

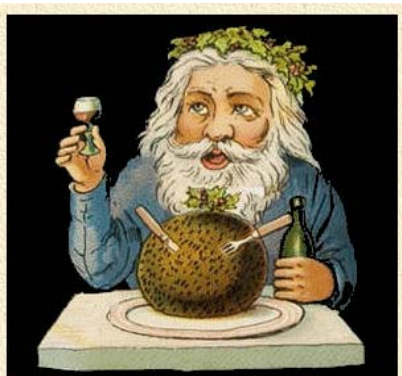
A Million Pictures



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

Newsletter # 07 | December 2016

Time flies when you're having fun... And so we were astonished when we realized that 2016 is almost over. We look back at a year of research and public talks, of meetings and conferences, of academic papers and artistic forms of engaging with the lantern, of working with the material objects and the digital documents related to them. Have a look at the past activities on our website at <http://a-million-pictures.wp.hum.uu.nl/category/agenda/> . In this newsletter, we share impressions from our Third workshop at Antwerp, a Technical Meeting at Brighton that implemented relevant project findings to the Lucerna Magic Lantern Web Resource <http://www.slides.uni-trier.de/> and are happy to present the opening of the Magic Lantern and Lantern Slide Catalogue Collection that we realised together with our partners at Media History Digital Library <http://mediahistoryproject.org/magiclantern/>. But this year is not yet over, and there are some lantern shows and public talks in December. We also look



forward to another year of collaboration with our conference as highlight.

May you enjoy some free days with good drink and food at the end of the year!

Santa Claus cheering after the year's work is done.

Image taken from www.luikerwaal.com

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From the Project Coordination

The Call for Contributions for our International conference ***A Million Pictures: History, Archiving, and Creative Re-use of Educational Magic Lantern Slides*** (29 August – 1 September 2017, Utrecht) is open. You can access the Call for Contributions in PDF, Docx or HTML format or via <http://a-million-pictures.wp.hum.uu.nl/call-for-contributions/> .

The deadline for the submission of proposals is **31 January 2017**.

Information about the conference will be updated regularly via the conference website <http://a-million-pictures.wp.hum.uu.nl/conference/>

Short notes, images, articles, questions, requests, comments on this newsletter and more are highly welcomed! Please send them by e-mail to

Sarah Dellmann: s.dellmann [at] uu.nl

Any items for the next newsletter (February 2017) should be submitted by

27 January 2017

The Magic Lantern Today – Impressions from Workshop #3 at Antwerp

From 27-29 October 2016, the third workshop of *A Million Pictures* took place at the Museum for Contemporary Arts Antwerp (M HKA). Under the title “The Magic Lantern Today – Creative Re-Use of Cultural Heritage” <http://a-million-pictures.wp.hum.uu.nl/workshop-3-launch-creative-re-use-projects/>, artists, curators, lanternists, collectors and researchers presented perspectives on this form of cultural heritage. The vivid exchange on how this material still matters and inspires professionals of various fields today once again proved the rich potential of lantern slides in present day contexts. For the workshop, filmmaker Sarah Vanagt was invited to create a work based on the Robert Vrielinck Collection, a collection of lanterns and slides held by M HKA. The result, the installation *Schijnvis / showfish / poisson brillant* <http://a-million-pictures.wp.hum.uu.nl/exhibition-schijnvis-showfish-poisson-brillant/> was opened at the first evening of the workshop.

Thanks to Gwen Sebus from the Magic Lantern Society for contributing her photos!



Members of the Research team Antwerp in the archive (left) and presentation during the workshop (right)

The Magic Lantern Today (continued)



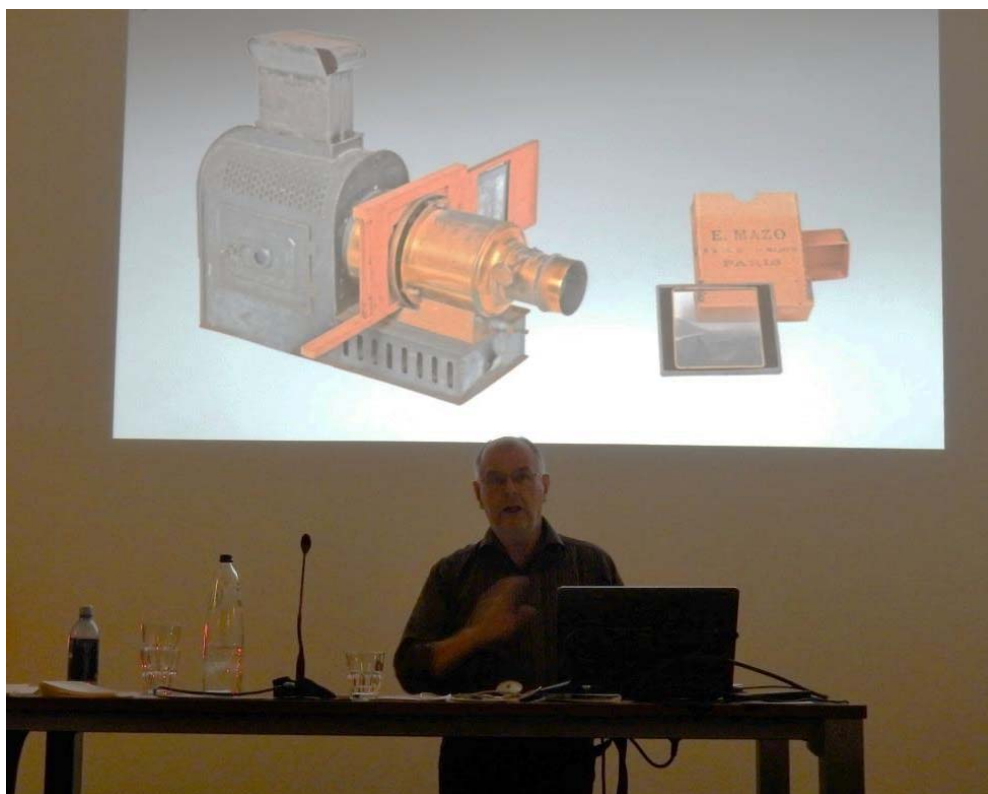
Part of the installation *Schijnvis / showfish / poisson brillant*



Film producer Emjay Rechsteiner from Our Associated Partner Staccato Film explains how he uses historical sources in the process of realising a historical fiction film.

The Magic Lantern Today (continued)

Right:
Collector and
Curator
Patrice
Guérin
lectures
about the
francophone
lantern
culture and
his research
on systems of
illumination.



Participants of the workshop enjoying the presentation.

The Magic Lantern Today (continued)



Lively discussions continued in the coffee breaks

Delegates from the Research Teams Girona and Salamanca with the youngest workshop participant.



The notes from workshop 3, with descriptions of all presentations will be published at the end of the month on the project website.

<http://a-million-pictures.wp.hum.uu.nl/category/publications/workshop-notes/>

Project News

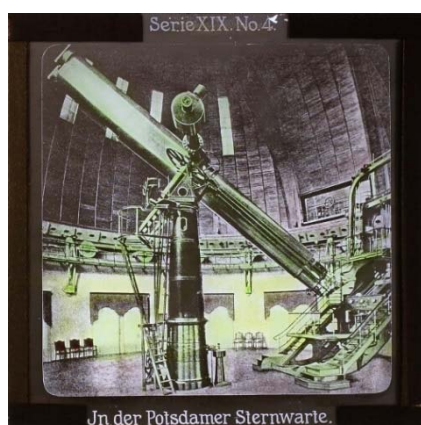
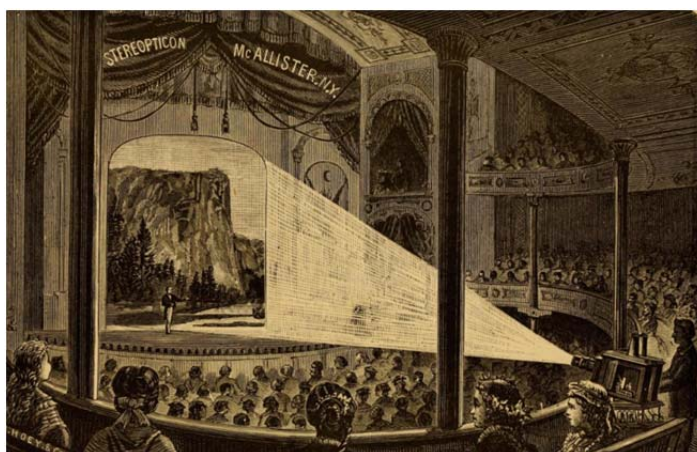
The Spanish journal *Fonseca – Journal of Communication*

<http://revistas.usal.es/index.php/2172-9077/>) dedicates a **special issue to magic lantern slides**. Submissions are welcome in Spanish or English. Deadline for submissions is March 2018. For more information, contact the editors, Carmen Lopez San Segundo (maika@usal.es) and Javier Frutos (frutos@usal.es) from the Research Team Salamanca & Girona.

The **digital collection of Magic Lantern and Lantern Slide Catalogues** is now available online at the Media History Digital Library: Currently, 38 Magic Lantern and Lantern Slides catalogues from six countries are online.

<http://www.mediahistoryproject.org/magiclantern/>

In the short article [Exploring Magic Lantern Catalogues Online](#), Sarah Dellmann introduces the collection and available research tools. The members of *A Million Pictures* thank all collectors who made their catalogue available for scanning and also thank the team of Media History Digital Library, Eric Hoyt, Derek Long and David Pierce for their wonderful work. Additional catalogues in all languages and from all countries are more than welcome. Please contact us if you can to contribute a (digital) catalogue!



From 6 to 8 December 2016, Eric Joris and CREW will install a ‘motion-capture studio’ in the “Garden of Sciences” in Strasbourg (FR) to explore and develop new layers to the immersive performance ***Celestial Bodies. An embodied Orrery/Corps célestes. Le planétaire incarné***. This event is organised by, among others, Nele Wynants and Kurt Vanhoutte from the research

team Antwerp. See <http://a-million-pictures.wp.hum.uu.nl/celestial-bodies/>

Project News (continued)

From 21-25 November 2016, an Expert meeting on further development of the Lucerna database was held at Screen Archive South East in Brighton (UK).



This image was tweeted by Screen Archive South East and retweeted by the Magic Lantern Society with the comment “Day 4 of Magic Lantern Hackathon - metadata, thesauri, image tagging for 19th Century magic lantern slides at School of Media”

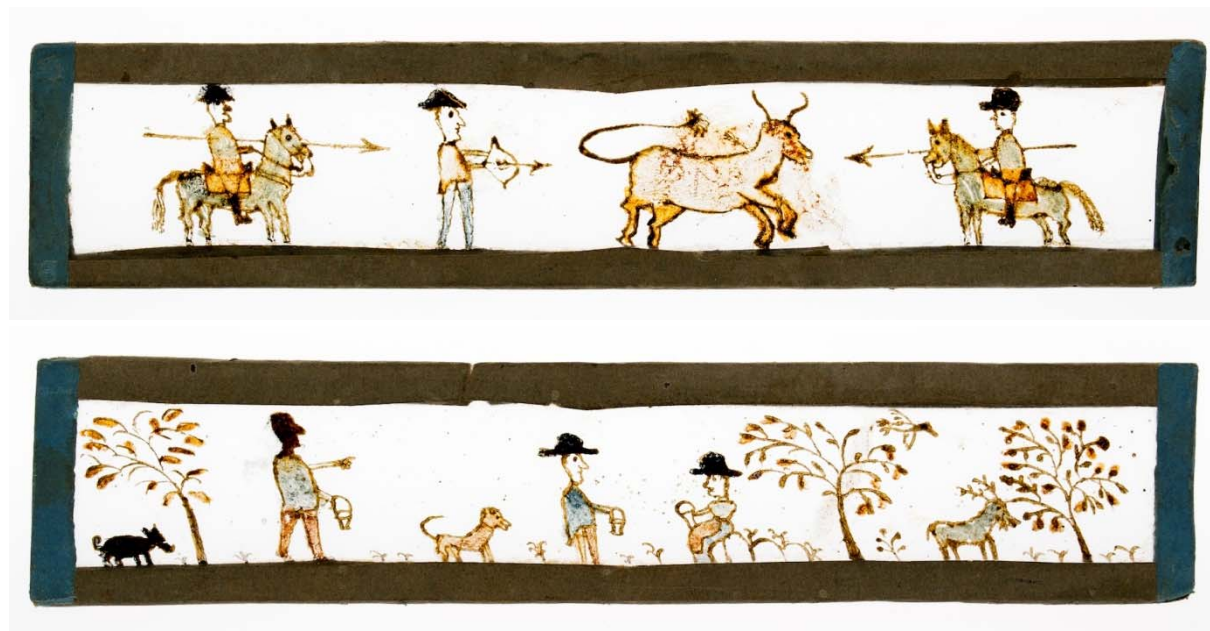
[@artsbrighton](https://twitter.com/artsbrighton)

The participants of the first “**Lucerna Hackathon**” discussed how to implement the requirements of various stakeholders and definitions for magic lantern slides and needs that were developed in the course of the *Million Pictures* project. People from the research Teams Exeter, Girona & Salamanca and Utrecht as well as from our Partners at British Film Institute – Reuben Library, Screen Archive South East and Trier University put their heads and laptops together so many changes were already implemented during the meeting. The expertise from the Coordination Centre for scientific university collections in Germany <http://wissenschaftliche-sammlungen.de/en/> was highly appreciated. We invite people to use Lucerna for cataloguing their collection and are highly interested in their feedback. Please contact Dr Richard Crangle from the Research Team Exeter for more information.

On 12 December 2016, Dr Emily Hayes from the Research Team Exeter will showcase *A million pictures* in her **public lecture: In a Geographical Light**. Emily Hayes will highlight the shaping of 19th and early-20th century geographical knowledge via the Royal Geographical Society’s lantern practices and lantern-slide collections. See <http://a-million-pictures.wp.hum.uu.nl/lecture-be-inspired/>

Series: Favourite Slide

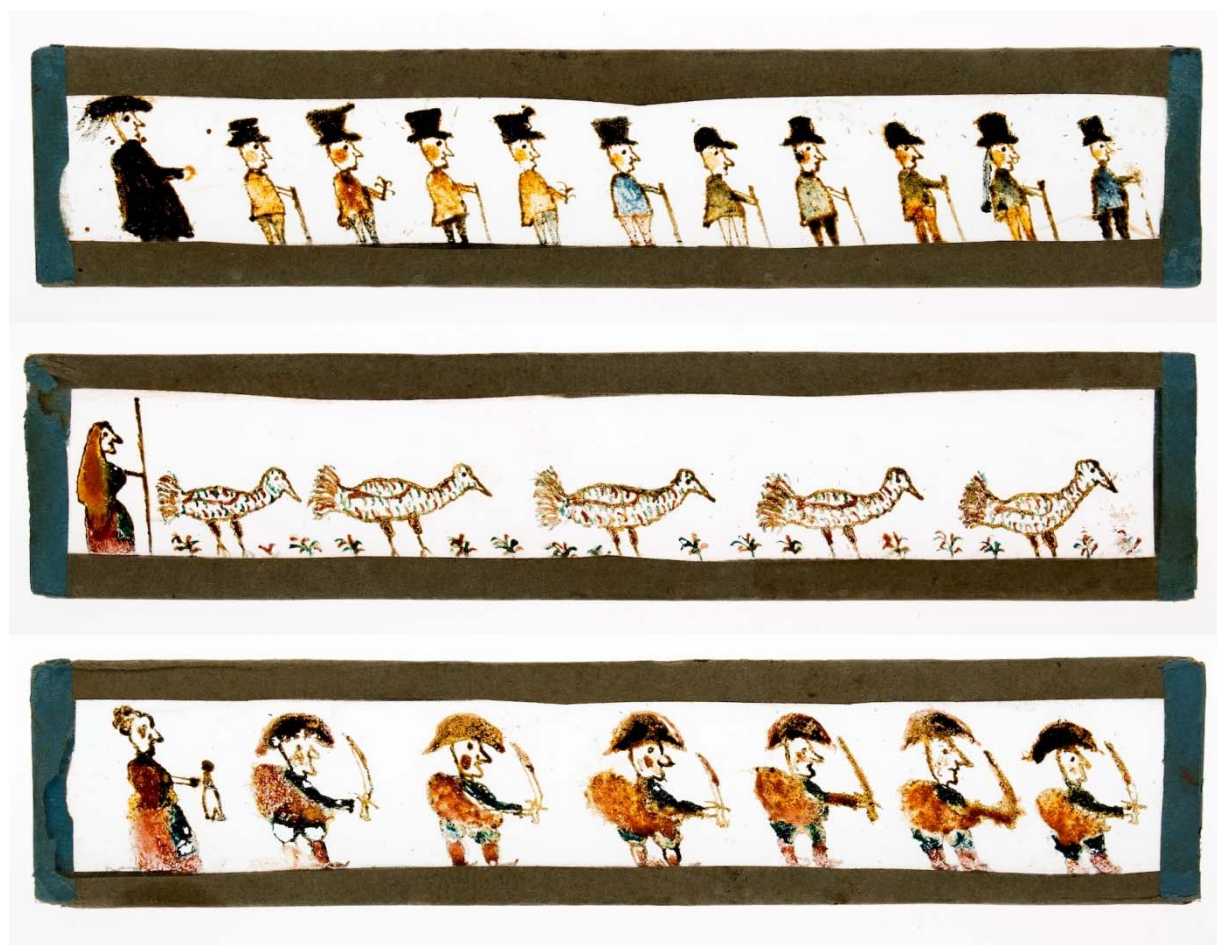
In every issue, one project member of the A Million Pictures team describes their favourite slide. This time, Daniel Pitarch Fernández from the Research Team Girona introduces his favourite slide set.



These days I am digitizing the lantern slides collection of Museu del Cinema—Col·lecció Tomàs Mallol (Girona). Under the copy stand I have seen countless slides, some of them quite beautiful (there is a moonlight scene in the ruins of an ancient temple, with two men wearing hats watching the moon appear behind the clouds... that has something similar to a De Chirico's beauty), amusing (a funny young man in profile showing his rather long tongue), with wonderful painting techniques (I have to show you, some other time, a beautiful harbour night slide and its sky made of fingerprints) or slides that left me guessing (how many different patterns were used in chromatrope slides? Is there a limited number of them? Some should be in the history of *calculated movements*—paraphrasing Larry Cuba's film). But among all them, today I choose to show you this slide set.

I could understand it, if maybe some of you don't agree in finding them beautiful, but I really do. Of course, an undeniable but accidental beauty in them is the beauty of difference. In the midst of so much XIXth century aesthetics these slides shine. Their drawing style, with all its naivety and unprofessional frankness, has a strange appeal.

Series: Favourite Slide (continued)



Maybe it is the appeal of *art brut*; but if this is so, the slides really seem to embody this perfectly (not everything common people produce is exhibited in museums like the Collection de l'art brut in Lausanne or the American Folk Art Museum in New York). Nowadays some artists and animators like David Shrigley, Phil Mulloy or Peter Millard use, consciously and successfully, an apparently amateurish and ugly-at-first-glance graphic style; something that not all artists are capable of (I know it is a commonplace, but trying to forget or twist your technical skills, whether in drawing or music, is not something easy to do).

Some details in the slides are very interesting. The animals drawn are splendid: take a look at that bull in the first slide or at those birds (chickens, maybe?) in the fourth. And what about that face under a shadow in slide number two?

Series: Favourite Slide (continued)

It must have been painted black on purpose, but why? Who is he? I realise that this is going too far with my reading of these slides, but with these trees and figures, this particular slide makes me think about Yuri Norstein's *Tale of Tales* (1979); as if somebody, after watching such a beautiful film, needed to draw his own version of it. Similarly, in the end, this slide set is so beautiful because you can feel the love of the person who made it: the fascination and love for the magic lantern that made him or her willing to draw some slides themselves. The love of an amateur, you may say, but is it not a great compliment to arouse that kind of love?

Nothing is known about these slides. Neither the author, nor the year of production (only the format and paper frame can be approximately dated). The set is formed by thirteen slides, showing rural life, a funeral procession and war. Some figures seem to wear a traditional Catalan hat called a *barretina* and the soldiers could remind us of French soldiers during the Napoleonic Wars. Besides that, not a clue of anything. Not much knowledge, then, but a lot of love.



Daniel Pitarch is working for A Million Pictures in Girona. He has taught video and animation in an art school (EADT) and film and animation history in different universities (UdG and UOC). He also plays music for silent films with his band Mamut Cinema.

Daniel Pitarch's favourite slides are held in the collection of the Museu del Cinema—Col·lecció Tomàs Mallol (Girona).

News

Lantern enthusiasts in and around **The Hague (NL)** should not miss the winter exhibition in Museum Hofwijck <http://www.hofwijck.nl> , which features lantern slides, workshops and other activities for (grand)parents and their children at the Huygens family former land residency. The special exhibition runs from 13 December 2016 to 14 January 2017.

At **IJsselstein (NL)**, the annual winter event “Sprokkelroute” will take place on Friday evening, 16 December with performances by IJsselsteiners in their living rooms, backyards and garages. As in the last years, collector and performer Frans Mooi will give short Christmas-inspired lantern shows between 19:30 and 22:30. More information can be found at <http://www.sprokkelroute.nl/> .



At Ghent (BE), you will have possibly the last chance to witness the **Laterna Magica Galantee Show**, put together by private collector and performer



Herman Bollaert. The show combines all kinds of special effects of the analogue age to achieve a “phantasmagoria of light, colour, movement and sound” by using hand painted slides, a triple lantern and live music . The Spectacle will take

place on 17 and 18 December 2016. The trailer on Vimeo <https://vimeo.com/190883676> and the Facebook page also contain information about booking: <https://www.facebook.com/Laternamagicainfo/>

An **interview with Prof. Erkki Huhtamo**, a leading scholar in the field of media history, is published on Foucault Blog. Read the interview here: <http://www.fsw.uzh.ch/foucaultblog/featured/158/from-media-archaeology-to-media-genealogy-an-interview-with-erkki-huhtamo>

News (continued)

The UMIS (University Museums in Scotland) and SUSCAG (Scottish Universities Special Collections and Archives Group) have organised the **conference 'Beyond the Lecture Theatre'**, at the University of Aberdeen, 26-27 January 2017. The conference explores the varied and innovative ways in which curators, archivists and researchers have engaged students, young people and adults with their collections, for example by supporting research and teaching to volunteer programmes, social events and the co-production of exhibitions and public events. To see the full programme and register go to:

<http://www.abdn.ac.uk/events/beyondthelecturetheatre>

The Call for Contributions and Panels for the 11th Science in Public conference (10-12 July 2017) at the University of Sheffield is now open. In the light of recent developments, the organisers ask for contributions to the question:

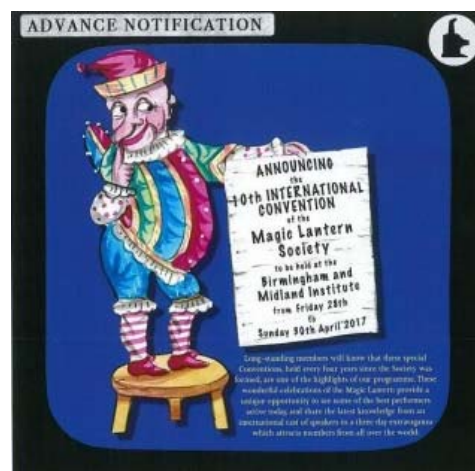


“How do science and technology affect what it means to be human?” See

<https://scienceinpublic.org/science-in-public-2017/>

Proposals can be submitted until 31 January 2017 at bit.ly/sip17panels

Booking is now open for the 10th Magic Lantern Convention held at the [Birmingham and Midland Institute](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/midland-institute) from **Friday 28th to Sunday 30th April 2017**. Every four years the Magic Lantern Society of the UK hosts an International Convention. The convention features a full programme of lectures and shows, an exhibition, a collectors' market, a Gala dinner and culminates with an auction. See <http://www.magiclantern.org.uk/convention/>



About & Editorial

This newsletter concerns 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



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 Daniel Pitarch. Photos of the Antwerp workshop by Gwen Sebus.