Conservation and preservation of the gelatin dry plate negatives collection by Jaan Riet

Kadi Sikka
Film Archives, Preservation department / Senior official

BAAC conference 2015: Echoes of the Past, Insights to the Future 28.10.2015
More than 8050 titles
FILM ARCHIVES – SOUND

- Sound recordings (discs, tapes, cassettes)
FILM ARCHIVES – PHOTOS

- More than 500,000 described photographs
Film Archives, gelatin dry plate negative (15x10 cm) by Jaan Riet, EFA.215.3-10201
Film Archives, gelatin dry plate negative (12x9 cm) by Jaan Riet, EFA.215.2-10295
Film Archives, gelatin dry plate negative (12x16 cm) by Jaan Riet, EFA f 215
Number of photographers in Estonia, 1843–1895
From: Liibek, Tõnis. Fotograafiakultuur Eestis 1839–1895, p. 143
Writer Anton Hansen Tammsaare, 12.02.1903. Photo by Jaan Riet. Film Archives, EFA.215.2-2490
Description: A man with his family, 1912.
Estonian National Museum, Fk 184:73 (gelatin print by Friedrich Kochtitsky)
A man with his family, 1912. Estonian National Museum, Fk 184:73 (gelatin dry plate by F. Kochtitsky)
Four men, 1920. Estonian National Museum, ERM Fk 2133:183 (gelatin dry plate by Jakob Bockmann)
Four men, 1920. Estonian National Museum, ERM Fk 2133:183 (gelatin dry plate by J. Bockmann)
Photographic collection of the Film Archives

- Other supports (film, paper)
- Glass support – Riet's collection
- Glass support – other
JAAN RIET

- 1873–1952
- Studied in Tallinn and Germany
- Studio in Viljandi (1896–1948)

Jaan Riet, 1897.

Film Archives, EFA.215.4-143
COLLECTION

- Largest collection of glass plate negatives in Estonia – more than 70,000 negatives
- Time span: datings between 1896–1948
- Example of photographer's workflow
  - Studio
  - Documentation, archiving, registration books
  - Letters
  - Equipment (cameras, tools, etc.)
Assistants in Riet's studio. Gelatin dry plate by Jaan Riet, Film Archives, EFA f 215
Assistants in Riet's studio, 1930s. Gelatin print by Jaan Riet, Viljandi Museum, VMF 439-190
Silver gelatin dry plate negative (stereo) by Jaan Riet. Film Archives, EFA f 215
Jaan Riet's photographic equipment. Photo Museum. Photo by Tanel Verk, 2014
Confirmation class, 1918. Jaan Riet's studio in Viljandi. Gelatin dry plate by Jaan Riet, Film Archives, EFA.215.6-738
Storage system in the attic of Riet's photographic studio in Viljandi, 2014. Photo by Kadi Sikka
Storage system in the attic of Riet's photographic studio in Viljandi, 2014. Photo by Kadi Sikka
Jaan Riet's registration book, 1909. Film Archives, EFA f 215
Jaan Riet's registration book. Film Archives, EFA f 215
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>1898</th>
<th>1899</th>
<th>1900</th>
<th>1901</th>
<th>1902</th>
<th>1903</th>
<th>1904</th>
<th>1905</th>
<th>1906</th>
<th>1907</th>
<th>1908</th>
<th>1909</th>
<th>1910</th>
<th>1911</th>
<th>1912</th>
<th>1913</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>92</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>120</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>131</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>102</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>313</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>195</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>164</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>120</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>157</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>182</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>124</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>126</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>85</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>52</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td>38</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>63</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Jaan Riet's registration book: number of plates. Film Archives, EFA f 215
Jaan Riet's registration books: July 1909. Film Archives, EFA f 215
Retouching tools. Tallinn City Museum/Photo Museum. Photo by Tanel Verk, 2014
Jaan Riet's signing tools. Tallinn City Museum/Photo Museum. Photo by Tanel Verk, 2014
Jaan Riet's signing tools. Tallinn City Museum/Photo Museum. Photo by Tanel Verk, 2014
Jaan Riet's stamp. Tallinn City Museum/Photo Museum. Photo by Tanel Verk, 2014
Jaan Riet's stamp on the glass negative. Film Archives, EFA f 215
Jaan Riet's retouching table and an example of pencil retouching on the glass negative.
Tallinn City Museum/Photo Museum, Film Archives, EFA f 215
Product of Estonian dry plate negatives factory, called „Balta“.
Tallinn City Museum/Photo Museum, TLM 18858 KF 375
COLLECTION MANAGEMENT

- Identifying = Understanding
- Cooperation with other institutions
- Documentation of deteriorations
- Storage (special design for broken plates)
- Documentation of finishing techniques
- Digitising
Examples of finishing techniques on Jaan Riet's glass negatives
Example of describing glass negatives
Conservation process
CHALLENGES

- Storage
- ID of finishing techniques
- Digitising
INSIGHTS to the future

- Crowdsourcing – registration books
- Ajapaik.ee – street views and landscapes
- Facial recognition system – for portraits
Thank you!

Kadi Sikka
Film Archives, Preservation department / Senior official
Kadi.Sikka@ra.ee

BAAC conference 2015: Echoes of the Past, Insights to the Future
28.10.2015