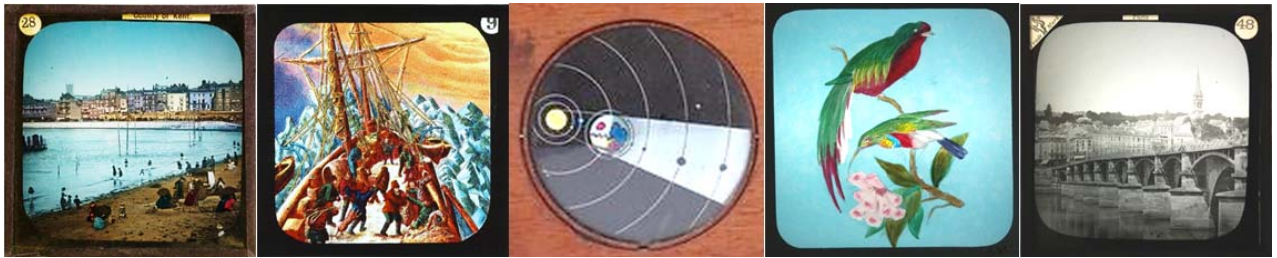


A Million Pictures



Magic Lantern Slide Heritage as Artefacts in the Common European History of Learning

Newsletter # 1 | Oct 2015

Shortly after we shared the good news about the project funding, we received e-mails from museum curators and archives who hold lantern slides. They are interested in an exchange about how to document, preserve and catalogue their collections in a way that meets both the requirements of the respective institutions and catches the attention of the contemporary public – museum goers, artists, the creative industries, and researchers.

The magic lantern show at the official project opening was well attended. After the show, I heard people vividly discussing the show. Their fascination proved that the magic of the magic lantern certainly is not only a thing of the past.

These two reactions to our project in its early stage encouraged us as they show us the need for and interest in a project such as *A Million Pictures*. After all, this project wants to bring together existing initiatives and form a network of everyone interested in the study, preservation and documentation of magic lantern slides – and in magic lantern shows. We believe that cultural heritage can only be preserved sustainable when it can find contemporary audiences.

Everyone who shares the fascinations for this material in one way or the other is invited to take part in our activities. Enjoy reading the newsletter!

In this newsletter

From the project coordination	2
Impressions from the first workshop	3
Working groups	6
Series: Favourite Slides	7
Upcoming Activities	10
Editorial & About	11

From the Project coordination

Four months into the project we can state without exaggeration that we already achieved many things: The project's website is online, staff has been hired, the - at times complicated - administration to receive the funding is on a good way, and we already held our first workshop with a sound working plan as an outcome. And the first newsletter is published!

This newsletter is meant to complement the website (which provides more detailed information) with upcoming local activities and news from research. It should also serve as platform to ask questions to the research consortium.

Short notes, images, articles, questions, requests, comments on this newsletter and more are highly welcomed! Please send them per e-mail to Sarah Dellmann (s.dellmann [at] uu.nl).

Any items for the next newsletter (Dec 2015) should be sent by

27 November 2015

Impressions of the first workshop

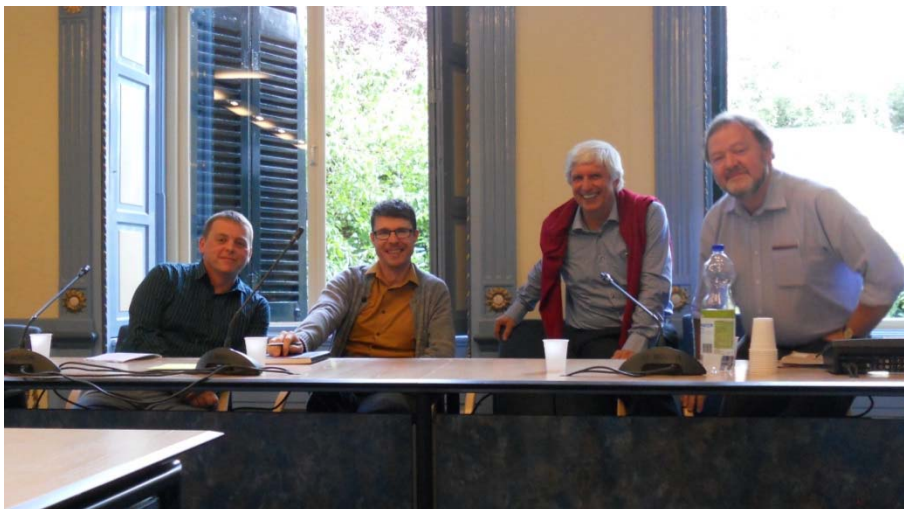
The first workshop **“Exploring the needs of stakeholders for access, documentation and re-use”**, held from 3-5 September at Utrecht University, was a big success: 30 participants with various backgrounds – collectors, lantern performers, curators, archivists, creative industries, lecturers and researchers from various universities attended the meeting.

The various perspectives on the material were inspiring to the attendants and resulted in concrete steps for the next months. The friendly and collegial atmosphere and the productive discussions made for a good starting point of the project.

The official project opening with magic lantern show was well attended with more than 80 people in the audience. We thank Elisabeth Waagmeester and Gwen Sebus for their original interpretations of the topic “Scientific Entertainment anno 1900”.

The notes of the first workshop are available for download on the project website: <http://a-million-pictures.wp.hum.uu.nl/publications/>

We add some visual impressions:



Content speakers after the first panel on Friday

Impressions from the lunch breaks:



Many questions came up during the workshop...



which provided food for thought and discussion...





The Research Team Assembly on Saturday ... ended with a thank you for the good organisation.



Working Groups

During the first workshop, we initiated working groups. Their task is to prepare input for the upcoming workshops.

Working group “Best Practices for Digitization”

This working group will exchange information and experience about how to best photograph lantern slides. The working group will provide instructions for the researchers. As a long-term objective, the results will be published in a guideline that will be made available to archives, museums, and collection managers who are interested in the digital documentation and preservation of their slides. The guidelines will cover all sorts of aspects concerning the digital photographing process including light, camera, setup for taking photographs in an archive, procedure of taking photographs, and software for the modification of the digital photographs.

If you have professional experience with making digital reproductions of lantern slides and wish to share your experiences, please contact Sarah Dellmann (s.dellmann [at] uu.nl)

Working group “Website”

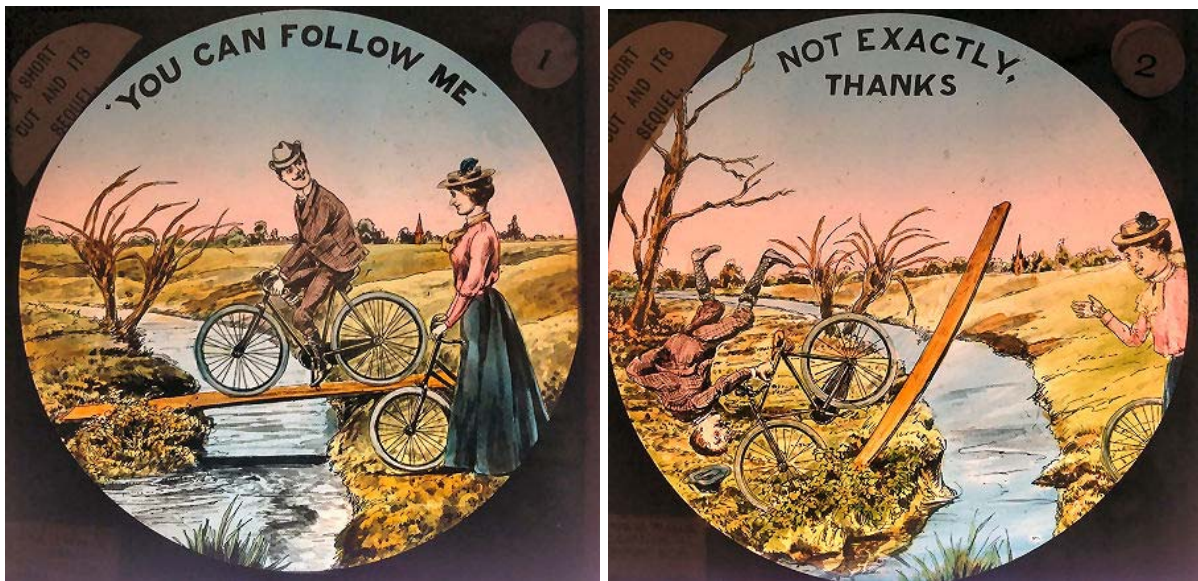
This group gives suggestions to enhance the project’s website and discuss changes. If you spot mistakes, dead links or stumble over formulations of the text or if you look for information that you cannot find (easily), please get in contact with Sarah Dellmann (s.dellmann [at] uu.nl).

Working group “Metadata & Cataloguing”

The objective of this working group is to look very closely at what is already happening in associated media datasets of other cultural artefacts and/or research on magic lantern slides. In a second step it will inventory what *A Million Pictures* needs to do for magic lantern slides. It is set up as a forum group that receives comments and presents work-in-progress at the workshops. The group will focus especially on issues related to cataloging – people with experience in that field who are interested in joining that work group can contact Ine van Dooren (I.VanDooren [at] brighton.ac.uk).

Series: Favourite Slides

In every newsletter, members of the research team share their fascination with lantern slides by pointing to their favourite source. In this newsletter, the word is to Sabine Lenk, Beatriz González de Garay and Ine van Dooren.



“I have always been interested in social changes in history and magic lantern slides perfectly captured the zeitgeist. I especially like these two ones because of the parodic reading of male historically self-proclaimed supremacy. The bicycle was such an emancipatory invention for women that medicine even needed to make up a disease (called ‘bicycle face’) to discourage females from cycling. So in a time when riding a bicycle was really daring for a woman, these slides show a little symbolic victory in the battle for equality.”

Beatriz González de Garay is lecturer at the University of Salamanca, Spain.



THE PROSCENIUM of the ENGLISH OPERA HOUSE in the STRAND, (LATE LYCEUM)
as it appeared on the Evening of the 21st March 1817, with Walker's Exhibition of the Eidouranian.

“When I was looking for a symbol of the concept of performativity in teaching with the magic lantern I came across this illustration of lecturer Adam Walker and his “Eidouranian” or “Large Transparency Orrery”. Walker's show has all to excite the audience of the English Opera House on 21 March 1817: an eloquent showman, a gigantic image created by a hidden apparatus, a fascinating subject for everyone (astrology), a carefully chosen podium (an important theater in London), a huge audience of wealthy people.

On the picture the audience seems partially enthusiastic about the show and partially indifferent: was Walker lucky this evening or was his appearance on the stage this evening unsuccessful? In any case: as lecturer he had to take the risk. He had to decide whether to be a serious lecturer or a showman. His talent as performer determined the attractiveness (in German: “Schauwert”) of the presentation, his performative qualities were decisive for the judgment of the spectators whether he ‘was worth the money.’”

Sabine Lenk is researcher at Antwerp University, Belgium.

Series: Favorite Slides (continued)



“When seeing my first Magic Lantern show in The Hague in 1988 I was completely captivated and it has kept me enthralled ever since. I have a special fondness for life model slide sets, their lyrical nature, their melodramatic stories, their mixed media aesthetics as well as their zealous instructional undercurrent. This image of THE LITTLE MATCH GIRL is exemplar in how this type of imagery draws me into its moving sphere.”

Ine van Dooren is archivist at Screen Archive South East in Brighton, England

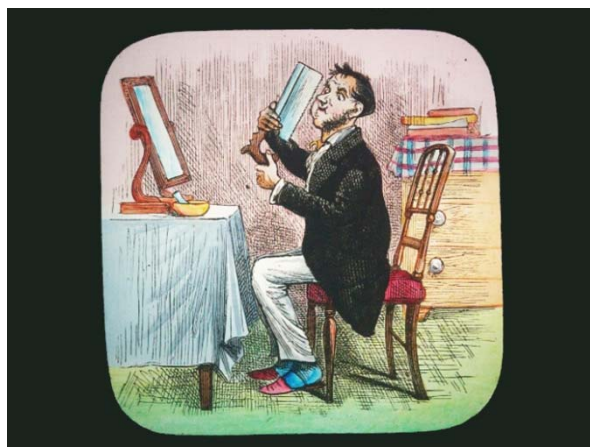
Upcoming Activities

30 Oct 2015 – Exeter, UK – RAMM

Things that go Bump in the Night

Special 'Trick or Treat' evening: Dr Richard Crangle will bring one of the 'curiosities of our magic lantern slides to light'... Bring the kids!

<http://www.rammuseum.org.uk/whats-on/things-that-go-bump-in-the-night>



11 Nov 2015 – Exeter, UK – RAMM

Forgotten Delights

Dr Richard Crangle will showcase *A Million Pictures* and present the collection of lantern slides at RAMM collections and how they will be digitized.

<http://www.rammuseum.org.uk/whats-on/forgotten-delights-the-ramm-magic-lantern-slide-collection>

3-4 Dec 2015 – Antwerp, BE –University of Antwerp

Symposium “DEEP TIME OF THE THEATRE. Archaeology/Technology of the Senses”

The *Research Centre Visual Poetics* at the University of Antwerp and *Fillièr Arts du spectacle vivant* of the Université Libre de Bruxelles) organize a study day on media archeology and theater, paying among others attention to the magic lantern: <http://visualpoetics.be/?action=event&id=23&chapter=info>

14 – 16 April 2016 – Girona, ES, - University of Girona

Workshop 2 “Defining guidelines for description and cataloguing – discussing first results”

The second workshop of our series will bring together the project members in order to discuss preliminary results and exchange experiences. The research teams will assemble on Saturday. More information will follow. Save the date!

Editorial

This newsletter informs about activities of the project *A Million Pictures: Magic Lantern Slide Heritage as Artefacts in the Common European History of Learning*.

The magic lantern was the most important visual entertainment and means of instruction across nineteenth-century Europe. However, despite its pervasiveness across multiple scientific, educational and popular contexts, magic lantern slides remain under-researched. Although many libraries and museums across Europe hold tens of thousands of lantern slides in their collections, a lack of standards for documentation and preservation limits the impact of existing initiatives, hinders the recognition of the object's heritage value and potential exploitation. *A Million Pictures* addresses the sustainable preservation of this massive, untapped heritage resource.

A Million Pictures is a collaborative research project between researchers from Utrecht University (NL), University of Exeter (UK), University of Antwerp (BE), University of Girona (ES), University of Salamanca (ES) as well as twenty Associated Partners.

A Million Pictures runs from June 2015 until May 2018.

More information about past and present activities are available on our project website: www.uu.nl/a-million-pictures



A Million Pictures: Magic Lantern Slide Heritage as Artefacts in the Common European History of Learning is a Joint Programming Initiative on Cultural Heritage – Heritage Plus project which is funded by NWO, Belspo, AHRC and MINECO and Co-Funded by the European Commission.



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This newsletter is edited by Sarah Dellmann, additional contributions are written by Ine van Dooren, Sabine Lenk and Beatriz González de Garay.