




THE COLLECTION: Tips and Guidance for Searching

Accessing the Film Reference Library Collection

The Film Reference Library is a non-circulating collection. All materials must be reviewed on-site at the TIFF Bell Lightbox.

Start by searching our online database for materials of interest. You may submit a query through the "Ask an Expert" feature (see below), or you may contact the library via phone or email at 416-599-8433 x2 or libraryservices@tiff.net. To learn more about the FRL, visit tiff.net/library

What can you search?

Welcome to the Film Reference Library Collection! To get started, please use the keyword search above, or try an Advanced Search using the sidebar navigation. You may also refer to our "How to Search the Collection" Guide.

- Books.
- Research files: film files (by title), biography files (by name), subject files (by term), which contain press clippings, press kits and various other research documents dedicated to specific topics and compiled by FRL librarians.
- Print copies of journals, magazines, newspapers and other periodicals.
- Audiovisual materials such as VHS, DVDs, and blu-rays that can be viewed on-site.
- FRL Special Collections, which can include posters, props, costumes, photographs, moving image materials and textual materials related to a specific production company, industry figure, or related topic (see Special Collection dropdown in Advanced Search for a full listing)
- TIFF Exhibitions records, as well as the objects from the collections featured within each exhibition.

General Tips for *Keyword Searching* from Homepage or Advanced Search page

- Search terms will yield results from **every field** (title, description, format, director, etc.) across the catalogue.
- Search terms are **NOT case-sensitive**.
- Do not add diacritics (accents) to search terms; instead enter the **non-diacritic** equivalent (ex. enter pathe freres in place of Pathé Frères).

- Use quotation marks (“”) around terms to activate an **exact phrase search**; this will yield search results that contain all terms in the exact order you enter them (ex. “film noir”).
- Exact phrase searches can be combined with keyword searches (ex. “wizard of oz” garland)
- **Stopwords** (common words such as “an”, “in”, and “to”) are removed from the terms you enter, except in the case of exact phrase searching, in which search terms are entered within quotations marks (“”).
- Your terms can be **truncated** using an asterisk (ex. czech* film will yield matches for all records containing *Czech Republic Film, Czechoslovakia Film, Czechoslovakian Film, AND Czechoslovakian New Wave Film*).
- **Note:** truncated searches are slower than non-truncated searches.
- By default, searches employ **AND** between all entered terms, meaning that **ALL terms** must be in the record for it to be found. However, you can override this by entering **OR** between each term. Note: **OR** cannot be used with exact phrase searches.

Ask an Expert

Film Reference Library Request

Please use this form to ask a reference question, request materials, or submit a request for images. Library staff will respond within 48 hours. The FRL is a reference library: we do not loan materials. All materials must be reviewed in-person at the library. For general enquiries, or to contact the Library Manager, please contact libraryservices@tiff.net.

* Required

Your Name: *

Email address: *

Please describe your request *

Ask a question; Request to access research materials; Book time for on-site research.

Record Number [optional]

Accession number or FRL number

- Use the **Ask an Expert** form to request material, book research time in the Brian Linehan Research Room, book time to watch a movie in the media centre, or ask a question about an item, or access restrictions.
- If at any point you require assistance in fulfilling your search, click **Ask an Expert** on the left sidebar or from the Advanced Search page. Describe the issue in the form provided and a FRL staff member will offer assistance via email.
- You may include the record number of an item (i.e. FRL number or Accession number, which is listed at the top of each record). Click **Ask an Expert** on the left sidebar or the link at the top of a detailed object record -- the latter will auto-populate the record number into the form.

Advanced Search Tips

Mon	Closed
Tue	12pm-5pm
Wed	12pm-5pm
Thu	12pm-7pm
Fri	12pm-5pm
Sat	12pm-5pm

- You may search many fields simultaneously using freetext or the dropdowns menus
- You may search only one term from the dropdown menus (Object Type, Format, Special Collection) at a time.
- It is recommended to search either the **Object Type** field or the **Format** field, but not both at once.
- Click “Reset” button to clear the form for a new search.
- You may search only Library, only Special Collections, or All (checkboxes at bottom of page).

People/Production Company

- If you know the exact spelling of the name you are searching, enter it within quotation marks with FirstName LastName (ex. “david cronenberg”).
- In the case of Production Companies, search the most prominent word, such as fox in 20th century fox productions or pixar.
- If you do not know the exact spelling or iteration of the name you are searching, try entering the last name without quotation marks (ex. cronenberg). **Tip:** truncation using an asterisk can assist in cases where the spelling is problematic (ex. nic* cage will produce records that are cataloged as “Nicholas Cage”).

Title

- If you are searching for material on a specific film title enter as many known words as you would like (ex. wizard oz). **Note:** Stopwords such as “of” or “an” will be excluded from the search engine unless enclosed within quotation marks (ex. “wizard of oz”).
- You can also search the title of books and research files (film files, subject files, biography files) utilizing this field.

Object Type

- Activate the **dropdown** to limit results to specific materials such as books, photographs, or videos. Note: you can only search one object type at a time.

Date

- Currently, only singular dates (ex. 1924) can be searched. Stay tuned for the ability to search date ranges.

Country

- Here you can specify the country of origin for films in relation to corresponding file file and information records, as well as videorecordings and special collections film prints.
- You can search more than one country at time in the case of co-productions (ex. france italy will yield results for any film that those two countries produced in conjunction) or you can employ **OR** searching (ex. france OR italy will yield results for any film with records related to those countries respectively, but not co-productions shared between the two).

Genre

- Select terms from the dropdown to limit your results. Genre is currently cataloged for a portion of videorecording records.

Format

- Select terms from the dropdown to limit your results. Formats for videorecordings and film prints (ex. 35mm; VHS; DVD) are available to select as well as specific types of objects (ex. costume; storyboard; prop). Note: you can only search one format type at a time.

Special Collection

- Selecting a specific Special Collection from the dropdown will limit search results to that collection. It also allows you to browse records related to collections without having to specify search criteria in the keyword or other advanced search fields.

Record Number

- You can locate specific records by recording their unique record number (accession number or FRL number) from the search results page for fast, easy retrieval of search results without replicating exact search criteria.