12th Image and Research Conference Girona (Spain) 20 – 23 November 2012

In the third week of November (from 20th to 23rd) a new edition of the Image and Research Conference was held, organised by the Centre for Image Research and Diffusion (CRDI) of the Girona City Council with the collaboration of the Association of Archivists of Catalonia. In that edition, around 150 people attended representing twelve different countries. The Image and Research Conference celebrated its twelfth year, and after 22 years we have become the benchmark event in Spain for professionals involved in photography and audiovisuals, mainly in the field of archival, preservation, history, and document management.

The Conference started on the 20th at the facilities of the Centre for Image Research and Diffusion with the completion of the workshop “Preparation of original photographs for digitization” by Angelica Soleiman, who obtained her Master’s degree in Photographic Preservation and Collections Management, at Ryerson University and at George Eastman House (Toronto, Canada – Rochester, NY, USA). The workshop aimed to look at, among other things, the reasons that justify digitisation, and the most common specific problems encountered during photographic processes in archives and collections, while proposing evaluation measures along with recommendations before and after the digitisation process. The workshop was repeated on 21st November, with 50 people attending.

On the 22nd and 23rd, the sessions for papers and presentations that make up the main event of the Conference took place in the Girona Conference Centre. To highlight some of the speakers we quote Howard Besser, Director of New York University’s Moving Image Archiving & Preservation master’s degree program with the paper “Preparing the Next Generation of Audiovisual Archivists: Lessons from New York University’s Moving Image Archiving & Preservation Program”. Augusto Pieroni, who teaches Photography History and Criticism at the University of Rome Sapienza, dedicated his talk to the analysis and interpretation of photographic work with the idea that interpretation is entailed by every use of photography. Pau Maynés, a photographer conservator, made a series of reflections on the history of the restoration and conservation of photographs from the seventies to the present. Lastly, Carles Mitja, Professor at the Image Processing and Multimedia Technology Centre (CITM) at Polytechnics University (UPC) took us through the various stages in the digitisation of photographs with regard to infrastructures and procedures.

In the experiences session we cite the speakers who took part of the Conference. Richard Wright, the archive preservation specialist in the BBC Research and Development department in London, presented the European project for digital preservation with audiovisual Prestoprime as a director of this project. Nathalie Doury, general manager of Parisienne de Photographie, the company in charge of digitisation and management of reproduction rights of the City of Paris’ photographic and iconographic collections, talked about her experience in managing this collection. She mainly focused on the commercial strategies. The commercial issue, but focused on audiovisual materials, was also the main subject of the paper of Sue Malden, Media Archive Consultant and chair of the Federation of Commercial Audio Visual Archives (FOCAL International). David Iglesias, from CRDI, presented a conceptual information map to design the photographic digital archive. Lastly, Didier Grange, an archivist from the Mu-
uniporal Archive in Genève, explained its strategies to preserve the video funds of the city. The program gives also special importance to debate and participation. On the 22nd the round table took place entitled “What is the Archives position in front of legal uncertainty of mere photographs?”, involving Jordi Lluís Forgas (Judge), Josep Matas (Lawyer), Lluís Salom (representative of the photographers from UPIFC), Joan Boadas (Archivist at CRDI), and David Iglésias (Rapporteur of the on-line debate, at Facebook).
Concerning the Europeana Photography Project, some publicity was made. People could get the leaflet, of which there were 75 copies, at the reception. In the opening session, Joan Boadas, Director of CRDI, mentioned the project and did a short explanation about its mission. In addition, Ms. Nathalie Doury, from Parisienne de Photographie, mentioned the project during the presentation of her paper. The two-day meeting in Girona was a good opportunity for all of us to be in contact with colleagues with different backgrounds but a shared interest: our photographic and audio-visual heritage.

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Girona City Council