

The Micheletti Foundation Film and Media Library *By Pier Paolo Poggio*

The Micheletti Foundation was set up in 1981 on the initiative of its founder, the entrepreneur Luigi Micheletti, a former partisan of the Italian resistance movement during WWII, as well as a tireless, and socially committed intellectual. Since the 1990s, the Foundation has taken on the ambitious project of creating the “Eugenio Battisti” Museum of Industry and Labor, currently the most important in its field in Italy.

The patrimony of the Micheletti Foundation is immense. Along with an extensive archives of paper fonds, it holds a substantial library, a specialized newspaper and periodical library, an iconographic collection, a photographic archives, a film library and finally, an ample collection of objects exhibited in its museum.

The film library, containing more than 7 thousand film cans, mostly in 35 mm format, is made up of many collections that still need to be inventoried.

There are about one thousand film cans from the Milan Cinestabilimento of the Donato Brothers, of which no list exists at present, varying from silent films from the beginning of the 20th century to industrial documentaries, newsreels, commercials and many others up to the 1960s. About 3500 cans come from the production Gamma Film of Roberto Gavioli, a Milanese company and European leader in the creation of cartoons from the 1940s to the 1970s and beyond.

In this collection, it is important to mention more than 2 thousand “Caroselli” produced by Gamma Film (both cartoons and live shows) between 1957 and 1977, various animated films and many industrial documentaries and films.

For both collections, it is important to underline that each section still has the actual machinery used to produce the films and the technical records (handbooks, advertising posters of the suppliers and original drawings of the cartoons).

Another fond includes about one thousand film cans from the Milan Company Cine Executive TV of Remo Grisanti, camera operator in the 1950s and 1960s and subsequently owner of the company. The majority of these records are industrial documentaries that record the company’s activity and the productions carried out in the 1970s and in the 1980s on behalf of several important Italian companies.

The media library includes an assorted group of records and audio-visual materials using various media, apart from the films organized in the film library. In addition to the acquisition of recent footage with digital technologies, the two central sections of the media library are made up of a sound archives and a video library. The sound archives holds about 300 items including spools, audiocassettes and discs.

Worth mentioning is the remarkable group of oral testimonies about the history of the province of Brescia , as well as the collection of recordings of events organized by the Micheletti Foundation and the Museo dell'Industria e del Lavoro . Also of interest is the collection of vintage discs coming from the Cinestabilimento Donato.

The video library contains about 1 thousand videocassettes (VHS and other formats). Among the series is a collection about the Lombardy Region with dozens of didactic videos regarding history, society and economy in Lombardy

There are many videos produced by various organizations in Brescia in addition to those produced directly by the Museo and its supporting foundations (Fondazione Luigi Micheletti and Fondazione Civiltà Bresciana).

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