

2026 FIAF FILM RESTORATION SUMMER SCHOOL PROGRAM

Film restoration online theory course: distance learning, April 30th to June 11th (on Thursdays)

Welcome meeting: Bologna, June 20th

Il Cinema Ritrovato film festival and Restoration lectures: Bologna, Cineteca facilities, from June 20th to 28th

Restoration workshops: Bologna, L'Immagine Ritrovata, June 29th to July 10th



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1. INTRODUCTION

PAST AND FUTURE SUMMER SCHOOLS

Cineteca di Bologna, **L'Immagine Ritrovata**, the **Fédération Internationale des Archives du Film (FIAF)**, and the **Association des Cinémathèques Européennes (ACE)** are delighted to announce that the 11th FIAF Film Restoration Summer School will take place in Bologna in the summer of 2026. These institutions have come together once again to renew and strengthen their long-standing cooperation, a partnership that aims to promote the spread of film preservation and conservation throughout the international community.

The FIAF Film Restoration Summer School was held annually from 2007 to 2010, and every two years since 2012 (with the exception of 2020). In 2013, for the first time, the project moved from Bologna to Asia, taking place at the National Museum of Singapore to offer film restoration training in another region of the world. Following the success in **Singapore**, the Summer School was held in **Mumbai** in 2015 in collaboration with the Film Heritage Foundation; in **Buenos Aires** in 2017 in collaboration with CINAIN – Cinemateca y Archivo de la Imagen Nacional; and in **Mexico City** in 2019 in collaboration with UNAM (Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México). These four international editions were also supported by The Film Foundation. Since the first Summer School in Mumbai in 2015, the Film Heritage Foundation has organized a Film Preservation & Restoration Workshop every year and is celebrating its tenth edition in 2025 in Bhubaneswar.

In Bologna, a total of 379 participants have taken part in previous editions, representing 75 countries, which we are proud to list: Algeria, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Bangladesh, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, China, Chile, Colombia, Croatia, Cuba, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Egypt, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hong Kong, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Korea, Kosovo, Latvia, Lebanon, Lithuania, Luxembourg, North Macedonia, Malawi, Malaysia, Mexico, Montenegro, Morocco, Myanmar, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, the Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, Thailand, the Netherlands, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, the United Kingdom, Uruguay, and the United States.

Following the success of previous Summer Schools, FIAF, ACE, Cineteca di Bologna, and L'Immagine Ritrovata are pleased to announce a new edition designed for specialists, film archive professionals, and students. During the selection process, priority will be given to candidates affiliated with FIAF and ACE member institutions.

IL CINEMA RITROVATO FILM FESTIVAL

Film restoration gives us the fantastic opportunity to bring great films back to the big screen and to the audience. Presenting and exhibiting restored films is a key part of the restoration process. For this reason the FIAF Film Restoration Summer School project takes place mainly in Bologna, arm in arm with Il Cinema Ritrovato film festival, a true meeting place for film researchers and experts (<http://festival.ilcinemaritrovato.it/en/>).

In 2025, the XXXIX edition of Il Cinema Ritrovato showcased 454 films—from 35mm and 16mm prints to restored masterpieces and rare hidden gems from around the globe—screened non-stop from 9 a.m. to 1 a.m. Festival-goers from 57 countries purchased 5,000 accreditations, contributing to a total audience of 140,000 participants.

The connection between learning about film restoration and an event such as Il Cinema Ritrovato film festival is very strong: while it is crucial to put restoration into practice and to learn how to restore a film, it is equally as important to understand how films, restored by different archives institutions, major film studios and productions companies, can be shown to today's public.

TARGETS AND FINAL AIM

The project's main objective is to teach and update participants on how to digitally restore and preserve a film through the combination of expert handcraft and new digital technologies.

Participants will have the chance to experience everyday work in a highly specialized laboratory; they will follow every step of the process through all departments, from beginning to end.

During the 2026 FIAF Film Restoration Summer School participants will be expected to develop and practice a specific set of skills such as operating all digital equipment in a laboratory; following a complete digital restoration workflow; performing all the primary necessary operations needed to restore a film; evaluating the state of conservation of a film and choosing the best practice to restore and preserve it.

After completing the FIAF Film Restoration Summer School participants will:

- know how a film can be restored using new digital technologies in a modern, flexible work environment
- be able to manage a complete restoration workflow
- know how to choose the best source to restore a film and have it digitized from film support to 35mm, DCP and file broadcasting
- be able to discuss each step of a restoration project in detail with a restoration laboratory
- know the various approaches to restore a film
- know how to manage a film restoration project budget

Finally, past editions of the FIAF Film Restoration Summer School have proved to be an excellent meeting ground for people working in the same field. It represents a great opportunity for participants to initiate collaborations on possible future restoration projects.

2. PROGRAM

FILM REPAIR AND DIGITAL RESTORATION

The FIAF Film Restoration Summer School is dedicated to teaching manual and digital techniques for the restoration of film heritage. While digital technologies have a well-established role in the contemporary film industry, their importance in the restoration of films has been somewhat neglected as a teaching/learning experience.

At the L'Immagine Ritrovata laboratory, participants will follow the key steps of the film restoration process: from identification to manual film repair, from film scanning to digital restoration and colour correction, and from sound digitization to final sound restoration. Since the laboratory opened a photographic digitization department in 2024, a section of the training will also be dedicated to this practice.

A THREE STEP COURSE

The 2026 FIAF Film Restoration Summer School is structured along three main course steps:

Film restoration online theory course: distance learning, April 30th to June 11th (on Thursdays)

Il Cinema Ritrovato film festival and Restoration lectures: Bologna, Cineteca facilities, from June 20th to 28th

Restoration workshops: Bologna, L'Immagine Ritrovata, June 29th to July 10th

1. Film restoration online course: distance learning

This online distance learning course has been conceived with the idea of offering the FIAF Restoration Summer School students an historical, technical and ethical overview of the Film Restoration discipline (definition, film materials, techniques, reconstruction, digital technologies and methodology) before attending the festival, meeting professionals and training at L'Immagine Ritrovata laboratory. It has been discussed with and enriched by the FIAF Technical Commission members and correspondents.

The program will begin two months before the start of classes in Bologna. Participants will receive weekly theoretical lessons, available for download on L'Immagine Ritrovata's cloud platform every Thursday from April 30 to June 11, which they can study at their convenience.

2. Theory lectures and Il Cinema Ritrovato film festival: meetings with experts

The first week will be entirely devoted to the XL edition of Il Cinema Ritrovato film festival, Cineteca di Bologna's main international event. Since 1986, the festival has been investigating the most remote territories of cinema history, screening the best in "Recovered and Restored Films" from archives around the world. Some screenings will be part of the FIAF Film Restoration Summer School's program. Daily meetings of one hour or more with international specialists will be included in the schedule. During the festival week meetings will tackle more general issues, such as film house and archive management, the conservation and preservation of film heritage, cataloguing and other non-film issues. Meetings will also focus on film restoration theory. They will deal with working in a film restoration laboratory and analysing specific pieces of restored works. These meetings will sometimes introduce the two-week long topics at the lab.

3. Restoration practice

During the third part of the course participants will be supervised by international experts and laboratory staff as they put into practice what they have learned during their distance online course and first week of theory at the festival.

Over the course of two weeks, participants will gain hands-on experience working across the departments of each laboratory, dedicating most of their time to practicing a variety of restoration techniques. Introductory plenary lessons will be provided prior to the practical sessions. The program includes 7 hours per day of a combination of lectures and training, for a total of 10 days.

Each department will accommodate a maximum of 5 participants. This is considered the right ratio of students per piece of equipment to allow each student the possibility of interacting directly with the teaching staff.

THE LABORATORY

Participants will be divided into groups and will work in each of the laboratory's departments:

- Film identification
- Film repair
- Chemical treatment
- Film comparison
- Film scanning and telecine
- Digital restoration
- Colour correction
- Sound scanning and sound restoration
- Mastering and Digital Cinema
- Data and Network management and back-up strategies
- Digitization and restoration of still photographs

TRAINING SUBJECTS

Film Identification	This very first step involves the identification, study and analysis of film materials, different elements (negative, positive, intermediate), trademarks, edge codes and marks, shape, and size perforation, etc.
Film Repair	Film handling and inspection: how to fix tears and breaks using adhesive film tape; analysis of old splices; restoring splices by hand with cement; repairing film to prepare it for cleaning and scanning or printing; cleaning of film nitrate, triacetate, and polyester both manually and with an ultrasonic cleaning machine.
Chemical treatment	Overview on different film base, their related types of decay and the chemical treatments used for fixing different issues to temporarily restore the mechanical functionality which allows the material to be duplicated without suffering any further damage. Understanding and practising how to develop a specific workflow for chemical deteriorated film and choosing the best treatment.
Film Comparison	Comparing the different sources available frame by frame, along with the analysis of various non filmic documents to understand and choose the right version for the restoration, using the best and the most complete elements.
Film Scanning and telecine	Scanning and telecine of a motion picture image from 35mm and 16mm negative, positive, and intermediate materials to a digital file.
Digital Restoration	Digital treatment of images using dedicated software to eliminate physical damage to the film resulting from usage and the manual handling of film, as well as the restoration of visual clarity of images by tackling issues such as grain, instability, and flicker without affecting the original material. Digital restoration has a wide range of tools and possibilities; therefore, it is vital for archivists to know what can be done in order to set their specific restoration workflow.
Colour Correction	Film colour correction and colour fade restoration. From Tint and Tone to Technicolor. Conforming, Mastering, Colour references. A focus on the main colour space and the new HDR technologies.

Sound Scanning and Restoration

Sound technology history: 150 years of sound on film.
Sound transfers: optical, magnetic and soundtrack scanning.
The sound restoration workflow: from analogue to digital.

Mastering and Digital Cinema

Quality Control, finalization, and export of output formats: Digital Cinema Packages, video files, HDR mastering and workflow.

Data and Network Management and Back-up Strategies

The structure of a restoration lab, which technologies to use and the points of interest to focus on. Management of the network infrastructure, storage, data and metadata management and how to co-ordinate the read and write flow.

Analysis of the most common methods for long-term archiving, examples of the use of the most common formats by analysing the types of LTO and their creation by bash-scripting.

Tools for controlling and monitoring the state of the infrastructure, detecting bottlenecks and avoiding them.

Photographic Department

Digitization of photographic materials and other printed supports.

Discussion of different methodologies of capture and post-production according to different supports and dimensions; including support handling, metadata management, quality assessment and quality control.

Characteristics and variables of export formats and how these define the use and utility of the resulting images.

3. PARTICIPANTS

The training is conceived for an international target group and will be taught by an international panel of experts from different countries. The 2026 FIAF Film Restoration Summer School is aimed at staff working at film archives, institution, or organization, as well as right holders and students in the field of Cinema. The aim is to foster a shared knowledge in the field for current and future generations and world film archives.

All classes will be taught in **English**.

Participants will be selected according to their C.V., commitment, and motivation.

The course will be divided into different levels and participants will be grouped according to their skills and expertise according to personal C.V. and experience in that field.

A special commission composed of representatives from FIAF, ACE, and Cineteca di Bologna will examine all applications. The commission will officially release the names of the 40 selected participants via e-mail and on the website of L'Immagine Ritrovata and those of its partners on March 6th.

4. PRACTICAL INFORMATION

The participation fee is **€4,000** and includes:

- Registration and festival accreditation
- 21 nights of accommodation in a shared room (check-in: June 20th; check-out: July 11th)
- 17 days of lunch

Participants who prefer to arrange their own accommodation are eligible for a corresponding discount. A surcharge applies for those requesting a single room.

Lunch will be provided daily from June 21st to 27th, and on weekdays (Monday to Friday) from June 29th to July 10th.

If the number of applications exceeds the available places, participants will be selected through a selection process. **The list of selected participants will be announced on March 9th.**

Selected participants must confirm their attendance by submitting the required fee no later than **March 27th**. Failure to meet this deadline will result in the loss of their place, which will then be offered to the next eligible candidate on the waiting list.

NOTES ABOUT SCHOLARSHIPS

FIAF and ACE will be awarding scholarships. Should additional institutions participate, candidates will be promptly informed of any updates or announcements.

5. DEADLINES

2026 DATES	WHERE	WHAT
February 15 th		Deadline for application form submission
February 16 th - 29 th		A special commission composed of FIAF, ACE and Cineteca di Bologna members will examine all application forms and select 40 participants.
March 9 th		Announcement of participants' names. All candidates will receive a communication via e-mail concerning the selection results. The list of selected participants will be published on the website of L'Immagine Ritrovata and those of its partners
March 27 th		Deadline for payment of registration fee
April 30 th - June 11 th	Online	Distance Learning Course
June 15 th		Definitive program of the theory lessons, names of international tutors
June 20 th	Bologna (Cineteca facilities)	Welcome Meeting 2026
June 20 th - 28 th	Bologna (Cineteca facilities)	Il Cinema Ritrovato film festival and – from the 25 th – the Film Restoration theory classes
June 29 th - July 10 th	Bologna (L'Immagine Ritrovata)	Film restoration workshops
July 10 th	Bologna	Closing day and delivery of the training certificates

Note on Photochemical restoration

In 2022, the historic and specialized film preservation laboratory Haghefilm (based in Waddinxveen, The Netherlands) became part of L'Immagine Ritrovata group.

Haghefilm can count on a cutting-edge printing and processing hub, composed of four processing lines: three lines dedicated to 35mm (two of which are for colored films, one for black and white) and one line dedicated to 16mm.

Due to its high specialization, starting from January 1st, 2024, all photochemical processes for L'Immagine Ritrovata group will be carried out exclusively at our Haghefilm branch.

Our Haghefilm facilities can be visited through a 360° virtual tour:

<http://haghefilm-virtualtour.nl/>

For further information contact:

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