

LIBERATE THE IMAGE: A MANIFESTO TO RESTITUTE COLLECTIVE MEMORY

**Today, multinational conglomerates own our image.
We demand the same right.**

Awareness of our disconnection from the realities of our past and the restrictions on the mobility of audiovisual heritage compels us to act. Archival material of the Global South is scattered and dispersed. It is often being held captive in spaces that perpetuate colonial practice or by state institutions that refuse their citizens access. These economies of accumulation must be dismantled in order for the have-nots of the world to discover, engage with, and re-appropriate their right to tell their own stories. Technology, interconnectivity and crucial alliances allow images to circulate in a way that people no longer can.

We invite all those concerned to engage the following principles:

- a. To liberate images from the commercial regime and initiate an ecology that respects the right to access information. While we recognize that the administration and maintenance of archives require resources, we reject the monetization of access with the intent of profit.
- b. To build an independent network/platform based on collaboration. This will facilitate the dissemination of information about ongoing and emerging efforts by either individuals or institutions to save and share films. This resource will acknowledge linguistic and indexical diversity.
- c. To mobilize solidarity as a foundational principle to constitute a commons to which we are all entitled because of our shared collective memories and interconnected histories. Mobilizing solidarity must be an act of restitution of our shared memories, our collective histories and narratives. One of the binding principles of our film community will be to share our findings, outcomes and creations that have benefitted from access to audiovisual archival material. We are not alone, we stand together to restore and circulate marginalized and silenced histories.
- d. To hold institutions responsible for enabling access. The consciousness of the people's past, present and future is at stake. Building our collective future hinges on our access to the past.

We invite the film community to join our effort and to circulate and undersign this manifesto. We welcome contributions to its content and practical suggestions on how to achieve its demands.

Sign here: <https://themanifesto.documentary-convention.org/>