

A Million Pictures



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

Newsletter # 5 | June 2016

Just after the April-Newsletter reached you, the second meeting in our workshop series took place at the Cinema Museum in Girona, Spain. It was a productive encounter between academic researchers and archivists that brought to light the different needs in documentation when starting from a (material) collection or a (theoretical) research question. The notes from the workshop with a detailed documentation of the discussion are [now online](#). A big step towards accommodating both needs was taken with a change in the programming of Lucerna, our web database: this site now allows to link single slides of a commercially produced slide set to a – more often than not – composite set of slides from various origins that we find in the boxes in an archive. There is also progress on the development of a non-English interface;

more in our next newsletter.

This is the last newsletter before the summer break; there will be no newsletter in August. While putting this newsletter together, the summer break for *A Million Pictures* is still four conferences, six papers and one public activity away.

We already wish you a great summer and a well-deserved break –under palm trees or elsewhere!



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From the Project Coordination

Project descriptions in English and Spanish are now available on the homepage of our website, <http://a-million-pictures.wp.hum.uu.nl/> . German and French translations will be uploaded shortly.

A meeting with staff from Europeana is scheduled for 28 June in Utrecht. The meeting is a first exchange in order to link data from Lucerna to the heritage portal Europeana. If you like to join, please contact Sarah Dellmann.

The next newsletter will be published in October 2016. 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 (October 2016) should be submitted by

26 September 2016

From the Museum: Disseminating Magic Lantern Knowledge through Workshops for Children

From Anna Carpena Torrens

An important way to spread knowledge about the magic lantern, its uses and the technology is to show and explain how different kinds of apparatuses and their slides work. This is usually done either through spectacular lantern shows or in educational settings. In the Cinema Museum at Girona we have an important collection of lanterns, accessories and slides and we take care of their preservation and access. We display a large part of our collection in the permanent exhibition. We also present lanterns on our website and our YouTube-channel - and we offer workshops for school children.

The Educational Department is one of the pillars of the Cinema Museum Girona. We receive more than 20,000 visitors each year. One of the workshops offered to schools is a workshop on the Magic Lantern, where children learn to perform a magic lantern show. We offer the workshop for children aged 8 to 12. The structure of the activity is the same but it is adapted according to their capabilities. The regular activity includes two parts: the first part is a guided tour through the Tomas Mallol Collection of Pre-Cinema and Early Cinema, focused on the magic lantern, phantasmagorias and slides. The second part is practical and allows the discovery of how a magic lantern projection worked and works.

During the workshop we use a replica of a magic lantern that explains how the technology works. Because it is a replica, we allow the students to perform their own shows with the lantern. In the practical part, we first explain how the projection works. We project different kinds of slides to show the evolution and variety of the medium - from the first painted drawings to photographic slides - and from static slides to the slipping slides and other slides with mechanical movement.

After the presentation, we invite the children to prepare their own stories and slides. In small groups they develop a story and they choose the most important events of the story that they wish to represent in a slide. In the workshop, we use acetate paper and we transform it into a magic lantern slide

thanks to the handmade painted drawings and a cardboard support. When the groups have finished they become lanternists and project their own slides with the magic lantern to explain their story.



*A slide produced and projected by children in one of the workshops at the Cinema Museum.
Photo: Cinema Museum Girona.*

This activity was developed with the aim to appeal to the artistic, technological and social importance of this performance medium - and also to encourage the creativity and imagination of children who use the apparatus which they usually only discovered during the workshop. But the main aim is to recognize the importance of this device in the history of media culture and to contribute to a better understanding of our audiovisual present.

Anna Carpena Torrens works at the Educational Department of the Cinema Museum Girona.

English homepage: <http://www.museudelcinema.cat/eng/index.php>

Video on activities: <http://www.museudelcinema.cat/eng/educacio.php>

Project News

The Workshop Girona, the second meeting in our series, took place in Girona. The workshop was dedicated to an exchange about cataloguing and digitising lantern slides – from hand-on demonstrations of digitisation methods to rather technical details for the mapping of metadata standards.

Detailed notes of presentation and discussion are available for download on the website: <http://a-million-pictures.wp.hum.uu.nl/notes-from-workshop-2/>

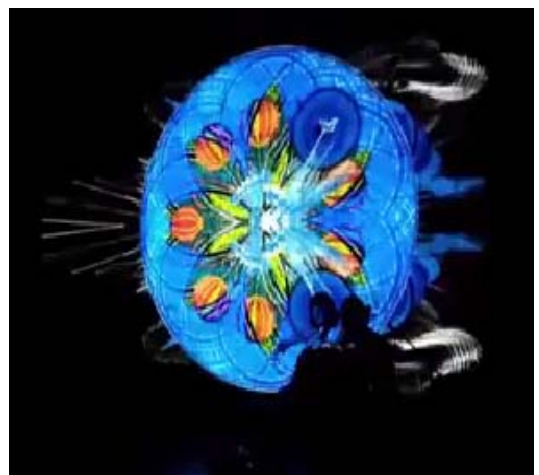


Participants of the workshop are heading for the public event. Foto: Jordi Pons

A video documentation of the public event, the live performance “**A taste of Nature**” by Cello player Björt Rúnarsdóttir and visual artist Alba G. Corral (performed on Thursday 14 April 2016) is available on YouTube.

The artists used digital images of lantern slides from the collection Thomas Mallol at of the Cinema Museum Girona. Watch the video online at

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w7ENTRAa1R8&feature=youtu.be>



Project News (continued)

Francisco Javier Frutos Esteban and Carmen López San Segundo from the Research Team at Universidad de Salamanca published their **article “Las Fantasmagorías de Robertson en Madrid (1821) y la historia natural del signo”** (“Robertson’s Phantasmagoria in Madrid (1821) and the Natural History of the Sign”) in the Journal *Revista Signa* 25 (2016). *Signa* is published by the Spanish Society for Semiotics, the Asociación Española de Semiótica. The online version of the publication will be made available soon at

<http://revistas.uned.es/index.php/signa/>



Ludwig Vogl-Bienek, researcher at our Associated Partner Trier University, has published the book *Lichtspiele im Schatten der Armut. Historische Projektionskunst und Soziale Frage* (ISBN: 978-3-86109-203-2). The book is based on his PhD thesis. Ludwig Vogl-Bienek investigates cultural practices of lantern slide projections in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries with regards to the social question. The

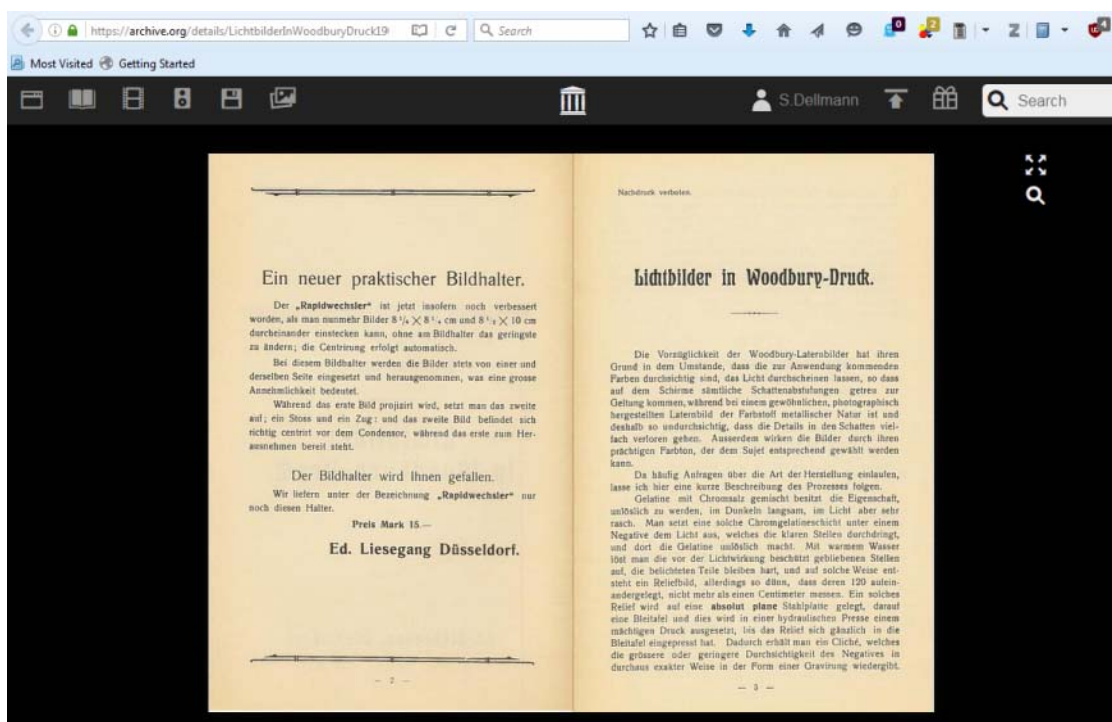
book also contains a number of full colour illustrations. More information (in German language) can be found at the publisher’s website:


http://www.stroemfeld.de/de/vorschau_L_718_1/

Save the date! The **International conference of A Million Pictures** will take place from **30 August 2017-2 September 2017** at Utrecht, The Netherlands. The conference will be a platform for exchange about research into magic lantern slides and the history of learning, archival documentation and artistic reused. The Call for Papers will be published in November 2016.

News from the working groups

The **working group ScanCats** has cleared the last questions and started uploading catalogues of magic lanterns and slides to the Media History Digital Library (MHDL), <http://mediahistoryproject.org/> a sub-collection of the Internet Archive. There will be a cross-reference from the Lucerna Magic Lantern Web Resource to MHDL and vice versa. At MHDL, items are displayed in a book reader and can be searched with a full-text function. Bit by bit, items will be indexed and searchable with the analytical tool “Arclight”.



 **Lichtbilder in Woodbury-Druck**
by Ed. Liesegang



The 1905 catalogue of Woodbury lantern slides by German manufacturer and reseller Ed. Liesegang in the book viewer. <https://archive.org/details/LichtbilderInWoodburyDruck1905Images>

➔ **If you have digital or paper catalogues of magic lanterns, lantern slides and / or accessories that you would like to make available on this resource, please contact us!**

Sarah Dellmann and Liselotte Westerterp will take care of checking, preparing and uploading the files.

Series: Favourite Slides

In every newsletter, members of the research team share their fascination with lantern slides by pointing to (one of) their favourite source. In this newsletter, the word is to Sabine Lenk.



Scene of a yet unidentified slide from the Robert Vrielynck Collection. Copyright: MuHKA; reproduction by Sarah Vanagt.

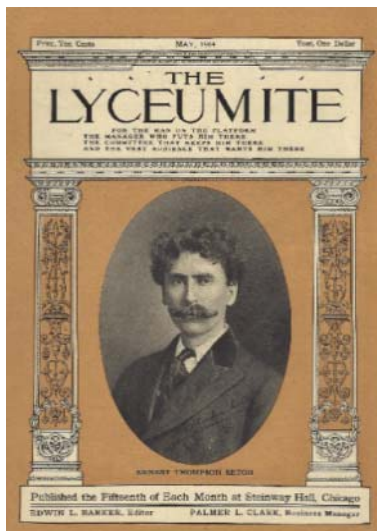
On a black background two beings are depicted. A young peasant woman in summer clothes, fresh cheeks, flowers in her hair, full of energy, and a horse (or is it a mule?), seemingly older than she, in an aristocratic looking costume and wearing a medal on its chest. Are they dancing together, enjoying summertime? Is she running from it as she fears its sharp teeth? Is the slide supposed to be read “innocently”, thus “literally”, or as a symbol for the eternal conflict between young and old, between life in the countryside and in town, between working class and aristocracy, between the sexes confronting a lustful male and an intelligent, witty woman keeping him at a distance? As long as the slide is unidentified, all interpretations are valid.

Sabine Lenk is PostDoc at University of Antwerp (sabine.lenk@uantwerp.be)

Other News

The **Deutsches Bildbandarchiv** (“**German Film Strip Archive**“) went online. This online resource documents a selection of German (both East and West) film strips and roll films dating from c. 1910s to the 1960s. Many commercial publishing houses of educative lantern slides also issued their images on film strips. Film strips were much cheaper than lantern slides on glass – and also much more fragile. The resource includes film strips on travel, Christian Religion, history, German militarism and patriotism, art, ethnology, politics and propaganda. Series of images on film strips were often issued with a reading, which is also documented online. The editors of this online resource added historical background information on the events depicted in the film strips. The resource is still under construction and will be updated regularly. <http://www.deutsches-bildbandarchiv.de>





The 2015 editions of the **Magic Lantern Gazette** are online. The Magic Lantern Gazette is a journal dedicated to research published by the Magic Lantern Society of the USA and Canada. Especially of interest to followers of the *A Million Pictures* project will be the article by Terry Borton on lecturers with the Lantern in the Lyceum Circuit, a US-American network for popular education.

Detail from the title page of the Magic Lantern Gazette 27 (1).

http://library.sdsu.edu/pdf/scua/ML_Gazette/MLGvol27no01.pdf (iss. 1)

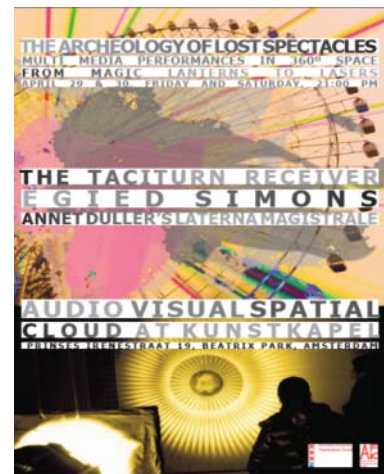
http://library.sdsu.edu/pdf/scua/ML_Gazette/MLGvol27no02-03.pdf (iss. 2+3)

Other News (continued)

The call for Papers for the conference **“Photo-Objects. On the Materiality of Photographs and Photo-Archives in the Humanities and Sciences”** held from 15-17 February 2017 in Florence (Italy) is open. This conference of the collaborative project "Photo-Objects. Photographs as Research Objects in Archaeology, Ethnology and Art History" looks at photographs not only as substitutes for research but also at their materiality and as “repositories of sedimented knowledge in social and cultural contexts.” More information and the complete Call for Papers is available at www.fotobjekt.hypotheses.org. Deadline for submission of paper proposals is 15 July 2016.



A **lantern show in 360 degrees** was given by lanternist Annett Duller on 29 and 30 of April in Amsterdam. Her show was part of a series on artistic projections organised by the project CLOUD 23 that experimented with old and new projection methods, surfaces and materials. The good response from public and organisers may lead to a follow-up.



The call for Papers for the **XIth International Conference of the International Association for Word and Images Studies / Association Internationale pour l'Étude des Rapports entre Texte et Images (IAWIS/AIERTI)** is published. The Conference title is “Images and Textes reproduced / La reproduction des images et des textes” and it will be held at the University of Lausanne (Switzerland) from 10-14 July 2017. The call for papers is open until 31 August 2016. <http://wp.unil.ch/reproduction2017/>

About & Editorial

This newsletter informs about the activities of the project *A Million Pictures: Magic Lantern Slide Heritage as Artefact 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



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This newsletter is edited by Sarah Dellmann; additional contributions are written by Sabine Lenk and Anna Carpena Torrens.