

Eesti Filmiarhiiv (Tallinn)



>> www.filmi.arhiiv.ee The main task of the Estonian Film

Archives, according to the Act of Archives, is to collect, preserve and provide access to the national film, photo and audio heritage. Collecting and preserving film heritage started in 1935. After the II WW governing the archival matters was directed to Moscow. Access to most of the pre-war films was restricted (the first film of Estonian origin was released in 1912). The collection policy, dictated by Moscow, provided a collection of newsreels and documentaries but the originals of feature films were preserved at Belye Stolby near Moscow where these are kept until present.

The Estonian Film Archives was founded in 1971 and it started to collect press photos and sound recordings as well. According to the Act of Archives (1998), EFA is part of the Estonian National Archives which is a public archives – accessible to all users. EFA's collections can be used for studies, scientific and research, as well as film-making activities according to the Copyright Act. In cooperation with schools, museums Estonian Filmmakers' Society EFA prepares retrospective film programmes, which were extremely popular during the "singing revolution" (1987-1991) period. EFA has independently produced two videofilms "Estonian Republic in 1918-1994" and "Estonia in the II WW" based on archival material with English and German subtitles. EFA's collections consist of over 8000 titles of films (mostly newsreels, documentaries, short films, commercials), 500 000 photos and 10 000 sound recordings. The filmreels are situated in three different depositories in Tallinn, Tartu and Rakvere. The originals are kept in Rakvere and Tartu in climate-controlled depositories. Since 1994 EFA is housed in the former building of the Soviet Army's Tallinn Garrison. The former prison was partly reconstructed as office-rooms, lab and storage. In the last years EFA has been busy creating a database – FIS – for films and sound recordings which gives online access to newsreels from 1920-1998, and a database for photos – FOTIS – which as a joint database also gives access to photos from other archives as well. About 415 000 digitised items can be viewed in FOTIS. Last year EFA completed major EU funded digitisation projects

wherein 700 hours of videos, 30 hours of nitrate film and 400 000 photos were digitised. Currently we are working on improving the databases, planning next digitisation projects, taking part in the European Film Gateway project and serving customers.