

## **Inspection Procedure for Carlos Alonso's "Gran Film del Uruguay" films.**

**Objective:** The objective of the following document is to establish the workflow based on good practices, clear rules which can guarantee the correct handling, organization, integrity and preservation of the films.<sup>1</sup>

**Grounds:** It is of vital importance to preserve the integrity of the films which will be examined due to the fact that they have heritage value and some of them are unique and therefore, irreplaceable.

**Scope:** All nitrocellulose base films from Carlos Alonso's collection which mention Uruguay departments and those which have not been identified yet, stored at Cinemateca Uruguay's vault for nitrocellulose films.

### **Relocation:**

The plastic containers which contain the films will be relocated to Cinemateca Uruguay's vault for nitrocellulose<sup>2</sup> films, located at Ruta 8, Brig. Gral. Lavalleja Km.16, Canelones, to the specifically conditioned area at Archivo Nacional de la Imagen y la Palabra -SODRE (National Archive of Image and word/ANIP), located at Sarandí 444, Montevideo, where the inspection work will take place. A maximum of 10 plastic containers will be relocated at a time, so as not to overload the work space or the warehouse. Once the inspection is completed, they will be returned to Cinemateca Uruguay's vault.

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<sup>1</sup> AMO, Alfonso del. Clasificar para preservar; p. 89

<sup>2</sup> AMO, Alfonso del. Clasificar para preservar; p. 92

The plastic containers will be relocated and examined in the order they appear on Cinemateca's inventory. Each time a container leaves the vault and arrives at ANIP it will be registered by keeping a record of dates and with a signature from Cinemateca and from Cine Casero.

Data to be registered on the relocation form:

Identification code of designated plastic containers

Date and time of exit from Cinemateca

Date and time of arrival at ANIP- SODRE

Date and time of exit from ANIP- SODRE

Date and time of return to Cinemateca

### **Setting up the inspection:**

Place: (specify place, location inside the building, name, floor, address)

On this stage everything related with the inspection must be prepared to avoid any interruptions due to lack of supplies.

The spaces for the inspection will be: shooting table and work table. Both must be wiped with isopropyl alcohol using a lint free cloth, to avoid accumulation of dust or garbage such as glue or tape.

Before starting the inspection, the work table must be clean and clear, to guarantee the correct handling of the films and to avoid contamination.

Avoid food and drinks. There musn't be food or drinks on work surfaces.

To begin the inspection the following tools must be available:

light table

35mm removable reels

35mm cores

Tapes

35mm fusion splicer

Film ruler to measure length/duration

Scissors, cutter, pliers

35 mm Leader tape

100 perforation length 35mm leader tape (to measure contraction)

Lint free cloth

Rewinder

Clean gloves

Mask

Lab coat

Rubber pear

Compressed air

Charged tablet (device to fill the inspection form)

Charged cell phone (device to take photos)

Notebook

New plastic container and empty label (for emergency replacements)

The tools must be organized as shown in the image (see anex)

## **Procedure:**

- 1) Put on the lab coat, gloves, lab goggles and mask. Given that the film can be damaged, contact must be avoided as some substances might be toxic or produce skin irritation. Furthermore, we guarantee the integrity of the films by not leaving any finger prints or skin grease.
- 2) Check that the shooting table is clear and that the white paper employed to take the photographs is clean and stainless. Otherwise change paper.
- 3) At the end of the day, check condition of all equipment such as the light table, cell phone and tablet. Make sure to charge them if necessary for the following inspection.

## **General considerations about the inspection**

The inspection refers to the action and effect of checking and determining the condition of the films, based on observation and note taking of specific information. It will be done manually. It is about the physical exploration done with the naked eye in order to identify considerable physical characteristics and specific of each material. The aim is to know its content and condition of preservation as well as to establish necessary actions towards a future digitalization and recommendations for its preservation.

The inspection of the plastic container must be started and finished by the same person. The inspection of each container can take approximately 4 hours of work.

The film will be **played only once**<sup>3</sup>. The direction of the film reel will be respected.

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<sup>3</sup> AMO, Alfonso del. Clasificar para preservar; p. 22,88

We will examine and keep a record of **technical aspects of the structure** and everything related to its condition of **preservation**. Furthermore, we will take pictures of the process and the **frames** which are representative of the content of the film and of interest for research and cataloging.

All information obtained from the inspection will be added to the container's memory and its identification number assigned by Institutions SODRE-Cinemateca in the corresponding technical forms.

Notes: the assessment of the production, type of material, duration and integrity will be carried out on a second stage of analysis, consulting the collected information.

Reference materials and guidelines for the practical work to be considered during the inspection.

- 1) Printed inspection form (to verify entries)
- 2) On the work space, keep a printed copy of *Classify to preserve* by Alfonso Del Am, as a manual and guide for immediate check. Specifically, sections 4.121 Negative – Positive / Transparent – Opaque; 4.121.1 Marginal mark; 4.121.2 – Damage; 4.122 windows, frame and reproduced perforations.
- 3) Identification guide for film manufactured by Kodak (year of manufacturing)<sup>4</sup>
- 4) Check web Film Colors: Edge Codes and Identification<sup>5</sup>
- 5) Check Argentine Nitrate's web index. In section **Techniques** there are specific examples (geographic proximity) of marginal marks, windows, splices, decomposition, etc., which can be used as complement.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> AMO, Alfonso del. Clasificar para preservar; p. 60

<sup>5</sup> AMO, Alfonso del. Clasificar para preservar; p. 74

<sup>6</sup> Cfr Del Amo, A (2006) Clasificar para preservar p.143. On section A3.41 – Working with materials of laminated nitrate. Notes: safety when working with cellulose nitrate, identification of media: section 2.512; recommendation “avoid use of engine or active electrical device which can produce sparkles due to alternating magnetic fields; not even on the base of the outlet to get electrical power. Ventilation is essential. Gases released during decomposition can be toxic and if they accumulate in a closed room, they could become explosive. There should be a *day warehouse* for the archive, so that the films which are being investigated, examined or reproduced could be attended. Here only the film which is being examined would be placed. About the relocation of the structure: International protocol for the transportation of hazardous goods defines nitrocellulose film as *flammable solids* (non explosive). It is

6) *Physical Characteristics of Early Films as Aids to Identification* de Harold Brown, Camille Blot-Wellens.<sup>7</sup>

7) Keep a notebook at hand for any observation that may come up during inspection which may not be contemplated on the inspection form (questions, exceptions, irregularities, suspicion, etc.).

## **inspection**

Take the item to be examined from the storage area designated for the project, check that it is registered on the relocation form to confirm that it belongs to Carlos Alonso's collection. Place it on the shooting table.

**Fill out an inspection form.** One form for each container and for each film/content must be used. This form will be filled throughout the process.

The inspection form enables the identification of the material, its cataloging and record of its condition.

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classified as N. 1324 under group 4.1,3c. The film boxes will travel inside a hard cardboard container or metal sheet, with a hazardous material label on. ”

<sup>7</sup> Cfr Del Amo, A (2006) *Clasificar para preservar* p.147. “A3.15 – Rolling up for storage. Evenness is the most important feature in any kind of rolling up. Appearance of differences in pressure or in placement between spires can lead to film damage. Differences in tension during winding will produce differences in pressure and a gap between the following spires. This gap will accumulate steam where the film will have to go through. Winding will be carried out at once and at a steady pace. There are winding machines which allow regulation of tension in rolling. However, for a skillful operator getting this result with a horizontal blade winding machine, is absolutely possible. The recommendation to rewind all film after use and before its new storage stems from this need for evenness. The film must be fully rewinded (from end to beginning) and carried out at once. Any changes in rolling pace or in the position of film will cause irregularities in the placement of spires and this can damage them during relocation.

## **Procedure:**

### Step 1: Complete the following steps

- Identification number determined by SODRE and CINEMATECA.
- Topographic situation
- Archival fond
- Placement in Cinemateca's vault
- Collection to which it belongs
- Series
- Plastic Container label
- Additional notes on the containers

Example:



-Identification number determined by SODRE and CINEMATECA: 441

-Topographic situation: NC 29

-Archival fond: Alonso

-Placement in Cinemateca's vault: NC 29

-Collection to which it belongs: Alonso

-Series: Departamentos del Uruguay

-Plastic Container label: Flores Alonso

-Additional notes on the containers: No Bob: 1 Metraje: 723p Acto: 1 Formato: 35 Observ:

Pos



## Step 2) Photographic record for identification

The photographic record provides evidence and information for later analysis of the collection.

It states the condition of preservation in a specific moment of their history. It also provides visual status and organization of containers from outside and inside when the inspection begins. It allows checking without handling original materials since in the containers there is information registered on paper, notes and labels with information on them which gives us a framework of the item to be analysed.

All photographs will be taken from a long shot with a zenithal angle on a neutral background. Lighting must be uniform with a reference for scale. Photographs to be taken:

- A. Photo of container with lid.
- B. Photo of container without lid.

**Note: If paper notes linked to the film are found (or any other item not belonging to the film) include them in the photo and put them back in the plastic container to avoid its loss during the inspection. If items impede visualization of film, a complementary photo will be taken.**

Example:



Step 3) Fill in the box **Corresponding nomenclature to identify photographs**, on the **inspection form**.

## **ATTENTION**

Before the film is removed for the first time from its plastic container, take into account:

- There won't be any definitive action on the original material except application of polyester leader glue for its handling.
- The material will be handled in an extremely respectful way considering the uniqueness of the original piece.
- In the cases where we don't have any information, the **boxes of the inspection form will be marked as: n/d (no data)**.
- This inspection does not include any cleaning or conditioning of the film. If this was necessary it will have to be done prior to the digitalization.
- If any doubt arose, before taking any action, enquire colleagues at LAPA- AGU, Cinemateca, UCLA.

### Step 4:

Fill in the inspection form **First Contact**. When the container is opened it is important to do a sensory evaluation to obtain information about the general visible condition of the film. In the sensory evaluation, the following aspects must be checked:

Can the material be handled?

Is it in good condition?

Do you see any signs of decomposition? -Mold, warping-

Does it smell?

Does it show any added acetate glue?

Explain any unusual situation at first sight in **Additional notes of First Contact**. What do we observe? Number of film? Do they seem to have an order?

Are there any additional written notes added to the film/films?

Notes about added paper or other structures: **The Font used on the containers and notes** must be taken into account as they are satellite elements which correspond to the materials.

If the film is damaged or in a severe degree of decomposition, where handling it would compromise its material integrity; photograph damage in detail, keep a record in the form, return film to its container and enquire other members of the Cine Casero team and technical fellow mentors about possible actions to take.

#### Step 5: Remove film from plastic containers

The original identification numbers used by SODRE and CINEMATECA for each plastic container will not be modified; they will be submitted into our database with the same reference number.

**If we found more than one film per container, it will be identified as follows:**

**-Identification No. of container + XX. (example 12589-01, 12589-02) -**

#### **Number of items or films per container**

#### Step 6: Film inspection in the manual winding machine

The films must be handled by holding them from the edges so as to avoid any contact on the emulsion side as well as any contact with the work surface or tools and the exposure to dust.

On the winding table, the film will be placed on the left side and the film core which collects, on the right side.

## Step 7: Technical inspection

Fill out the following boxes:

All items marked with \* must be completed

-**Step** (35mm; 16mm; 8mm; Other)\*

-**Emulsion type** (Negative, Positive; Reversible)\*

-**Media:** Nitrate; Acetate; Polyester, Diacetate, Other

-**Emulsion:** B&W Emulsion, Color Emulsion, Modified Emulsion, Toned color, hand-painted colors, Stencil Color, Tinted Color, Other\*

-**Approximate total length in meters**\*

-**Estimated duration.** This data can be included on the second stage of the analysis of the material.

-**Playback speed.** If this data is identified in the film if not **Not identified**

-**Laboratory** (if the data is identified in the movie)

-**Manufacturers edge marks** (write down manufacturer's brand and corresponding code)\*

The manufacturers edge marks are signs, identification or codes used by the manufacturer's on the outer edge of film.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> The FIAF Code of ethics has been read and checked for the inspection of this collection  
<https://www.fiafnet.org/pages/Community/Codigo-de-Etica.html>

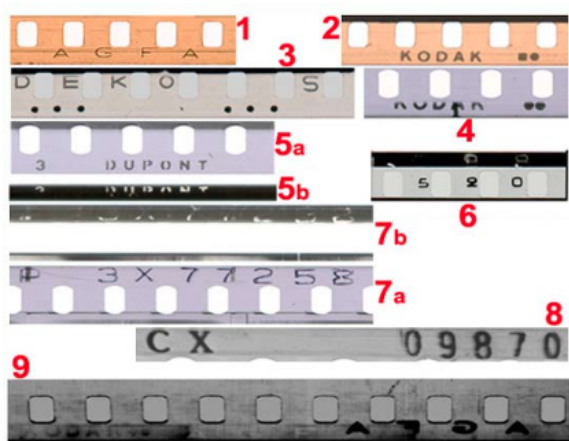


Figura 139.  
**Marcas marginales y generaciones de reproducción**  
[1-2-3] Marcas originales en copias positivas.  
[4] Marca original en un negativo..  
[5a] Marca original en un Dup-negativo reproducida en [5b] un positivo.  
[6] Copia positiva Agfa-Gevaert con su propia marca entre perforaciones y parte de la numeración de pietaje de un material negativo.  
[7a] Numeración de pietaje impresa en un duplicado negativo Kodak. [7b] La misma numeración reproducida en una copia.  
[8] Numeración de pietaje introducida fotográficamente (imagen latente) en un negativo Ilford.  
[9] Copia Agfa con su propia marca y las marcas reproducidas desde un duplicado positivo Kodak y un material negativo Agfa.

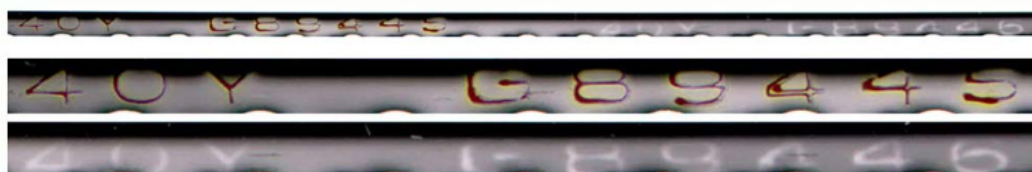


Figura 140. **Marcas marginales reproducidas por veladura.**  
Las reglas "sencillas" pueden fallar cuando se trata de realidades complejas. La numeración de pietaje impresa en este material negativo, se reprodujo accidentalmente sobre el mismo material al producirse una pequeña veladura (que no afectó a la imagen) durante el manejo del rollo.  
En la imagen superior pueden verse juntos, el número 40Y G89445, impreso sobre el material, y copiado, letras blancas sobre fondo más oscuro, el número sucesivo del pietaje: 40Y G89446.

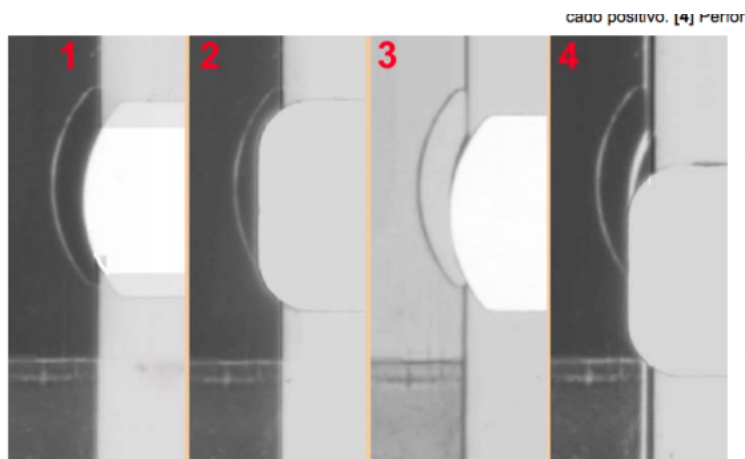
## -Number of reproduced perforations

The combination of differences in shape and dimensions of the perforations, the position of the frame and the difference in projection equipment, can become a guide to determine the situation of the production of duplicates. Also, they can be a source of knowledge of the history of the film and therefore of their reconstruction and restoration. When trying to determine which materials are original from the camera and which are copies, the mere existence of copied elements outside the area of image (outside the frame), becomes really important.<sup>9</sup>

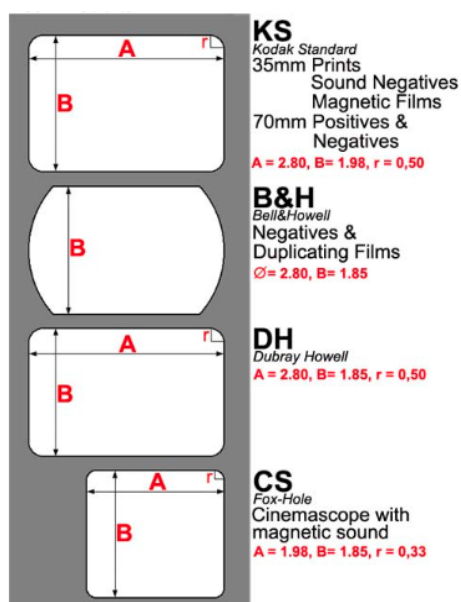
This data can be included on the second stage of the analysis of the data.

<sup>9</sup> Example of Nitrato Argentino

<https://nitratoargentino.org/catalogo/flor-viviente-que-encierra-el-mar-la-les-hotes-de-la-mer-11e-serie-la-flor-vivante-des-mers-9-0/>



-Type of perforation (standard 35mm: BH Copy, Negative KS, Pre-film 35mm, Round, Rectangular Edison, Rectangular Pathe, other)



**-Generation of material**<sup>10</sup>This data can be included on the second stage of the analysis of the data.

Note: The assessment of the generation and type of material (image negative, sound negative, interpositive – only image-) copy from projection, must take into account number of perforations. **This can be done on the second stage of the analysis of the data).**

<sup>10</sup> Nitrato Argentino - <https://nitratoargentino.org/indices/>

**Important: check and take photos of Manufacturers edge marks and Number of perforations.**

**-Date of manufacturing of the media.** Provided it is easy to prove, include in form under **Other**, e.g. 1943. If this wasn't possible mark: **Not identified** and on a second inspection, check the information and try to establish a date.

**-Image dimension** (Silent 1:1'33; Academic 1:1'37; Other)\* <sup>11</sup>

Dimensiones de una película de 35mm		
(Según normas ISO: 70, 491, 2906, 2907, 2939) Medidas en milímetros		
	<b>A - Ancho nominal 35mm</b> (Estandarizado 35.975 ± 0.025)	
	<b>B - Paso de perforación</b>	4.75 (largo) 4.74 (corto)
	<b>C - Distancia de borde de perforación a borde</b>	2.01 -
	<b>D - Distancia entre borde y eje de imagen</b>	18.75 -
	<b>E - Ancho área de imagen</b>	(cámara) (proyector)
	Mudo	24.00 (teórico) 23.00
	Formatos planos	21.95 (mínima) 21.11
	Formatos anamórficos	21.95 (mínima) 21.29
	<b>F - De área imagen a borde de referencia</b>	7.80 (máximo en cámara)
	<b>G - Altura área de imagen</b>	(cámara) (proyector)
	Mudo 1:1'33	18.00 17.25
	Normal 1:1'37	16.00 15.29
	Panorámicos 1:1'66	- 12.62
	1:1'75	- 11.96
	1:1'85	- 11.33
	Anamórficos 1:2'35	18.60 18.21
<b>H - Entre borde y el eje de la columna sonora</b>		6.17 -
<b>I - Ancho columna sonora</b>		1.93 (área) 2.54 (densidad)

**-Type of sound** (Variable Area; Variable Density; Silent -no sound-; no space for soundtrack; Soundtrack without space; Mono Sound; Stereo Sound; Only soundtrack; Magnetic Sound Film; Other=. <sup>12</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Edge code chart; [https://www.filmpreservation.org/userfiles/image/PDFs/fpg\\_10.pdf](https://www.filmpreservation.org/userfiles/image/PDFs/fpg_10.pdf)

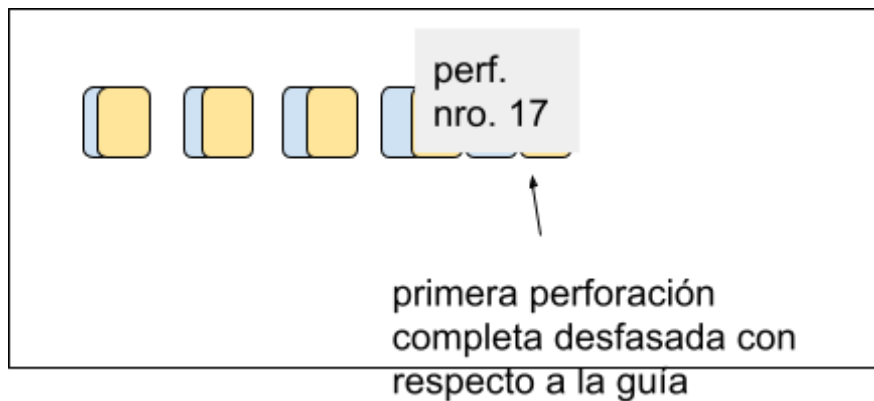
<sup>12</sup> Edge Codes and Identification de Film Colors; <https://filmcolors.org/timeline-entry/16668/>

### **-Contraction Level**

This measurement will be done in two or three steps according to the size of the item (film or segment), at the beginning, in the middle and at the end. **To measure the contraction a section of 100 perforations of a 35mm polyester film will be used as a guide (with marks every 20 frames as a rule).**

Any overlapping of the original film and the guide will give us an idea of the contraction of the element.

The guide is placed over the original film and we start counting from the beginning of the sample (perforation 0) the number of perforations until one perforation is entirely misaligned with the original. The number of that guide perforation is registered (see example number 17).



We can also check carefully with the splicer to see if the perforations fit the registration pins.

**-Observed Damage in the film.** Quick **yes or no** response to question **Do you notice this damage?** - Leaving a blank will be considered **NO-**



Aspects to observe:

- Dirt
- Grease
- Scratches
- Damage in perforations and edges (if it is above 25% mark affirmative)
- Warping
- Polygonization
- Dryness
- Silver mirror
- Mold
- Color fading
- Peeling emulsion (in over 25% of the frames, mark affirmative)
- Destruction (breakage or cracks such as tearing, destruction or burning of window)
- Deterioration in the base of the film
- Previous restoration
- Stains of unknown origin
- Other

**-Descriptive questions on how to handle the film** (does it have editing splices; thermal paste; tape/Mylar; does it have copied splices? If this was the case, has the glue been removed from the acetate?)

**-Conservation note:** Carry out a general assessment of the damage which has been observed. Include flaws which can be observed on the duplicate (flashlights, shift in windows or any unusual element).

**-General assessment scale of damage** (Level 1= 25%; Level 2= 50%; Level 3= 75%; Level 4 = Severe generalized deterioration)

**-Assessment of Preservation condition of film considering a digitalization.** Scale: Level 1: postponable; Level 2: Medium; Level 3: Considerable; Level 4: Priority, urgent digitalization. Severe generalized deterioration.

**-Necessary actions for the digitalization setting up:** Cleaning, splices repair, crack repair, High contraction, Place initial and final lead)

### **-Technical inspection photographs**

#### Step 8: Content revision

Keep a photographic record of frames, in full, vertically<sup>13</sup> in correlation with the content description and generic descriptors.

On the form, 10 photographs will be uploaded (the most representative and varied, choosing those which can quickly show the content of the film).

The person who inspects the film will be able to take more photographs (the number will depend on the time and speed of inspection, as well as on the length of the film). It is recommended to take photographs of those frames which contribute to the catalog of contents such as: labels frames, credits, titles or inter-titles, long shots of buildings, squares or public places which will enable geographic location and close-ups which can help identify people, etc.

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<sup>13</sup> Harold Brown, Camille Blot-Wellens (ed), *Physical Characteristics of Early Films as Aids to Identification: New Expanded Edition*, FIAF: 2020

**-Is there more than (1) title per film?**

The following boxes will be completed in relation to the elements found on the material to be examined and must be completed when marked

- **On screen title**
- **Country of production**
- **Year of Production**
- **Manufacturer data in frame**
- **Producers**
- **Upload photographs of titles, inter-titles, credits.**
- **Photographed language in the film**
- **Content description. Brief synopsis.**
- **General Descriptors:**
  - select those which fit best with the description-
  - INTER-TITLES; CREDITS, Overprints
  - ARCHITECTURE – city sights, architecture construction and roads
  - Abroad – outside Uruguay
  - COUNTRYSIDE -farming activities, landscapes, parties, work
  - SOCIAL EVENTS -shows, dances, festivals, recreation, folklorik, others
  - Religious ceremonies
  - Sports events
  - Domestic Records
  - Advertising, Shops, Commercial production
  - INDUSTRY -factories, builders, workers-
  - SCIENTIFIC DISCLOSURE
  - Means of transport
  - PERSONALITIES - Authorities
  - FICTION
  - RECORD OF HISTORICAL EVENTS
  - POLITICAL -Acts, Campaigns, Parties
  - OTHER

- **Photographs of content identification.** Only 10 can be attached as a descriptive sample. The rest of the photographs of content will be added to the container folder.
- **Additional notes about the contents.** Indicate everything else which wasn't indicated previously and that can be relevant; include recommendations if necessary.
- Archive note. **Notes about the general inspection;** develop any previous field where relevant.
- **Inspection date**
- **Person in charge of the inspection.** State name of the person who examined the material.

Step 9: Returning the film to the container:

Once the inspection of each film is completed, this is withdrawn from the work station.

Step 10: Download photographs which correspond to the inspection of the containers

Once the inspection is completed, download the photographs onto the external hard drive assigned for the project and upload them to the drive. The organization of the digital archive will have a folder named: **Film inspection.** Inside there will be a folder named **Photographic record** for each container corresponding to the **Number of Inventory determined by SODRE – CINEMATECA** of each container. When there is more than one film, the numbers must be as follows: **Identification No of container + XX (example 12589-01, 12589-02).**