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## NFSA selects DFT's Scanity for national archive project

National Film and Sound Archive of Australia will use DFT's motion picture film scanner to digitize its extensive holdings of 16mm film in the national audiovisual collection.

Posted on 31 May 2013 by Melody Uy

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**Darmstadt, Germany** - Digital Film Technology GmbH, a leading provider of high-end film and digital post production solutions that preserve, manage, and deliver pictures, has announced a major sale to the National Film and Sound Archive of Australia (NFSA). The NFSA has acquired DFT's new motion picture film scanner Scanity, for the digitisation of its extensive holdings of 16mm film in the national audiovisual collection. This new equipment will add to the NFSA's existing capability for scanning small-gauge film, and complement its commitment to traditional photomechanical film preservation.

Introduced in 1923, 16mm film is one of the most common film gauges, favoured particularly by independent filmmakers, documentary producers, and as a format for non-theatrical distribution. The national audiovisual collection holds 91,000 16mm titles – more than all other film formats combined.

Michael Loebenstein, CEO of the NFSA said, "16mm film, once a format to liberate filmmakers from the confines of industrial production and the first democratic distribution medium, has become the poor cousin of legacy formats. As the stewards of the Australian screen heritage, NFSA makes a substantial investment in the future accessibility of an important part of our collective audiovisual memory. The timing is fortunate as in 2013 we celebrate the centenary of Film Australia and Australian documentary film; a legacy that to a great extent survives in the 16mm format."

Traditional photochemical film solutions are being phased out and becoming more expensive, with limited suppliers, so scanning 16 mm materials is a key element in a long-term preservation strategy. Scanned materials are not discarded; they continue to be preserved in their physical formats, in optimised cool storage.

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The Scanity scanner selected by the NFSA is being supplied via Future Reality Ltd, Australia, following a tender process and an extensive period of research and market-testing. The selection criteria included the ability to handle fragile, shrunken film, and efficient scanning of soundtracks and images at high resolution; crucial requirements for archival digitisation.

Simon Carter, sales director for Digital Film Technology GmbH said, "Scanity will greatly enhance the film ingest capability for the NFSA's ageing collection, preserving the true value of this historical content for future generations."

He adds, "Delivering high quality data capture from archival 16mm material is fraught with a range of complex considerations predominantly physical damage like dust, abrasions and shrinkage, which can only be managed by the correct technology. The real-time Scanity is designed specifically to handle just these concerns and deliver the best possible 2K or 4K data files in a fast and yet controlled manner. Digital Film Technology GmbH is delighted that the NFSA, has after an extensive evaluation period, chosen the Scanity for this historical 16mm film capture."

Ian Gilmour, Head of Technology Strategies at the NFSA said, "The DFT Scanity performs very well in the gentle handling of fragile, shrunken film and efficient scanning of soundtracks and images at high resolution."

Loebenstein, concluded, "This scanning equipment will also potentially increase the NFSA's capability to support digital screenings of the national collection at both the NFSA's Arc Cinema in Canberra, and its regional touring screening programs, and offers new opportunities for restoring and re-releasing historical titles for the broadcast, home entertainment and broadband markets. The implementation of 16mm digital workflows also moves us further towards future support for the digitisation of 35mm film."

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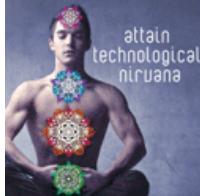
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