explore all avenues to identify and acquire these titles in the coming years.

Museum function

Eye seeks to preserve and present a museum collection that reflects the most important artistic developments in film history and culture; however, it does not intend to create a complete record of these developments. Completeness is not the goal. The collection takes shape through careful selection and intentional acquisition. It does not limit itself to national films and/or international classics and oeuvres of renowned filmmakers but also focuses on works prone to obsolescence – for instance, ‘orphan’ films and experimental productions in which Eye recognises a particular cinematographic or contextual value.

The museum function also partially applies to the film-related collections, which include posters, photographs, magic lantern slides, film apparatus, and paper archives from Dutch filmmakers and may be presented in connection with or independent of the overall film collection.

In performing its museum function, Eye applies the following criteria:

• The object (film, photograph, poster, or archive) has an artistic quality and/or documentary value for the (history of) Dutch film culture;
• The object is unique to the Netherlands or the world, shows originality, and/or has exemplary qualities for film or cinema culture;
• The object shows extraordinary cinematographic quality, for instance through remarkable direction, editing, or camerawork.

Acquisition policy

Eye aims to acquire titles and film-related items that enrich and complete the core collection and provide further opportunities of presenting special programmes. Therefore, Eye generally only seeks to acquire film titles that are (at least) cleared of rights and thus may be screened in-house. Acquisition involves old and recent titles in various analogue and digital formats. While some new and restored films can only be acquired digitally, other films are preferably obtained on celluloid because of a special format (70 mm for example). In the coming years, Eye intends to give priority to the acquisition of relevant films and film-related material.

Donations

Apart from acquisition, the collection is continuously supplemented by large and small donations. Acceptance or rejection of a donation will be subject to a curatorial assessment against criteria in line with the acquisition policy. Only in exceptional cases will a donation be accepted without extensive assessment beforehand, for instance in the case of donations due to bankruptcies. Items that have been acquired conditionally may later be disposed of by transfer to another archive or by destruction, if it concerns a duplicate copy that is already part of the collection. To guard against excess, Eye prioritised the deaccession of duplicates before, during, and immediately after the relocation to the Eye Collection Centre, resulting in the disposal of 5,000 cans of film material.

Inventory awaiting registration

The publicity surrounding the opening of the new Eye Collection Centre generated renewed interest in the archive. Following the opening, Eye was flooded with donations, ranging from old nitrate material and batches of more recent analogue films – including those of the Cineco film laboratory (which filed for bankruptcy in 2012), A-Film (the largest film distributor in the Benelux until its disbandment in 2015), and Twin Film (children’s films) – to numerous smaller donations. Meanwhile, the complete collections of merger partners Holland Film and Filmbank have been transferred to the Eye Collection Centre for inclusion in the collection. In recent years, Eye has also been offered various archive collections and film apparatus.

Collection Policy Plan

The publicity surrounding the opening of the new Eye Collection Centre generated renewed interest in the archive. Following the opening,
While Eye is pleased with the large number of donations, it has seen its unregistered inventory grow exponentially. In the coming years, Eye will need to catch up on more than 20,000 cans of material, which need to be examined, selected, registered, documented (by adding metadata), barcoded, and deposited in a vault. Registration of this inventory – which also contains archives, posters, photographs, and other material – will be carried out by supervised volunteers.

Sovexportfilm donation: an example from the inventory awaiting registration

One of the many interesting donations concerns a batch of ten pallets from Sovexportfilm, the Soviet Union’s official film import and export company. Approximately 1,500 cans in various batches were donated to Eye in 1971 and 1993. Promoting Soviet film since 1945, when it opened an office in Amsterdam, Sovexportfilm ensured that Soviet films could be seen in the Netherlands. In the 1970s and 1980s, festival screenings and purchases by the former Nederlands Filmmuseum and film distributors were often arranged through the Sovexportfilm office on the Bachlazan, in Amsterdam. The company had close ties with the Vereniging Nederland-USSR, where films of a blatantly propagandistic nature were regularly screened. Over the years, never returned Soviet-Union film copies kept accumulating, until the Sovexportfilm collection was finally donated to Eye where it now resides under the name ‘Sovexportfilm’.

An interesting addition to the existing collections of Soviet films in the Eye collection, the Sovexportfilm collection contains feature films as well as documentaries, promotional and propaganda films, and reportages of major events. The collection as a whole provides a unique impression of Soviet society and how a centrally controlled film industry tried to influence perception abroad.

The inventory awaiting registration contains nearly 30,000 cans of nitrate film of which at least 2,000 remain unidentified. The identification as well as the careful selection of these films for preservation and restoration will be undertaken in the coming years. On average, Eye receives 150 cans of nitrate film each year. Therefore, within the Silent Film collection, the activities mainly involve the registration of nitrate film.

Silent Film collection

The Desmet collection forms an important part of the Silent Film collection. Acquired in 1957, the collection contains the archives left behind by Netherlands’ first professional film distributor Jean Desmet (1875-1956). The film-historical significance of this collection has been recognised worldwide: the Desmet collection was included in the UNESCO’s Memory of the World Register in 2011. The collection comprises films, posters, photographs, and an extensive company archive. It also contains many rare and unique items, including: the only remaining copies of masterpieces by D.W. Griffith and Louis Feuillade; films starring well-known actors of the period, such as Léonce Perret, Francesca Bertini, and Lyda Borelli; and productions by Pathé, Gaumont, Vitagraph, and Edison.

In 2014, the material was presented in an exhibition dedicated exclusively to Jean Desmet: Jean Desmet’s Dream Factory. The Adventurous Years of Film (1907-1916).

Among the extensive silent film collection, many masterpieces that had disappeared from view for decades have been found, including: A munkászubbony / The Work Jacket (István Bródy, Hungary, 1915); Opiumets magt (Robert Dinesen, Denmark, 1918); Fragments of Germaine Dulac’s first film, Âmes de fous (France, 1918); A fragment of Fedora (Giuseppe de Liguoro, Italy, 1916) with Francesca Bertini; Love, Life and Laughter (George Pearson, Great Britain, 1923); A fragment of Una notte a Calcutta (Mario Caserini, Italy, 1918) with Lyda Borelli;
Of Eye’s entire collection, the Silent Film collection is the most widely circulated, due to its unique character but also because language is less of an obstacle. New Eye restorations can regularly be seen at international festivals and fellow institutions. Furthermore, every fortnight, Eye presents a Cinema Concert in its museum – a programme in which silent films from the collection are screened accompanied by live music.

Vinegar syndrome

Inspections during the move to the new Collection Centre detected the so-called vinegar syndrome in many films and magnetic audio tapes. This syndrome affects the carrier and spreads a pungent vinegar smell. As the syndrome is contagious, infected rolls must be quarantined immediately. There are two methods of saving the image and sound material from destruction: by either digitising the image and/or sound as quickly as possible or by making a new analogue copy. The second solution is costly, the first labour-intensive. Approximately 132,400 meters of film and 93,000 meters of magnetic tape are currently contaminated. The state of the material and the growing number of contaminated carriers require action. In the coming years, Eye aims to inspect, select, and digitise or preserve this material.

Preservation

Analogue, digital, and hybrid film materials make up the core of the collection. It is crucial that originals are appropriately preserved against loss in secure and climatised vaults. As original heritage artefacts, these films frequently serve as the basis for research and new restorations. With the commissioning of the new Collection Centre, Eye is able to preserve these objects under the best conditions for as long as possible. The collection is located in eight of the eleven vaults, each measuring 300m². There are: five vaults for films (housing a total of 210,000 cans); two vaults for film-related materials (including 82,000 posters, 700,000 photographs, and 27,000 books, journals, and press cuttings); and one two-stories high vault (the ‘high vault’) that, in addition to the larger apparatus, houses both the film and film-related inventory awaiting registration. Because of the rapid growth of film-related material, Eye hopes to put a ninth vault to use by 2021. This vault must in due course be equipped with special roller racks.

Climate control in the vaults

Eye keeps the temperature in four of the five film vaults at +5°C with a relative humidity of 35%. The fifth film vault is climate-controlled at -5°C (below zero), at the same humidity. This vault mainly stores negatives, master copies, and 70mm material. The temperature in the film-related vaults and in the ‘high vault’ is ideal for paper collections at +18°C with a relative humidity of 50%.

Due to safety and environmental regulations, the nitrate collection (approximately 30,000 cans) is stored in three special bunkers in Castricum, Overveen, and Heemskerk. These bunkers are expected to reach full capacity in the coming years as the nitrate collection continues to grow. The bunker in Castricum, where 7,000 nitrate cans are stored, no longer meets the current safety regulations and storage requirements and must be modernised very urgently. To resolve these issues, Eye is preparing another vault for nitrate storage, in Heemskerk. Until recently, some of the analogue films that were transferred to the Eye Collection Centre were stored in this vault.

Eye chooses to store the born-digital films and digitised analogue films in the Digital Archive in accordance with current best practice and standards. The preservation process entails a detailed documentation of activities and interventions in the preservation (of analogue, digital, and hybrid workflows), digitisation, and restoration of both film image and film sound.

Restoration

Unlike most art restorations where work is performed on the original element, film restoration requires duplication of the original element, creating a new restored copy. When duplicating a film to a new medium (analogue film or digital file), interventions are made regarding colour, contrast, resolution, and sound. And while maintaining as much as possible of the original is essential, there is always a degree of interpretation by curators and restorers: the original can never be entirely recreated. Film constantly reinvents itself; materials, technology, and screening conditions are different today compared to a hundred, fifty, or even twenty years ago.

At Eye, the term ‘restoration’ indicates that extensive research has been done to investigate the historical, technological, and aesthetic characteristics of the original film and that the necessary time (and money) to recreate the original aspects has been invested. If it is neither possible to do extensive research into duplication nor apply a number of techniques, Eye speaks of ‘analogue or photochemical preservation’, if the result is a new analogue film, or of ‘digitalisation’, if the result is a digital copy. Regardless of the choice for photochemical preservation, digitisation, or restoration, all interpretations and decisions must be based on film-historical knowledge.

Prior to all restoration workflows (analogue, digital, and hybrid), restorers examine the aesthetic and technological quality of the work. They determine whether the film is complete, which versions exist, and which version is most suited for restoration. Eye often collaborates with international fellow archives to compare different source material (surviving film elements may be found anywhere in the world), share expertise and bring together the best materials for a joint restoration.

Restoration plans

In the coming period, planned film restorations include films by Eric de Kuyper, George Sluizer, and Henri Piaut.

In collaboration with Stiftung Deutsche Kinemathek and Deutsches Filminstitut Frankfurt, Eye is working on the digitisation and restoration of films by Hans Richter (1888-1976). This German painter, graphic artist, and filmmaker was influenced by Dadaism, and had contact with the Dutch art movement De Stijl in the early 1920s. In 1921, he made his first abstract film, Rhythmus 21, now considered one of the classics of avant-garde film. In the early 1930s, Richter spent some time in the Netherlands where he made advertisements for Philips. Original material from a number of these films is held by Eye.

In collaboration with IdFilmCentre, a restoration studio in Jakarta led by Dutch film director Orlow Seunke, Eye is restoring the Indonesian film Tjoel Nja Dhien (Eros Djroat, 1988), starring Christine Hakim. The film was shown as part of the Un Certain Regard programme at the Cannes Film Festival in 1989.

In 2018, the Russian propaganda film, Fragments of an Empire / Oblomok imperii (1929) by Friedrich Ermler (Sovkino) will be restored. Eye has a nitrate copy of this film in the Film-liga collection. The restoration will be carried out together with the San Francisco Silent Film Festival, the Russian film archive Gosfilmofond, and the Swiss Film Archive.

Eye provides access to these film restorations through screenings in the museum building – such as those held on the annual Meet the Archive – and at international festivals, for instance through the Eye International department that promotes worldwide visibility of Dutch film and filmmakers.

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Die Barfusstänzerin (Rosa Porten, Germany, 1918).

Die neueste Stern vom Variété (Rosa Porten, Germany, 1917).

Die Barfusstänzerin (Rosa Porten, Germany, 1918).
Analogue photochemical restoration

In a select number of cases, Eye may choose to restore photochemically, if, for instance, a film is very fragile and the digitisation process may cause further damage to the original. This often applies to old nitrate films or to carriers affected by the vinegar syndrome. Occasionally, photochemical restoration workflows are also adopted for silent films to remain faithful to the original production and projection technique. Silent films were not shown at the standard rate of 24 frames per second (typical for sound films), but at a variety of rates (normally between 14 and 48 frames per second); restoring these films digitally may therefore interfere with the authentic projection speed of such films.

Finally, an analogue workflow is generally preferred for works where film materiality is emphasised. This is often the case with contemporary, experimental filmmakers who embrace the use of analogue film for artistic purposes.

In all these cases, Eye first makes a film-to-film copy (often a duplicate negative) followed by either a digital scan or a new analogue projection copy.

Experimental Film collection

The Experimental Film collection contains work by all major Dutch experimental filmmakers. In addition, Eye aims to acquire titles that represent the canon of avant-garde film history, which will be integrated into its unique experimental film collection. Thanks to the Filmliga collection, Eye holds a unique experimental film collection. Thanks to the Filmliga collection, Eye holds a unique experimental film collection.

Regarding analogue restoration, Eye frequently works collaboratively with specialised laboratories. Haghefilm Digitool (and its predecessor Haghefilm) and Eye have worked together on numerous restoration projects since the 1980s. In addition, Eye regularly collaborates with other international film restoration laboratories where specific expertise is required. These include Cineric in New York (United States) and L’Immagine Ritrovata in Bologna (Italy).

Digital image and sound restoration is performed on a small number of films, in particular films that have been selected for screening at Eye and national and international festivals, or films that are being restored in collaboration with other archives.

Digital image restoration replaces missing or damaged details in the image with similar details from surrounding frames. Sometimes scratches or stains run from frame to frame, so that no comparable details are available to repair the damage; in which case, the scratches or stains are left untouched.

In general, image restoration is only attempted if the intervention is invisible and no new digital artefact is added to the image. Some damage may be part of the film’s history; traces of the production process, such as camera instability. The restorer does not necessarily restore the image ‘as new’ (pristine restoration), but is limited to restoring the historical, technical, and aesthetic qualities of the film while maintaining the original characteristics of the film.

The same general guidelines apply to colour correction (grading) and sound restoration. In colour correction, the original colours of a film are restored using reference copies. If these are not available, similar films will be studied to estimate the original state of the colours. Where possible, the filmmaker and/or cameraman is consulted.

In the coming period, Eye will primarily focus on expanding knowledge regarding colour correction and sound restoration, so that these activities can eventually be performed in-house instead of being outsourced to external laboratories. Since the opening of the Eye Collection Centre, Eye has acquired a Sounder Resonances scanner for the digitisation of soundtracks and ProTools software with which to restore them. Currently, Eye’s sound restorer is receiving additional training in current sound restoration.

Collection Policy Plan

Films may be digitised at 2K or 4K resolution. These abbreviations represent two thousand or four thousand pixels per horizontal line respectively, and determine the amount of detail copied. A 10-Bit logarithmic colour depth determines the amount and variation of colours copied. Most films are digitised at 2K. This is the minimum required resolution for...
theatrical release with no perceptible loss of detail. A 35mm camera negative is ideally digitised at 4K or higher resolution to ensure the capturing of the finer details of the negative. Compared to 2K, digitising at 4K generates a file that has quadrupled in size. For example, a 90-minute feature film will result in approximately 1.5 terabytes at 2K 10 Bit and 6 terabytes at 4K 10 Bit.

Film-related collections, such as posters, archive documents, and publicity materials are digitised with an A0 scanner, and in high resolution when requested.

In the context of the European research project A Million Pictures, the complete collection of (magic) lantern slides has been digitised and original descriptions have been added to the catalogue. Funded by external subsidies, Eye also digitises and provides access to various seminal film journals. In March 2018, a further two journals from the library collection are being digitised: Nieuw weekblad voor de cinematografie 1922-1964 (22,000 pages) and Kunst en Amusement 1920-1927 (8,000 pages).7

The Digital Archive

Over the past fifteen years, a true digital ‘revolution’ has taken place in the film world, confronting cultural institutions that collect, archive, and present films (audiovisual archives, but also museums) with the intake of a rapidly increasing amount of born-digital material. Meanwhile, over the past years, also a large volume of analogue film material has been digitised, particularly during the project Images for the Future (2007-2014).8

Sustainable preservation of and permanent access to digital film objects require adequate registration and storage systems best suited to the nature of the material. Eye uses the Open Archive Information System (OAIS) reference model. This model provides a conceptual framework for an archival system dedicated to the intake, storage, and accessibility of digital information. The Eye Digital Archive consists of a digital storage environment, a Media Asset Management system (Eye-D), and a catalogue system (Collection Eye).

Intake of digital files

All supplied digital files are checked, normalised, and transferred to the storage environment. Eye prefers to store digital material uncompressed and adds metadata on the technical details and content.

Digital rollout

In the past twenty years, the post-production of films has primarily shifted to digital. Regardless of being shot on film, the material is usually digitised for editing, special effects, and colour correction purposes. Having adopted digital tools ahead of the film industry, film sound has been digital for some time now. Over the past ten years, films have generally been digitally recorded, distributed, and projected as digital files (Digital Cinema Package or DCP). At present, around 130 films are produced digitally in the Netherlands each year.

In accordance with the Netherlands Film Fund deposit agreement, the master elements of all productions supported by the fund are donated to Eye and integrated into the collection. These include feature films (also co-productions), documentaries, experimental films, animated films, filmic experiments, and both short and long productions. Agreements have also been made with the Dutch Film Academy regarding the intake of films made as final graduation projects.

The main reason for these collaborations is to guarantee long-term preservation and sustainable storage of Dutch audiovisual heritage. The sustainable storage of source materials enables Eye to produce future copies and/or digital formats on whichever standard is pertinent.

7 I. Before and after the digital restoration of Shoes (US, 1913)
Standardisation of born-digital delivery specifications

Eye refers to the international standards of the Society of Motion Picture and Television Engineers (SMPTE) and the International Organization for Standardization (ISO). Standardisation is essential in guiding the digital submission procedure. All Dutch post-production studios are asked to follow the submission guidelines for the Digital Archive, which facilitates the delivery of digital material. In the completion phase of a film production, the following digital elements must be transferred to Eye:

- An uncompressed master: Digital Cinema Distribution Master (DCDM).9
- A projection copy: unencrypted Digital Cinema Package (DCP) including any available subtitles.10

In addition, uncompressed files of film-related material (photographs, posters, Electronic Press Kit, shooting script, etc.) are supplied to Eye for completion of the preserved item.11

At the end of 2017, the Eye digital collection amounted to approximately 2.5 petabyte. Each year, it is estimated that 300 terabytes of new material is generated by means of digitisation and Film Fund admissions.

Digital storage and digital sustainability

Data is stored on LTO tapes in a data robot, which is a commonly accepted industry standard for archiving data. For back-up purposes, two sets of LTO tapes are made and stored at separate locations. Maintaining compatibility across all major operating systems, the open-standard software (LTFS) ensures that, if necessary, the data tapes can even be read outside Eye. After a number of years the data tapes are migrated to new tapes and servers and/or components within the robots are replaced. In this regard, Eye follows best practices in the IT industry and international standards of the FIAF (International Federation of Film Archives).

Eye-D

Launched in 2016, Eye-D is a Media Asset Management (MAM) system that stores all of Eye’s digital material, which can be delivered in a variety of formats suitable for various purposes. The access interface of Eye-D is user-friendly and offers quick access to the collection for both internal activities (programming, exhibition, and research) and external contacts (researchers, festival programmers, filmmakers, or customers of Eye’s Archival Sales department).

The system is linked to the Collection Eye (CE) catalogue, where all technical metadata on the digital objects is directly linked to relevant catalogue records.

Collection Eye (CE) Catalogue

Collection Eye (CE) is Eye’s catalogue system and contains information about every item in the collection. The catalogue comprises nearly 815,000 records of collection items and approximately 317,000 additional records, including information about individuals and corporations.12 New records of analogue and digital material are added or updated every day. In 2016, along with the introduction of the new workflow for born-digital material, a new registration model was developed to describe acquisitions of born-digital material and digitised analogue titles.

In early 2018, Eye will start procedures to gradually upgrade CE. One of the objectives is to integrate the BIBIS library catalogue in CE. In the coming period, collection management will be further optimised in accordance with international standards set by FIAF and Spectrum, an international handbook for collection management. Eye aims to improve the quality of data by refining import guidelines and import inspection, supplementing missing data (possibly by using external sources), and adhering to national and international standards, such as the Common Thesaurus for Audiovisual...
This certificate covers various areas: organisation, technology, processes, procedures, documentation, finance, legal aspects, and personnel. Becoming certified demonstrates that the repository is a reliable, digitally sustainable, and accessible archive and involves meeting the guidelines set by CoreTrustSeal. Eye expects to become certified in 2019/2020.

The preservation of Expanded Cinema and digital presentation projects

In the coming years, Eye would like to research how non-traditional works such as Expanded Cinema installations and online/on-site digital presentation projects can best be registered and preserved. Such works contain different components that often fall outside the traditional categories of film and film-related collections. These include installations developed or acquired for (temporary) exhibitions and installations produced by Eye, such as the 360° installation in the Panorama or The Scene Machine (on-site installation and an online platform). Virtual Reality, Augmented Reality, and Mixed Reality projects, such as the Eye Walk, also partially fall into this category.

Eye aims to keep a record of the first presentation of these works, so as to maintain the possibility of presenting them again. Eye policy will continue to focus on this issue and create conditions for optimal archiving of these productions. To improve conditions, the description format in the catalogue will need to be adapted and will be taken into account during the process of upgrading CE. In the case of co-productions or commissioned work, agreements must be made with the makers as to which material needs to be provided for archiving. For a digital project, this only concerns the software (including content) written for the project, and not the off-the-shelf hardware, unless it has been specially developed or modified for the project. With on-site installations, only unique elements, like custom-made furniture or equipment, will be secured. The non-unique, replaceable elements are included with photographs and descriptions in the documentation of the work.

In order to preserve Expanded Cinema and digital presentation projects, Eye will turn to fellow institutions for specialist advice and collaboration where necessary.

Expanded Cinema collection

Filmmakers increasingly intersect film with other arts (fine art, media art, installation art, photography, performance, and music), while artists from other disciplines regularly use the characteristics of cinema. In both cases, the medium of film requires examination by, for instance: questioning time, space, and the fixed position of the spectator; experimenting with new narrative structures; and raising the issue of the single projected image. Works in the Expanded Cinema collection explore and reflect on one or more of these aspects and offer an artistic and cinematographic answer to questions on the essence of cinema.

Eye researches, collects, preserves, and presents Expanded Cinema because Eye recognises that important cinematographic developments regularly occur outside the cinema. In 2012, Eye gave free rein to Expanded Cinema with the exhibition Expanded Cinema: Isaac Julien, Fiona Tan and Yang Fudong.
Activities in the fields of digitisation, preservation, and restoration only become final once the result is shown to an audience in a cinema, exhibition, or online. Eye uses two presentation strategies: ‘open’ and curated. To reach the widest possible audience, Eye provides ‘open’ access to the collection; the user is free to decide what to see and how they want to (re)use the material. At the same time, a team of programmers and curators carefully select and present curated material, which provides the user with context and pathways to help appreciate the collection. In a world where users have access to large quantities of digital material from many (inter)national heritage institutions, it is necessary to guide the user so that they can enjoy the fullest possible range of what the collection has to offer.

Priorities

Currently, the Collection and Public & Presentation departments have a number of priorities in terms of content. Stemming from Eye’s general mission, these principles are:

• Presenting and contextualising film culture in various and innovative ways.
• Creating a broader perspective by presenting the work of forgotten filmmakers.
• Mapping out important technological developments, genre cinema, Dutch film culture, etc.
• Focusing on groundbreaking cinema: filmmakers who blur boundaries and styles, break the rules, and find their way independently through the (inter)national landscape of cinema.
• Selecting and presenting work by talented young filmmakers and well-known masters of cinema.
• Presenting (highlights from) the collection.

International collection

The International collection reflects Eye’s ambition to create a unique collection of work by prominent filmmakers from around the world and from milestones in film history.

This collection focuses on groundbreaking cinema: innovative films of new talent (Nicolas Provost and Ruben Odfjeld) and new films by established filmmakers, whose work is already part of the collection (Ulrich Seidl, Roy Andersson, Hou Hsiao-hsien).

Eye has agreements with distributors, such as MGM/UA and Granada, allowing Eye to screen, distribute, and add titles from their catalogues to the collection. In addition, Eye actively acquires film classics and interesting restorations from fellow archives. Recent examples are Howards End (1992) and 2001: A Space Odyssey (1968) on 70mm.

Titles from the International collection are frequently featured in summer programmes, thematic programmes, and monthly series, such as Restored and Unseen, and Eye-shadow, which combines films with provocative live concerts that complement the film.

Curatorial vision

In past years, Eye has invested a lot of time in making the collection visible in the Eye museum building and nationally and internationally. Eye will continue to present the collection worldwide and online and will further intensify its research into the collection. In the coming years, investments will be made in autonomous research across all collections. The largest collection, Dutch Film (comprising two-fifths of the entire collection), will receive a more collaborative approach: curators from all collections (Silent Film, Experimental Film, Expanded Cinema, Amateur Film, Film-related Collections, and Animation) will work within the Dutch Film collection, exploiting the widest possible range of expertise.

One of the ambitions for the coming years is the expansion of the curatorial team with the appointment of an International Film curator and a curator of Contemporary Dutch Film.

The curatorial team, together with external researchers and/or guest curators, will also
investigate lesser-known parts of the collection in the coming period. The collection is, after all, rich and varied and full of untapped material waiting to be extracted.

Unique finds

Curatorial work often leads to unique finds and restorations, such as Fietsen naar de maan (Jef van der Heijden, 1963) and Herwinnen door werk (Alex Roosdorp, 1945). In recent years, films long considered lost have regularly been discovered, such as the American drama film Beyond the Rocks (1922); the British feature film Love, Life and Laughter (1923); the German film Gräfin Küchenfee (1918), starring Henny Porten; Robert Wiene’s directorial debut Die Waffen der Jugend (1912); and Dutch films such as De Bertha (1913) and Bloedgeld (1921).

Eye aims to present its collection as an organic whole, in which all collections complement and provide context to each other. This applies to analogue and digital films, posters, photographs, archives, apparatus, sound, sheet music, books, journals, installations, and other objects. Through regular meetings and structural exchanges of information between curators and programmers, all aspects of the collection will have the chance to be seen in various forms of presentation.

Film-related collection

Eye’s film-related collection is large and diverse, including 700,000 photographs and 82,000 posters as well as a number of highlights from 1920s poster art. The paper archives are a valuable source for research and historiography and contain unique items regarding Dutch film production, distribution, and exhibition. In addition, the institutional archives (NBB/NFC, Productiefonds/Fonds voor de Nederlandse Film, NIAf) provide insight into the organisation and subsidising of Dutch film. An important recent acquisition is the extensive archive of Gerard Soeteman, Netherlands’ most prominent screenwriter of films such as Turks fruit (1973), Soldaat van Oranje (1977), and Zwartboek (2006).

The company archive of distributor and cinema owner Jean Desmet and accompanying posters, photographs, and publicity material constitute the largest part of the silent film-related collection. Together with parts of other archive collections (for example, the Geoffrey Donaldson archive), it provides a great deal of background information on silent film.

The integration between film and film-related collections is reflected throughout the museum building. Some examples are: the film apparatus in the Panorama; the changing exhibition of posters in the hallways leading to the cinemas, which are thematically linked with current programming; and the Eye on Set, a changing exhibition of film-set photographs displayed on seven monitors above the foyer bar.

Access to the collection

Over the past decades, Eye has made great efforts to digitise the collection and make it digitally accessible through various channels. The large-scale digitisation of the Images for the Future project (2007-2014) has ensured that 22% of the collection is now digitally available. During this project, almost 7,000 film titles from the collection have been digitised.

Eye’s regular digital workflow will digitise about 200 titles a year. In addition, an average of 150 born-digital films is acquired each year. However, copyrights restrictions form a major obstacle for all audiovisual archives wanting to make film heritage available online. The copyright and screening rights clearance for each individual film title is a time-consuming and costly task. Eye collaborates at a national and international level within the audiovisual field to find effective solutions to these limitations.
FORWARD system

Orphan works are films of which the copyright holders are unknown or cannot be traced. Recent legislation allows cultural institutions to publish these works. Sharing its knowledge and expertise in the field of orphan works, Eye had a crucial role in the three-year European FORWARD project that ended on 1 February 2017. The project resulted in the development of a semi-automated system that is able to determine the legal status of European audiovisual works, including orphan works. Eye supports the plan by the Association des Cinémathèques Européennes (ACE) to maintain, further develop, and make the FORWARD system accessible to other European film archives.

A substantial part of digital film in the public domain has now been made freely available. In the coming years, Eye aims to focus on making accessible Dutch film productions that are currently protected by copyright and to present these, if possible, free of charge in innovative forms of presentation. In the past, Eye participated in the VOD platform Ximon that made Dutch films accessible for a small fee. Unfortunately, this platform has since been discontinued. Using today’s knowledge and more affordable technology, Eye aims to explore available possibilities for developing an Online Archive Portal to provide additional and curated access to Dutch films.

Digital presentations

The collection is made available on Eye’s own online platforms, as well as on external platforms, such as YouTube, Open Images, European Film Gateway, NECSUS, and various social media platforms.

Every week, Eye posts titles from the collection on YouTube and on the website, where accompanying articles, blogs, film descriptions, and thematic dossiers provide additional context. Currently, over 1,000 titles are posted on YouTube. Eye also posts weekly fragments or photographs on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram to draw attention to material from the collection.

The Collection department has its own Facebook page on which employees post news items about collection-related topics, highlighting special collection items (film, photography, or apparatus) and promoting activities (lectures, presentations, or research projects) in the Eye Collection Centre.

A recent example of an innovative digital project that makes use of the collection is Jan Bot; Eye’s first algorithmic curator who generates short experimental films based on the day’s trending topics, exclusively using material from the Bits & Pieces collection. The videos are streamed on the Jan Bot website and social media platforms.

Target groups (re)using the Eye collection

Apart from use for in-house activities (programming, exhibition, education, etc.), the collection is intensively (re)used by various (inter)national target groups: the general public, academics and colleagues from the archival and museum world, educational users (facilitators and end users), and the film industry.

Eye aims to encourage users to reuse the collection so that it reaches the widest possible audience, both inside and outside the museum.

(Re)use of the collection within Eye

Eye exhibits films from the various collections throughout the year. There is ample opportunity through summer programmes, thematic programmes, and special events (such as the annual Film Ball and Museum Night) or through a wide range of series: Cinema Concert; Eye on Art; Cinema Egzotik; Eyeshadow; and Cinemini, a series specifically intended for toddlers and infants.
The Education department uses the collection as teaching material for almost all educational activities and provides a wide range of guided tours, interactive programmes in the cinemas, and workshops. This includes the History Repeats workshop in which students make videos inspired by films from the collection.

**Virtual Reality, Augmented Reality, and Mixed Reality**

In recent years, developments in the fields of Virtual Reality, Augmented Reality, and Mixed Reality have rapidly progressed. In 2017, Eye created a compact VR installation to allow visitors to participate in these developments.

There is endless experimentation with storytelling on a 'screen without frame'. One example of this is the Eye Walk, a tour Eye created for children over the age of seven. This innovative video tour contains fragments of films from the collection and has won several awards, including the New Media Awards (Best of Industry in the Museums category) and the Highly Commended Prize awarded by MuseumNext.22

In due course Eye hopes to be able to employ VR technology to find new and exciting ways to present and experience the collection and will create conditions to optimally archive its own (co)productions.

Eye’s temporary exhibitions, such as Jean Desmet’s Dream Factory: The Adventurous Years of Film, 1907-1916 and Péter Forgács – Looming Fire, are comprised, almost exclusively, of items from the collection. These exhibitions are accompanied by a film programme and a display of posters or photographs from the collection that tie in with their theme.

In recent years, through a permanent exhibition known as Eye Discover, it is possible to access material from the Film-related Collections. Spread throughout the building, replicas of interactive pre-cinema apparatus are waiting to be discovered (Eye Explore); to find these, children from the age of seven can take part in a treasure hunt (Eye Explore More). In the Arena, there are ‘listening benches’ where a lively story is told about the creation of five films (Eye Listen).

The Panorama on Eye’s ground floor houses the permanent exhibition which displays apparatus that mark important moments in film history.

Some major items include a mutoscope, a magic lantern projector, and the Kinamo – a compact camera used by film pioneer Joris Ivens to film the famous documentary De brug (1928).

The Panorama also houses the 360° installation, a space where visitors are surrounded by nearly one hundred thematic film fragments from the collection. There is also an interactive installation which utilises green screen technology to allow visitors to star in a film scene from the collection.

There are also four so-called Pods (mini-cinemas with three seater sofas) in the Panorama, which show several hundreds of films from the collection in their entirety. In the coming years, Eye aims to expand the number of screened films in the Pods and place one or more Pods in locations outside Eye. In 2018, the first Pod has been placed in the Amsterdam Public Library.

**Eye Move: a new on-site presentation**

In the coming years, Eye will replace the current 360° installation in the Panorama with a new immersive and interactive installation. Under the working title Eye Move, an extensive new piece de résistance is being worked on which will allow visitors to explore the Eye collection in a different way. Like the 360°, this new installation will provide high-tech access to the Eye film collection. Visitors will play a leading role through movement. To search the collection, visitors will no longer enter search terms as a word tag like in traditional search engines; instead, they will ‘act’ in a direct, intuitive, and physical way: the body will act as a ‘game controller’ of the search engine.
In Eye Move, the visitor will determine the common denominator of scenes or shots shown on the walls. Using gestures and postures, the visitor literally controls the narrative and determines what kinds of film fragments are being accessed. These could feature, for instance: close-ups or wide shots (the visitor moves his/her hands close together or far apart); the colour red (the visitor selects red on a colour wheel); and quickly edited scenes (the visitor quickly claps his/her hands). A visitor’s pose can also be translated via image recognition into, for example, a romantic pose from a well-known film. Eye Move will use the latest techniques and software in the field of image recognition and image analysis, and will be developed in close collaboration with the NWO project The Sensory Moving Image Archive (SEMI A) of which Eye is a partner (see page 46).

(Rejuse of the collection outside Eye)

The collection can also be seen through various channels outside the museum.

To promote the screening of short films, Eye initiated the Short Film Pool, a distribution platform through which subscribed film theatres have access to more than 500 digital short films, documentaries, and animations. The selection includes films from the Filmbank and NIAF collections, as well as titles from independent producers and films produced for the annual NTR KORT! series. The Short Film Pool also offers specially curated programmes, from compilation programmes of film festivals to educational programmes with free teaching material.

Dutch cinemas and film theatres can programme films from the Eye distribution collection. This distribution collection has more than 1,000 titles and contains both classic and contemporary film. About 1,100 bookings are made every year.

Distribution collection

In the late 1980s, the collection and activities of the Film International distribution branch (now known as the International Film Festival Rotterdam, IFFR) were housed in the Nederlands Filmmuseum. This collection contains dozens of copies of notable arthouse films, mainly from Asia, Russia, and Europe as well as many modern classics. Ten to fifteen films per year were added to the collection during the 1990s and 2000s. The Filmmuseum maintained a close relationship with the IFFR during this period and the work of a number of directors was closely followed and often acquired. The Distribution collection includes works by Manoel de Oliveira, Zhang Yimou, and Hou Hsiao-hsien. The collection reflects the history of arthouse film in the Netherlands between 1970 and 2010. Along with the archival collection, the distribution collection provides an excellent starting point to follow developments in cinema. Asia, the Middle East, Russia, and Latin America are regions that Eye would like to particularly focus on in the coming years. At a time when demand for analogue film copies is declining, the Distribution collection represents a large cultural capital for Eye to research, preserve, digitise, and – rights permitting – present.

The Archival Loans department lends films to film festivals, (film) museums, and cinemas. Around 750 copies are sent around the world each year.

Archival Sales handles requests from museums, production companies, TV channels, newspapers and magazines, web and app designers, artists, academics, and private individuals. Eye delivers approximately 900 film files, 400 photographs, and 100 posters to external parties every year.

Eye International

The Eye International department is responsible for the promotion of restorations at major international film festivals, such as Cannes Classics and Berlinale, and at film heritage festivals, such as Il Cinema Ritrovato in Bologna, Le Giornate del Cinema Muto in Pordenone, and the Festival Lumière in Lyon. In order to enhance visibility of the Eye collection, Eye International has film market booths at various international film festivals.

Since 2017, the annually released Eye International film catalogue has included a film heritage section highlighting the most recent restorations. The English-language magazine SEE NL, which Eye International publishes in collaboration with the Netherlands Film Fund, often focuses on the Eye collection, heritage activities in the Eye Collection Centre, and events and programmes related to the collection.

In 2018, one of the projects promoted by Eye International abroad was the restored work of Dutch film director George Sluizer. This restoration project resulted in the release of a DVD box containing Sluizer’s entire oeuvre.

International distributors regularly release Eye films on DVD and Blu-ray. Restored versions of J’accuse (Abel Gance, 1919) and Man with a Movie Camera (Dziga Vertov, 1929) were recently released by Lobster Films in France. In 2018, Milestone Films in the United States will release the restoration of Shoes (Lois Weber, 1916) and Filibus (Mario Roncoroni, 1915).

Restoration projects

2015 and 2016 were eventful years, primarily marked by the relocation of the collection to the new Eye Collection Centre. In the future, Eye intends to present two major restoration projects per year. In this context, ‘major’ means a famous, classic film, a prestigious presentation, or an important international collaboration. These restoration projects generate attention for the collection as a whole and can lead to new co-productive restorations, which may increase the number of restoration projects in the future.

Thanks to new film-historical insights and technical developments, films continue to be presented in different ways. Each screening of a restored film creates a new chapter in the history of film.
Eye plays a leading role in the fields of preservation, digitisation, and restoration of film heritage and closely collaborates with various partner institutions and experts in the Netherlands and abroad. The opening of the Eye Collection Centre in 2016 has further helped secure Eye’s international reputation as evidenced by a number of new in-house programmes and projects: the Eye Artist and Scholar-in-Residence programme, the Film Restoration Traineeship programme in collaboration with Haghefilm Digitaal, and various (inter)national collaborative projects in the fields of restoration, research, and knowledge enhancement.

International appreciation

The Eye restoration of Beyond the Rocks (Sam Wood, 1922) was shown worldwide after its premiere at the Cannes Film Festival in 2005; the restoration of Nicholas Ray’s final film experiment We Can’t Go Home Again (1972) premiered at the Venice Film Festival in 2011. In recent years, Eye has put together a variety of film programmes that have been circulated worldwide, for example, excerpts from the Jean Desmet collection (1907-1916) and compilations of early coloured films. In addition, restorations of films by Dutch experimental filmmakers, such as Johan van der Keuken, Frans Zwartjes, and Joost Rekveld, are regularly shown internationally.

Eye has won several international awards for its restoration work, including the Jean Mitry Award (for innovation in the field of colour preservation in nitrate film), the Film Preservation Honors, and the Prix Henri Langlois.

In 2017, Eye was awarded the annual San Francisco Silent Film Festival Award in appreciation of its contribution to the preservation and restoration of film and the sharing of knowledge through presentations held in San Francisco over the years.

In the 1990s, Eye was one of the first archives to use digital techniques for the digitisation and restoration of film images. In the past three decades, Eye, together with partner laboratories, has developed many new analogue and digital techniques to restore films to their full glory. The results have been presented to the public in the Netherlands and abroad.

International expertise centre

The Eye Collection Centre functions as a centre of expertise where scholars, journalists, filmmakers, students, and other film professionals can work with the collection. In the Eye Study, the public research centre, visitors may consult (digitised) materials, such as books, journals, films, DVDs, posters, photographs, personal and institutional archives, scripts, audio collections, sheet music, and film apparatus. It is also possible to consult experts who work in the Eye Collection Centre, such as curators, information specialists, and restorers. The building is equipped with a multifunctional 35-seat cinema room, which is regularly used for expert meetings, press screenings, lectures, and workshops.

Collaboration in a national context

Eye works closely with various partner institutions and specialised network organisations in the fields of preservation, digitisation, restoration, and presentation of film heritage.

Networks

Netwerk Digitaal Erfgoed (NDE)

Netwerk Digitaal Erfgoed (Digital Heritage Network) is made up of five institutions, each representing a distinct domain within the heritage field. Together they represent a system of national facilities and services for improving the visibility, usability, and sustainability of digital heritage. Over the past few years, Eye has actively contributed to various projects within the NDE programme. In the coming period, Eye aims to focus on linked open data and rights management of digital objects.
The company has been a partner in Eye’s Short Film Pool distribution platform from the beginning and their most recent collaborative project is the Eye Film museum & Haghefilm Digitaal Film Restoration Traineeship.

When requested, Eye will also store nitrate material for Haghefilm Digitaal.

The Netherlands Institute for Sound and Vision

Eye and the Netherlands Institute for Sound and Vision in Hilversum closely collaborate in many areas, such as access to digital collections, joint educational projects (for both primary and secondary education), and various academic activities. Eye and the Netherlands Institute for Sound and Vision have been partner institutions in the Master’s programme Preservation and Presentation of the Moving Image (P&P) at the University of Amsterdam since 2003. The two institutions collaborate on numerous research projects, including the NWO SEMIA project and the MediaNow project, which develops open-source search algorithms that enable a search of large-scale media archives.

Continuous communication takes place between Eye and Sound and Vision to avoid the overlapping of collections, especially in the field of Dutch documentaries.

Collaboration in an international context

Eye is a member of a worldwide network of international archives, including the International Federation of Film Archives (FIAF) and the Association of European Cinémathèques (ACE); alongside other renowned film institutes, such as the British Film Institute, the Deutsches Filmmuseum, and the Cinémathèque Française. The collections and archives are connected and complement each other. Through these networks, Eye users have worldwide access to a broad, international collection.

FIAF

Eye has been a member of the International Federation of Film Archives (FIAF) since 1947. When it was founded in 1938, the organisation had only four members. Today, 164 institutions (89 active members and 75 associates) from 75 countries are affiliated with the organisation. FIAF is an important consultative body in the film archival world and promoter of various international partnerships. FIAF works with three specialised expert committees engaged in the development and application of both theoretical and practical standards. Eye is represented on two of these committees. Anne Gan (head of Film Conservation and Digital Access) is a member of the Technical Commission, and Massimo Benvegnú (Programming staff) is head of the Programming and Access to Collections Commission.27

ACE

Eye is also a member of the Association of European Film Archives and Cinémathèques (ACE), an affiliation of 44 national and regional film archives and cinémathèques from across Europe. Founded in 1991, ACE aims to safeguard, promote, and make accessible European film heritage and is the initiator of various projects, such as the European Film Gateway. Eye supports ACE’s plan to maintain, further develop, and provide access to the FORWARD system for other European film archives. Eye director Sandra den Hamer is the President of the ACE board.30

Network for Experimental Media Archaeology

Eye is a member of the Network of Experimental Media Archaeology (NEMA). This international network promotes new forms of collaboration between universities and heritage institutions with regard to obsolete media technologies. The network aims to encourage historians, archivists, and curators to engage and experiment with apparatus collections from museums and archives.33

Academic function

Eye holds a strong position in the academic field. In recent years, the academic role has been further strengthened, partly due to the establishment of the Chair in Film Heritage and Digital Film Culture at the University of Amsterdam (UVA). Giovanni Fossati, chief curator at Eye, was appointed to this professorship. The combined function of professor and chief curator is exceptional in the international film archival world, and forms an ideal link between Eye’s restoration practices and academic research at the UVA. Through its academic policy, Eye seeks to provide researchers and students with optimal access to the collection and expertise within the film archive.

Collaboration with the UvA focuses on the Master’s programme Preservation and Presentation of the Moving Image, the annual Eye International Conference, the public lecture series This Is Film! Film Heritage in Practice, and the academic book series Framing Film. In addition, Eye and the UvA jointly participate in various national and international research projects.34

Master’s programme Preservation and Presentation of the Moving Image

As co-founder and partner, Eye has been involved in the organisation and implementation of the English-language dual Master’s programme Preservation and Presentation of the Moving Image at the University of Amsterdam since 2003. On average, sixteen (international) students participate in lectures and practical workshops given by Eye staff. Every year, Eye offers at least three internships at various departments, giving students the opportunity to gain practical work experience for four months under the guidance of experienced curators, restorers, and digital film specialists. The fifteenth anniversary of the programme was celebrated in 2018.26

Public lecture series This Is Film! Film Heritage in Practice

Eye and the University of Amsterdam annually present a public lecture series on remarkable film restoration and heritage projects for a wide audience. In a series of six lectures entitled This Is Film! Film Heritage in Practice, various recent restoration projects and presentation forms of film heritage are addressed, ranging from pre-cinema to recent experimental films and Hollywood classics. Apart from regular film projection in cinemas, the lectures also cover film
installations and exhibitions of film and film apparatus. International experts, curators, and Eye staff contribute to each lecture in the programme. This Is Film! enables Eye to provide insight into the behind-the-scenes work of film archives and museums.36

\[\text{Research group Moving Images: Preservation, Curation, Exhibition} \]

At the Eye Collection Centre, international guest speakers lecture on issues regarding the preservation and presentation of, and research into, archival films about three times a year within the ASCA (Amsterdam School for Cultural Analysis) research group Moving Images: Preservation, Curation, Exhibition. This research group meets every six weeks and is led by chief curator Giovanna Fossati and Eef Masson, coordinator of the Master’s programme Preservation and Presentation of the Moving Image at the University of Amsterdam.

\[\text{Research Labs programme} \]

With the annual Research Labs programme, Eye seeks to encourage the development of the next generation of talented curators and artists. Students from art academies and universities put together a programme containing their own work and films from the Eye collection. The thematic programmes consist of a mix of performances, lectures, film, video, music, dance, and/or installations. By allowing students of the Research Labs programme to explore the richness of the collection, Eye hopes to engage and inspire young talent. Students can reuse the collections by making remixes with copyright-free material. Aside from providing an excellent opportunity for students to create new work and become familiar with the collection, the Research Labs programme is also often the first time students get to work with a film heritage institution. The students’ best audiovisual works are added to the collection.

\[\text{Collaborations with educational programmes} \]

In addition to the Master’s programme Preservation and Presentation of the Moving Image at the University of Amsterdam, Eye also collaborates intensively with other universities and colleges, including the Reinwardt Academy, the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, the Research Master’s Cultural Leadership at the University of Groningen, the University of Bologna, the University of Zurich, and the Master’s programme Digital Audiovisual Restoration at the Sapienza University in Rome. Collaboration can vary from internship programmes to various research and presentation projects.

The following institutions participate in the Research Labs programme: the Rietveld Academy, St.-Joost Academy, Sandberg Institute, the Royal Academy of Art, Piet Zwart Institute, the University of Amsterdam, University of Leiden, VJAcademy, and HKU University of the Arts Utrecht.

Eye is also involved in student graduation projects, which use the Eye collection as a starting point. A recent example of this type of collaboration is the MEDIATED REALITY project, a machine that develops and prints films in real time created by an Interaction Design student at ArtEZ Academy of Art & Design in Arnhem.37

\[\text{Eye International Conference and Meet the Archive} \]

Once a year, Eye hosts an international conference attended by film scholars, archivists, curators, and restorers. The conference is organised in collaboration with national and international partners from the academic world and the field of film heritage. Each year, the Eye International Conference starts with Meet the Archive, an afternoon in which Eye curators present special projects to the public for the first time. The final day of the conference always
Eye International Conference 2018, 2019 and 2020

The 2018 edition of the Eye International Conference marked the celebration of the fifteenth anniversary of the Master’s programme Preservation and Presentation of the Moving Image, whose approximately 150 alumni are working in museums, archives, and universities around the world. The theme of the conference was Activating the Archive. Audio Visual Collections and Civic Engagement, Political Dissent and Societal Change.

In 2019, the Eye International Conference, in collaboration with the Women and Film History International (WFHI), hosted an international conference on the role of women in the film industry during the silent film period entitled Women and the Silent Screen (WSS), focusing on the theme Sisters.

In 2020, the Orphan Film Symposium will return to Eye after its first successful European edition in 2014. Orphans is a biennale dedicated to orphan film material. The 2020 conference will focus on Water, Climate, and Migration.

Publications within the Framing Film series

Eye is actively involved in the publication of (academic) books, journals, and online material (e.g. articles, blogs, etc.). Since 2009, Eye has published its own academic book series entitled Framing Film in collaboration with Amsterdam University Press (AUP). The series comprises theoretical and analytical books in the fields of restoration, preservation, archival, and exhibition practices, which are in line with Eye’s work. Its first volume, From Grain to Pixel: The Archival Life of Film in Transition by Giovanna Fossati, was published in 2009. Since then, more than a dozen books have been published; an average of three to four books appears each year. With the Framing Film series, Eye and AUP seek to support scholars and archivists in reflecting on film archival and restoration practices. The series has received international recognition:

’I ... applaud this [series’] effort, because for me the construction of film history has always been a complex matrix of social forces, academic research interest, and archival ability. Just as research queries by film scholars lead to films being prioritized for preservation and restoration, preservation initiatives from the archives also lead to an opening up of new film historical terrain.’

– Jan-Christopher Horak, director UCLA Film & Television Archive

‘The Eye Filmmuseum in Holland is a leader in the field and their Framing Film imprint adds invaluable scholarship to the field.’

– Mike Legget, Leonardo Reviews

Upcoming Framing Film publications

• The Greatest Films Never Seen. The Film Archive and the Copyright Smokescreen by Claudy Op den Kamp (2018).
• From Grain to Pixel. The Archival Life of Film in Transition (revised version) by Giovanna Fossati (2018).
• Yervant Gianikian and Angela Ricci Lucci at Work edited by Alo Paistik and Jonathan Larcher (2020).
Eye, together with Amsterdam University Press and other universities, is co-founder and partner of NECSUS - European Journal of Media Studies. NECSUS is an international, peer-reviewed, open access, online journal in the field of film, television, and media studies.

NECSUS is actively supported by the European Network for Film and Media Studies (NECS), the Research School for Media Studies (RMeS), and the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO), which provides financial support. Published bi-annually as thematic issues, NECSUS encourages authors to include digital archives and audiovisual data and materials in their articles.

The website structure facilitates interaction, allowing people to make blog posts, submit video essays, and integrate content across virtually all social media platforms. The website also features a search function and an interactive map of the collection. The site provides access to the collection and encourages scholars to annotate and interpret the materials.

The aim of the project is to gain a better understanding of the magnitude, content, composition, and condition of the collection while, in consultation with international experts and research institutes, simultaneously attempting to reach an agreement on the most viable ways to manage and preserve animation artwork collections. Debating best practices will not only benefit Eye but also other private and public archives in formulating a well-considered conservation policy. The publications and meetings resulting from this project will help put Eye on the map as a centre of expertise on research into animation art in 2018.

Materials in Motion is funded by Mermorfoze, a national programme for paper heritage preservation.

The Sensory Moving Image Archive (SEMIA)

In the ongoing research project Sensory Moving Image Archive (SEMIA), Boosting Creative Reuse for Artistic Practice and Research (2017-2019), Eye is working collaboratively with the University of Amsterdam, the Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences, the Netherlands Institute for Sound and Vision, and Studio Louter. The SEMIA project investigates which analysis software and interfaces are needed to explore and reuse digitised heritage collections based on visual characteristics (light and colour, shape or movement). In the course of two years, various workshops, expert meetings, and a symposium will be organised in support of this project. The project is funded by the NWO’s research programme Smart Culture – Art and Culture.

Other ongoing research projects

Eye is involved in the project MIMEHIST: Annotating Eye’s Jean Desmet Collection (2017-2018), which aims to develop a scholarly annotation environment for the Desmet collection. MIMEHIST is a pilot project within the larger CLARIAH (Common Lab Research Infrastructure for Arts and Humanities) research programme, which aims to design a digital infrastructure to connect large amounts of data and software from different humanistic disciplines and make them digitally searchable.

Eye is also involved in the international project A Million Pictures: Magic Lantern Slides Heritage as Artefacts in the Common European History of Learning (2015-2018), which investigates the use of magic lantern slides by educational, popular, and scientific associations in the nineteenth century. The project is an initiative of University of Utrecht and is financed through the Heritage Plus programme.

Finally, Eye is involved in the development of a number of research projects in collaboration with various universities in the Netherlands and abroad. For these research projects, grant applications have been, or will be, submitted to institutions, such as NWO (Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research), HERA (Humanities in the European Research Area), and the European Commission which provides funding through the Horizon2020 programme to stimulate innovation and research.

Eye Artist and Scholar-in-Residence programme

In 2017, Eye celebrated the seventieth anniversary of the collection with the launch of a new Eye Artist and Scholar-in-Residence programme. This programme aims to stimulate research into and reuse of the collection and to promote cross-fertilisation between film, arts, and sciences. Each year, Eye intends to invite an artist/filmmaker and a scholar to work with collection material at the Eye Collection Centre. The programme results are then highlighted through presentations, lectures, and programmes in the cinemas or exhibition space. The work created by the Artist-in-Residence is added to the collection.

With this traineeship, Eye and Haghefilm Digitaal seek to bridge the gap between academic (theoretical) training in the field of film archiving and daily film restoration practices. In pursuit of this aim, the programme goes one step further than other internships and workshop programmes. The initiative is intended to educate a new generation of film restorers, enabling them to smoothly transition into employment once the traineeship has ended.

Other publications

Eye is involved in various national and international (research) projects necessary for the continued application of innovative methods of restoring, digitising, and providing access to the collection.

Materials in Motion

In 2018, work on the two-year research project (2016-2018) Materials in Motion: A Conservation Policy for Analogue Dutch Animation Artwork from the Period 1930–2000 will continue in the Eye Collection Centre. The animation artwork collection increased substantially in 2013 with the acquisition of the collection of the Netherlands Institute for Animation Film (NIAf). Eye is now the custodian of artwork by more than fifty different Dutch animation filmmakers. In addition to paper material, the collection contains approximately 80,000 animation cells, a portion of which is in poor condition. Research into the preservation of these transparent plastic foils is still very much in its infancy.
The traineeship is a seven-month paid position and consists of two phases. In the first four months of the training programme, the trainee will receive training under the guidance of experienced curators, restorers, scanning operators, and digital film specialists in various departments at both Eye and Haghefilm Digitaal. By rotating activities, the trainee will acquire a broad all-inclusive knowledge of various aspects of analogue and digital film restoration processes, such as identifying, reconstructing, repairing, scanning and developing film, quality control, and sound restoration. In the last three months, the trainee will specialise in a field of their own choosing. Throughout the programme, the trainee will work with material from the Eye collection.

**Oral History programme**

In the coming years, Eye aims to develop and set up a programme for an oral history collection. Oral history is a form of historiography based on eyewitness accounts. Stories and personal accounts from an older generation of filmmakers and artists will be collected as a safeguard against loss for coming generations. In the development phase of this project, Eye will devise a standardised interview method combined with a workflow to process, preserve, and make accessible the interview videos and sound recordings. Special attention will be given to the transcription and registration of this material. Eye will seek specialist advice from fellow institutions that have undertaken similar projects.
Ambitions

Guardian

Storage

Eye aims to make provisions to improve the current storage capacity and conditions for the nitrate film collection.

The nitrate collection is currently stored in three vaults in the North Holland dune area. Eye is expected to run out of available space in the near future as the nitrate collection continues to grow. In addition, one of the three vaults no longer meets the current safety regulations and storage requirements and therefore urgently needs to be modernised. To resolve these issues, Eye intends to retrofit a film vault for nitrate storage in Heemskerk. Renovating this vault is a costly affair, amounting to approximately €110,000. In order to realise this ambition, Eye will need to find extra funding.

Eye will make use of a ninth depot in the Eye Collection Centre in connection with the growth of the film-related collections. Eye would like to start using this 300m² depot by 2021; in the meantime, the space will have to be fitted with special roller racks.

Digital ecosystem

Eye will consolidate and further expand its digital ecosystem.

Early in 2018, Eye will start procedures to gradually upgrade the CE Online cataloguing system. One of Eye’s ambitions is to integrate the BIBIS library catalogue in CE. Eye will also explore how Expanded Cinema objects and apparatus should be described in the system. In addition, collection management will be further optimised in accordance with international standards. Eye aims to increase the quality of data through tightening the guidelines and inspection of imports, supplementing missing data (possibly from external sources), and adhering to international standards.

Eye will optimise the user interface of CE Online for external (international) users, translate Dutch terms into English, and make collection information available via Linked Open Data (LOD) to promote the reuse of information and ensure data interchangeability between platforms.

Eye seeks to make its policy and practice regarding digital sustainability for third parties transparent and measurable. In 2018, Eye will apply for a CoreTrustSeal certification. Once Eye meets all the requirements, the CoreTrustSeal Data Repository certificate will be awarded in 2019. By becoming certified, Eye can demonstrate to external parties that it is a reliable, digitally sustainable, and accessible archive.

Preservation

Eye will investigate how non-traditional projects can best be registered and preserved. Expanded Cinema installations, VR/AR/MR projects, and digital presentation projects both online and on-site often contain components that do not fall into traditional categories of film and film-related collections. Eye aims to create standards for archiving its own (co)productions. The catalogue description format needs to be adapted and material delivery specifications must be formulated. Eye will be seeking advice from, and cooperation with, fellow institutions that have more experience in this area.

Acquisition

Eye will pay particular attention to the acquisition of relevant films, archives, and film-related material. Eye seeks to acquire titles and items that further enrich its core collection, fill gaps, and increase the possibility of presenting unique and special programmes. Because the Netherlands does not have a legal deposit system (the legal obligation for rights holders to deposit work) several titles from Dutch cinema are missing from the Eye collection. Eye will identify and acquire missing titles within the framework of available resources and staff.
Workington

Eye aims to reduce the inventory awaiting registration.

Continued growth of the analogue collection, particularly from donations, has created extra work. In the coming years, more than 20,000 recently received cans must be examined, selected, registered, barcoded, and deposited. An inventory of this stock—which also includes archives, posters, photographs, and other material—will be conducted with the help of volunteers under expert supervision. This material will eventually be made available once it has been digitised, preserved, or restored. In the case of several special collections, Eye will pursue opportunities to raise funds externally, for example through crowdfunding.

Eye aims to secure carriers infected with vinegar syndrome.

Inspection during the move to the new Collection Centre revealed that the number of film rolls and sound carriers affected by the vinegar syndrome is substantial. Presently, a total of 132,400 meters of film and 93,000 meters of magnetic audio tape are contaminated. The state of the material and the growing number of contaminated carriers require action. In the coming years, Eye will examine, select, and digitise or preserve this material.

Expertise expansion

Eye will further professionalise the restoration studios and provide appropriate training to its team of restorers in new and emerging disciplines. One of its priorities will be to increase expertise in the fields of sound restoration and colour correction ensuring that these activities can be performed in-house in the future.

Guide

Curatorial team

Eye seeks to further intensify its research into the collection.

Eye will continue to use two presentation strategies simultaneously: ‘open’ and curated. To reach the widest possible audience, Eye provides ‘open’ access to the collection; the user is free to decide what to see and how they want to (re)use the material. At the same time, a team of programmers and curators carefully select and present curated material, which provides the user with context and pathways to help appreciate the collection.

Eye will introduce a more collaborative approach to the largest collection, Dutch Film, which comprises two-fifths of the entire collection. Sharing their expertise, the curators of Silent Film, Experimental Film, Expanded Cinema, Amateur Film, Film-related Material, and Animation will each work with the Dutch Film collection.

Eye seeks to expand the curatorial team by hiring two new curators for Dutch Contemporary Film and International Film. The size of the Dutch Film collection (more than 20,000 titles) necessitates additional curation; therefore, a second curator who will specifically focus on Contemporary Dutch film will be appointed to this collection in due time. The International collection is currently the only collection without its own curator. Employing new curatorial staff, however necessary, requires additional funding.

Eye aims to further intensify its presentation practice to strengthen the collection as an organic whole in which each collection complements and provides context to the other. This applies to analogue and digital film, posters, photographs, archives, apparatus, sound, sheet music, books, magazines, installations, and other objects. Through the exchange and structural coordination of information between curators and programmers, all aspects of the collection will be shown in various forms of presentation.

Access to the collection

Eye strives to give the broadest possible access to its collection. In order to achieve this, more analogue films from the collection must be digitised. Currently, about 200 titles are processed each year. Digitisation often takes place at the request of the Presentation and Exhibitions departments, but can also be requested by external parties through the Archival Sales and Archival Loans departments. Digitisation is also attempted when the material’s poor condition requires it. With current staff and resources, the pace of digitisation will most likely remain steady in
coming years. Speeding up the digitisation process would require either a rearrangement of people and resources in the Collection department or additional funding.

Eye aims to continue its collaboration with the audiovisual field at both a national and international level to find effective solutions for restrictions on rights regarding online access to film heritage. Eye supports the proposal by the Association des Cinématheques Européennes (ACE) to maintain, further develop, and make the FORWARD system accessible to other European film archives. FORWARD is a semi-automated system in which the legal status of European audiovisual works, including so-called orphan works, can be determined.

Presentation projects

Eye will explore the possibilities of developing an Online Archive Portal to create additional and curated access to Dutch films. A large part of Eye’s digital films that do not have copyright restrictions has now been made available free of charge. In close consultation with the Dutch film industry, Eye aims to study the accessibility of Dutch film productions still protected by copyright to offer them in curated form, in one place and, where possible, at no charge.

Eye will seek external funding to replace the current 360° installation in the Panorama with a new immersive and interactive installation. Under the working title Eye Move, a major new pièce de résistance is being worked on, which will enable the visitor to search the Eye collection in a different way every time they visit. Like the 360°, this new installation will again provide high-tech access to the Eye film collection. Eye Move will use the latest techniques and software in the field of image recognition and image analysis and will be developed in close collaboration with the NWO SEMIA project, in which Eye is a partner.

Eye will explore new ways in which it can eventually employ Virtual Reality for the benefit of its collection. Eye also aims to optimally archive its own VR productions and co-productions, and will explore the possibilities of doing so in the coming years.

Eye seeks to expand the number of films it screens in the Pods and aims to place one or more Pods in locations outside Eye. In so doing, the public will be able to view films from the collection outside the museum building.

Major restoration projects

Eye aims to carry out two major restoration projects per year and to present them in both the museum building and at relevant international film festivals. ‘Major’ means a famous, classic film; a prestigious presentation; or an important international collaboration. These restoration projects will generate attention for the collection as a whole. They may also lead to new co-productive restoration, which in turn could increase the number of restoration projects in the future.

Pioneer

Exchange of expertise

Eye aspires to further evolve as an international, leading centre of expertise. The state-of-the-art Eye Collection Centre, which opened in 2016, facilitates this ambition. Eye aims to provide its broad knowledge and expertise in the areas of information management, storage, digitisation, collection management, restoration, and so on to fellow institutions at both a national level (via the network organisations AVA_Net, NDE, and CCDD) and international level (through ACE and FIAF, among others).

Eye aims to further optimise interactions with national and international laboratories in the fields of knowledge, expertise, and equipment. A recent example of such a collaboration is the Eye Filmmuseum & Hogehuis Digital Film Restoration Traineeship. Where appropriate, Eye will offer consulting services to commercial parties.

Academic activities

Eye will consolidate, and where possible, further develop its academic activities. A number of activities will be continued and further promoted, including the Chair in Film Heritage and Digital Film Culture at the University of Amsterdam, the Eye International Conference, the public lecture series This Is Film! Film Heritage in Practice, and the academic book series Framing Film. New initiatives, such as the Eye Artist and Scholar-in-Residence programme and the Eye Filmmuseum & Hogehuis Digital Film Restoration Traineeship, both launched in 2017, will need to be further embedded in the current practice and financial framework.

Research projects

Eye aims to remain a leader in the fields of film restoration, digitisation, and innovative methods of access by participating in various national and international projects. Such projects in the fields of Digital Humanities and preservation are necessary for the continued application of innovative methods of restoring, digitising, and providing access to the collection. Eye, in collaboration with national and international partners, will apply for Dutch and European subsidy grants to raise the necessary additional funds.

New programme

Eye intends to set up an Oral History programme. Eye is committed to collecting stories and personal accounts from an older generation of filmmakers and artists, securing them for future generations. In the first phase of the project, Eye will develop a standardised interview method combined with a workflow to process, preserve, and make accessible the video or sound recordings of these interviews. In this development phase, Eye will seek advice from fellow institutions that carry out similar projects.

Realisation of ambitions

The ambitions formulated in this Collection Policy largely fit within the financial framework set out in the Eye Policy 2017-2020. However, some ambitions can only be realised with extra financial support. These include the new nitrate vault, the inventory-awaiting-registration project, the expansion of the curatorial team, the eventual realisation of an Online Archive Portal, and the renewal of the 360° installation in the Panorama. In anticipation of the new policy period 2021-2024, Eye will seek additional funding to realise these specific ambitions.
Since 1988, the Hubert Bois Fund has supported filmmakers from countries where making independent artistic films is particularly difficult due to a lack of infrastructure or freedom of speech.


Measured on 1 September 2017.

For Materials in Motion section, page 46.


See: https://www.materiaalismovie.nl/.

See: https://sensorymovingimagearchive.humanities.uva.nl/.


For best practices, Eye will seek advice from the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. This institute has run an Oral History programme since 1989; and, since 2012, it has its own department for Oral History projects. See: http://www.oscars.org/oral-history/about.
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Collection Policy Plan

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Collection Policy Plan
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Illustration on front cover: Still from L'écrin du radjah (FR, 1906)

Illustration on back cover: Still from Le voyage sur Jupiter (FR, 1906)
COLLECTION POLICY

Eye Filmmuseum

COLLECTION POLICY