

A Zine of Quotes, Historical notes and reflections around Brazil's most important film preservation institution

By William Plotnick

Quotes from Nitrato (1974)

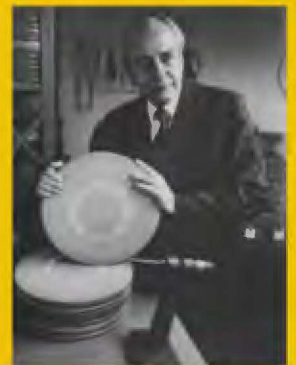
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Jean-Claude Bernadet: "I think that the cinemateca is concretely a cultural problem. It's part of the cultural problem of the country or of a certain kind of society. To the cinemateca, I put the problem of museums, and the problem of museums pertains to societal memory, something that every underdeveloped country holds in short supply. It refers to a culture that cannot support itself. The cinemateca reacts to this problem by presenting, in the manner of museology, an activity that has been neglected by the greater society - only due to the setbacks of this very society, which knows not how to honor its own history



Paulo Emilio Salles Gomes: "The problem is that when people envisioned the cost of a film archive, when they perceived how it was expensive to truly build a film archive, as it should be - with possibilities for conserving films, contracting the necessary materials, all of that - interest failed to grow."

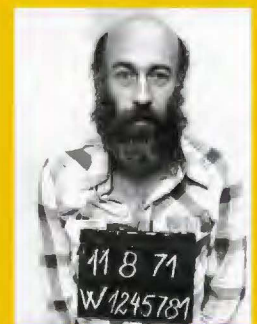


Paulo Emilio Salles Gomes: "Today there are more Cinematheques in Albania or in Portugal than here. We're not exactly at the zero mark, but rather halfway."

Ruda de Andrade: "The Cinemateca fulfilled, from 1954 to 1964, a very important role due to the enormous circulation of its films throughout Brazil."



Maurice Capovilla: "The people that came from Rio to São Paulo became quite connected to us. Glauber Rocha, Paulo Cesar Saraceni, Carlos Diegues, David Neves. Everyone moved a bit in orbit around the Cinemateca. The Cinemateca gave support as a specialized cultural entity to the movement led by these young guys. In this sense, it made a mark in terms of film culture, meaning, it was present at a decisive moment, which was the transition from the old cinema to Cinema Novo."



A Historical Timeline of the Cinemateca Brasileira



São Paulo's film library is disconnected from the museum of modern art, and the CB is established

1956



1957 → The CB Facility is destroyed by a nitrate film fire

The Sociedade Amigos da Cinemateca (SAC) is founded, a civil society whose purpose is to provide financial assistance to the CB.



1962

1969 → A 2nd fire takes place, destroying many documentaries on nitrate



A third fire occurs, leaving the institution in a desperate financial state.

1982



1988 → São Paulo Mayor Jânio Quadros allows the CB to move into an abandoned slaughterhouse in Vila Clementino. The building becomes listed as a Tourist heritage site.

The CB is incorporated into the Brazilian Ministry of Culture

2003



2008-2013 → In partnership with SAC, the Ministry of Culture begins to provide major financial support to CB, and its activities ramp up.

A 4th fire occurs, resulting in the loss of 1003 rolls of cellulose nitrate films (and 731 movie titles).

2016



2020 → At the outset of the Covid-19 Pandemic, the Ministry of Culture cuts off all funds for the CB and fires the staff. It remains out of operation today.