

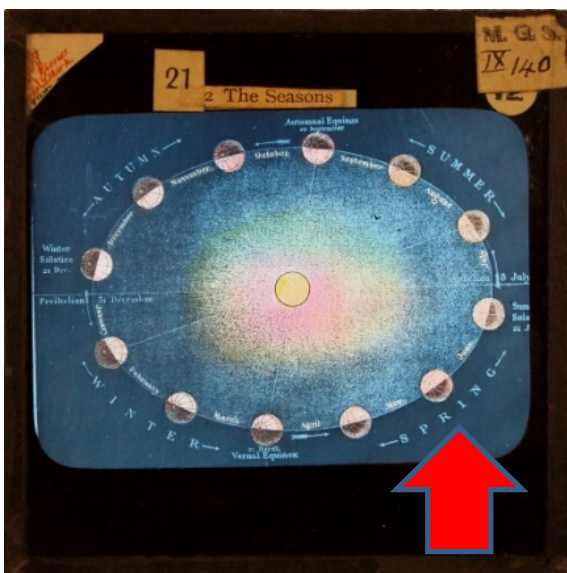
A Million Pictures



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

Newsletter # 09 | April 2017

This newsletter is fully packed with announcements, articles and news and counts four extra pages. We expanded our network through cooperation with researchers from the project Constructing Scientific Communities in a workshop in London, to researchers in Early Cinema studies during a roundtable on the magic lantern at the 11th seminar on the history and origins of early cinema in Girona. Our contacts with the Institute for Art History in Florence, Italy will result in more slide catalogues made available online.



Preparations for the *A Million Pictures* conference in August are well underway (more in newsletter #10) and the production of the DVD with examples of creative re-use has started. The explanation for this increased energy can only be the change of seasons, as illustrated by this lantern slide. We hope you enjoy this newsletter and wish you lots of positive energy throughout the seasons!

Image: Slide "The Seasons" from set [Astronomy lecture](#) (York & Son, n.d.). Digitized by Richard Crangle. Manchester Museum Collection, taken from Lucerna, www.slides.uni.trier.de/slide/index.php?id=5109136

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From the Project Coordination

We are very proud to announce that our project progress was graded “excellent” by the evaluation committee of our funders.

We are busy **finalizing the schedule for the A Million Pictures conference**.

What we can promise already is a truly interdisciplinary conference with presenters and performers from various backgrounds and continents! Keep an eye on our conference website for updates on the programme and information for contributors, speakers, and guests in the tab “conference”.

<http://a-million-pictures.wp.hum.uu.nl/>

Registration for the conference will be possible from 1 May until 15 August.

Short notes, images, articles, questions, requests, comments on this newsletter and more are highly welcomed! Any items for the next newsletter (June 2017) should be submitted by **29 May 2017** to Sarah Dellmann (s.dellmann@uu.nl)

Project News

The Girona Team is happy to announce that the **digitization of the lantern slides of Museu del Cinema–Col·lecció Tomàs Mallol is now completed**. The digitization was carried out by researchers of the team Girona in collaboration with our associated partner, Museu del Cinema. The slides were photographed on both sides (for research purposes) and also the transparency alone (for re-use purposes). Moving slides were photographed in more than one position and also digitized in a video file. A sample of these images will be used in the temporary exhibition to be opened in June at Museu del Cinema, in an interactive tool developed for this exhibition by CIFOG



(announcement of the exhibition below), and in the Linternauta App developed by the Salamanca Team. The import of Museu del Cinema-Col·lecció Tomàs Mallol into Lucerna will begin soon.

Images: slides from the Col·lecció Tomàs Mallol with different mechanisms for movement.



Frank Kessler from the Research Team Utrecht and Sabine Lenk from the Research Team Antwerp published their joint **article “Une ‘collection virtuelle’. Les plaques de projection pour l’enseignement de la société Ed. Liesegang en Allemagne avant 1914”** in *Transbordeur: photographie histoire société* no, 1 (2017), pp. 96-105.

The annual journal is dedicated to the history of photography and edited by scholars from the Universities of Lausanne and Geneva, Switzerland. Its first issue centres on the transnational history of museums and collections of visual documentation around 1900. [Read the full article](#) in the green OA version via the Repository of Utrecht University.



Project News (continued)



More news from Girona: Jordi Pons and Daniel Pitarch published the **article “History of a fantoscope: a device for education in nineteenth-century Girona”** in *Early Popular Visual culture* 15 (1) 2017 (pp. 83-99).

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/17460654.2016.1270403>

In this article, the authors describe the astonishing discovery of a fantasmagoric lantern (see image) in the archives of a former high school in Girona and trace how the object got to Girona as well as the contexts of its use.

The **Wikipedia list of lantern slide collections** was accepted by the Wikipedia editorial team. The list is an initiative of Anastasia Kerameos, librarian at British Film Institute. The aim is to give institutions a place to make the existence of a collection known, even if it is not yet catalogued (which often is the precondition for making information available online). So researchers and interested parties will know where to find out more. In its present form, the list is still a stub - we invite everyone who wants their collection publicly known to edit the page and add theirs:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_lantern_slide_collections



Fig. 154. Automatischer Apparat für Lichtbild-Reklame.

Sabine Lenk (team Antwerp) and Frank Kessler (team Utrecht) participated in a workshop on screen advertisement held in Sigtuna near Stockholm on March 2-4, 2017. They gave a presentation entitled "**Projection Media and Advertisement in Public Spaces before 1914**".

*The caption to the illustration translates:
“Automatic apparatus for slide advertising”*

Report: Magic Lantern and Science Workshop Report

By Joe Kember

In collaboration with the [Constructing Scientific Communities](#) project, *A Million Pictures* had a successful day at the [Royal Institution](#) in London, with a day of papers and presentations dealing with the multiple intersections between the magic lantern and aspects of popular science, finishing up with a fantastic entertainment from Jeremy Brooker.

The workshop on 17 March was sold out weeks before the event, with a great range of academics, independent scholars and historians, curators and archivists, and enthusiasts from all walks of life in attendance. It was great to see members of the Dutch, British, Belgian, and Spanish teams giving papers and in the audience, as well as the project team from Constructing Scientific Communities.

The papers delivered were extremely varied, with panels dealing with popular science, archives and archiving, and the materiality of the lantern. After Sally Shuttleworth (Oxford) and Geoff Belknap (Leicester) opened proceedings, Iwan Morus (Aberystwyth) provided an



interesting account of the magic lantern and some of its related technologies as a way of examining the ambiguities of seeing and distinguishing between representing facts and creating illusions during the nineteenth century. Then our own Sarah Dellmann (Utrecht) presented some of her most recent research concerning scientists' strategies of presentation a public image through lantern slides, dealing especially with slides of expeditions 1900-1950 that are held in Utrecht University Museum collections. Charlotte New, the Curator of Collections at the RI then gave a very welcome presentation about the slide materials held on-site, with much excitement generated by the recent discovery of slides which appear to have been used by John Tyndall, the Royal Institution's Professor of Natural Philosophy (1820-93) in his own lectures. We expect more news on that soon.

Magic Lantern and Science Workshop (continued)

In the second panel, both Frank Gray (Screen Archive South East, Brighton) and Phil Wickham (Bill Douglas Cinema Museum, Exeter) detailed lantern strengths in their collections, with Frank also highlighting the significant influence of Citizen scientist/lanternists such as T C Hepworth in the latter decades of the Nineteenth Century. Million Pictures' own Emily Hayes then detailed one aspect of her research into the Royal Geographical Society, explaining the formative influence of Tyndall's scientific lantern presentations on the teaching methods of Halford Mackinder. The day's final session began with a fascinating paper from Philip Roberts (York), detailing the dependence of the early nineteenth-century lantern industry on a diverse array of economic, commercial, manufacturing and distribution networks and practitioners. Kelly Wilder (de Montfort) considered instead the materiality of photography and projection, with an emphasis on the experiences engendered by different qualities of light. Finally, Deac Rossell concluded with a sweeping account of the magic lantern's "scientific birth" across three centuries. Richard Crangle and Joe Kember (Exeter) rounded off the day on behalf of Million Pictures, with Richard giving a helpful introduction to Lucerna.

After a wine reception and an opportunity to peruse the RI's collections, Jeremy Brooker gave his performance, 'A Light on Albermarle Street' with a beautiful triunial projector and a science flavour, drawing on his impressive knowledge of the field and once again featuring Tyndall's slides, projected, perhaps, for the first time in a century.

Massive thanks to Sally Shuttleworth and Geoff Belknap of the Constructing Scientific Communities project, as well as to Frank James and Charlotte New of the RI, for making the day possible.



Images: left: old and new projection devices at use the RI; right: slipping slide from the Jeremy Brooker's show, illustrating the expression 'travelling with the lantern'

Series: Favourite Slide

In every newsletter, members of the research team or our partners share their fascination with lantern slides by pointing to (one of) their favourite source. In this newsletter, the floor is to Ned Thanouser.

“My short story is about this slide: I won it on an eBay auction in February 2006 from a British seller for \$64.



Image taken from Lucerna: <http://slides.uni-trier.de/slide/index.php?id=5108707>

The 23-episode serial, which the slide advertised consisted of two-reel film cliffhanger episodes released weekly by Thanouser starting June 22, 1914. It was one of the first serials produced and released in the United States. *The Million Dollar Mystery* was wildly successful: it earned Thanouser over a million dollars in profit! Notice of this effort was initially publicized on April 1, 1914 in the *New York Dramatic Mirror* which noted:

Series: Favourite Slide (continued)

THANHOUSER THRILLER. *The Million Dollar Mystery* is the latest of the big serial pictures to flash upon the horizon. Thanhouser will produce this feature, and Harold MacGrath, whose *Adventures of Kathlyn* has proven such a hit, will collaborate with Lloyd Lonergan, Thanhouser scenario editor, on the story. *The Chicago Tribune* and over 200 newspapers throughout the country will publish the stories as the pictures are released.

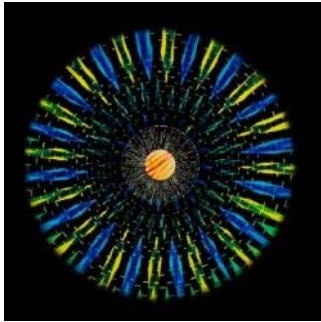
Plans for *The Million Dollar Mystery* have been underway at New Rochelle for some time, and C.J. Hite, Lloyd Lonergan, leading players and producing directors, have been holding secret meetings, the object of which was only last week divulged. *The Million Dollar Mystery* is to be written around the sudden disappearance of an heiress, and her thrilling adventures. Flo LaBadie will be seen as the heiress, and the balance of the cast will be recruited from the strong Thanhouser roster. Marguerite Snow will be seen in the heavy lead as a titled adventuress. James Cruze will portray a newspaper reporter, and Sidney Bracy will be seen as an old faithful family servant. The pictures will be in two reels, issued weekly, starting June 21

The glass slide referenced above was initially a mystery to me as it states “Nine Miles of Love, Mystery, Thrills, and adventure.” When I first read this, I was confused: what did “nine miles” reference? But then I did some simple math: 23 episodes x 2 reels/episode x 1,000 feet/reel= 46,000 feet / 5,280 feet/mile = **8.7 miles of film!** Close enough to round up to nine miles...I get it!

So, you can imagine this glass slide was perhaps targeted to curious mathematicians in Great Britain where it was used by the Reynolds Newspaper to draw audiences into theatres. We do have surviving copies of the novelization (hard copy book form) that Harold MacGrath published in *The Chicago Tribune* with the release of each episode, but it is sad for me to report, however, that there are no known extant prints from any of *The Million Dollar Mystery!*”

Ned Thanhouser is head of Thanhouser Company Film Preservation, Inc.
[Glass slides of the Thanhouser Collection](#) were added to Lucerna in 2016

Upcoming Activities

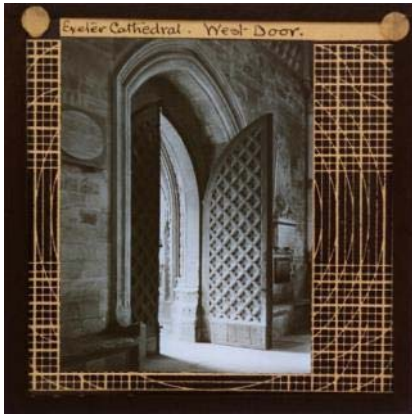


Temporary Exhibition *Light! Magic Lantern and the Digital Image* (27 June 2017-January 2018) in Girona
by Jordi Pons and the Girona Research Team

On 27 June, the temporary exhibition *Light! Magic Lantern and the Digital Image. Affinities between the Nineteenth and Twenty-first Century* will open at Museu del Cinema (Girona). This exhibition has three main goals. First, to show the magic lantern slides collection of Museu del Cinema. Usually, only a little part of this collection is on display in the permanent exhibition. In the temporary exhibition, visitors will be able to see many more!

Second, we want to communicate to the general public the importance of the magic lantern and its popularity in eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. And thirdly, and maybe a bit daring, to establish connections between the uses of magic lantern in the nineteenth century and the digital culture of the twenty-first: technology changes, but intentions, uses and motivations behind the images are similar. By tying the present, digital world to the past, we aim to attract a young audience for the magic lantern and make them discover the foundations of our visual culture. This exhibition is realised as part of *A Million Pictures* and is produced by Museu del Cinema and University of Girona (with funding of MINECO). The exhibition will run until January 2018, entrance is free. In the context of this exhibition, Museu del Cinema has reached an agreement of collaboration with CIFOG, a professional school specialized in 3D animation, computer games and interactive media. Teachers and students will develop an interactive tool for this exhibition using a touchscreen, that recreates the playfulness of lanternists handling the slides, but in a digital environment. The visitors of the museum will be able to choose from a sample of 60 slides and play/perform them as a lanternist using various mechanisms: levers, rackworks, etc. Via the touchscreen, the users select slides and play/perform them, the result will be a magic lantern session, displayed in a video projector. For obvious reasons, touching the original slides is impossible for the visitors of the exhibition, but through the digital interactive tool, we can recreate this experience for a general public.

Upcoming Activities (continued)



Save the date! The last workshop of our series, **Workshop 4 “Evaluating the Project & Setting the Agenda”** will take place from **11 - 13 January 2018** in Exeter, UK. During this workshop, we will look back on the achievements of the projects and look forward to set the agenda for future research into magic lanterns, slides, their preservation and the contexts of their use. Please get in touch and tell us your ideas of things you would like to cover in

our final hurrah! The workshop is open to interested stakeholders; more will be published on <http://a-million-pictures.wp.hum.uu.nl/workshop-4/>

Every year, EYE Film Institute Netherlands and the University of Amsterdam present a **series of public lectures** devoted to notable projects in the field of film restoration and film heritage. In the session of **Monday, 8 May 2017 from 16:00-18:00**, Giovanna Fossati (Chief curator at EYE and professor at the University of Amsterdam) and Sarah Dellmann (Research Team Utrecht) will present examples of preservation, research and uses of lantern slides from the collection of the film museum. Annet Duller and Wim Bos will give a lantern show accompanied with live music. For more information and reservation of tickets: www.eyefilm.nl/thisisfilm

In the first two weeks of September, Joe Kember from the Research Team Exeter will **be in Australia visiting archives and project partners** on Million Pictures’ sister project in Australia, ‘Heritage in the Limelight’. Do get in touch with him if you have any points of interest to share with our colleagues in Australia: e-mail:

J.E.Kember@exeter.ac.uk

The [10th international Magic Lantern Convention](#) (28-30 April) at Birmingham, UK will feature, among others, the **Lantern Peep Show** by Tony Lidington that was created as part of *A Million Pictures Creative Re-Use Activities*. Don’t miss it!



News from Other Projects

Prof. Annie van den Oever, André Rosendaal and Bernd Warnders from the University of Groningen (NL), have been working since the spring of 2015 on a project called “**Media Heritage**”. In the course of the project, they experimented with different types of 3D objects and how these objects could be used in research and education. The aim was to set up a framework to present a collection of media apparatuses on online platforms. The project was completed in 2017; the project report is available for download via the website of the [Network of Experimental Media Archaeology](#).



The [Online Exhibition Into the Archive. On the Materiality of Photographs](#) (English/Italian/German) is available at the website of the Kunsthistorisches Institut Florenz (Institute for Art History in Florence). This online exhibition argues that archives are not only places where photographs are passively conserved; archives also actively transform them into material objects. Four academic photo-archives from the field of architecture and art history are put in the spotlight.



Noa Kollaard, master student in Conservation and Restoration of Cultural Heritage at the University of Amsterdam, **seeks advise for her a research on diaphanorama plates** in the collection of the Rijksmuseum (Amsterdam, NL). Diaphanorama plates are cold painted glass plates that usually come in sets of three. Each plate depicts the fore-, middle- or background of an image. Any reference to restoration of these objects as well as their original functions and exhibition contexts is welcome!

Please email to noa.kollaard@student.uva.nl .



Set of three diaphanorama plates, depicting a battle on a village square. Wood, glass and paint, 36 cm x 43 cm x 0.8 cm. Amsterdam: Rijksmuseum, c. 1750-1830. [Inv. no. BK-NM-8462-J/L]



The Big Lanterns in the Robert Vrielynck Collection, or: Performativity as Aspect of Distinction

by Sabine Lenk

We don't know much yet about Robert Vrielynck as a collector, but one thing is certain: he was interested in transformations. When he acquired a new film-related object, he looked for the difference in “aggregates” (if one may use this word). He wanted to learn more about the changes in form and size, function and functioning etc. It was not so much that, when buying cameras, projectors and optical apparatuses, he intended to study “principles” to represent movements (by analysis, by synthesis) through the ages, as many of his fellow-collectors did. When one looks at how and what he collected, one gets the impression that he needed to understand the (often minute) differences from one model to the next when a manufacturer brought out a new version of his product.

As for the lanterns in his collection, he most certainly wanted to acquire a variety of different types. Several of his professional lanterns are not yet identified, therefore it is not possible to examine them in chronological order, by countries of origin or by producers. For a first analysis, it is interesting to concentrate on their exterior aspect, which reveals different nuances of performativity. (They must have differed widely in their power of performance, too, but most of the original light sources are gone).

The performative power of a lantern is a mixture of aesthetic form, function in the presentation / program, locality of the performance and its characteristics, immersive capacity of the presentation, auratic presence (“charisma”) and “cooperation” with the showman or lecturer, as an extension of his body *and* as an acting object in its own right. (These ideas were partly inspired by Erika Fichter-Lichte's work on performativity.)

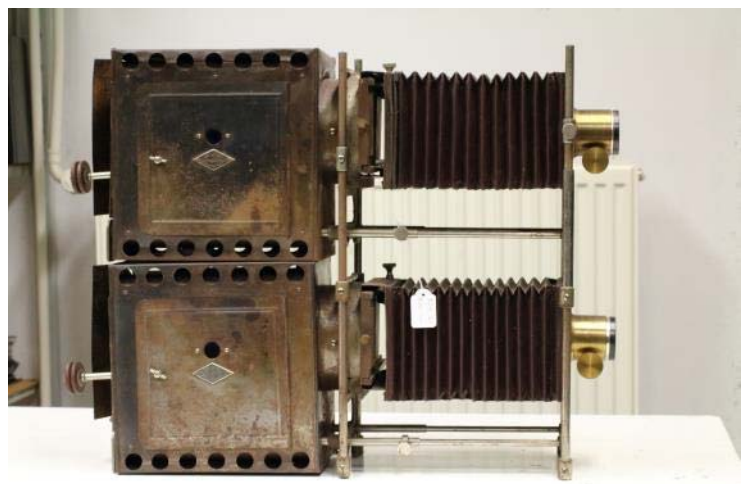
Vrielynck's big lanterns can roughly be divided into four categories of performative power. They could be called: entertainer, intellectual, servant and do-it-yourself.

Big Lanterns (continued)



The “magic” lanterns wanting to impress, amaze, enchant the audience are made of finest mahogany, brilliant copper or brass, aristocratic cobalt blue, they are solid, heavy, massive constructions; nevertheless, they appear elegant, fine, noble. They are made for the “big show”, programmed for an audience that has come to be entertained. They are part of the entertainment, they are supposed to be looked at. These lanterns are the “actors”, the “divas” among the lanterns, they have the highest exhibition value of them all. They could be called the “*entertainers*”.

Others are made out of steel, Russian iron and cardboard, they look technical, practical and functional, their exterior is not shiny nor eye-catching but serious, technical, sober, as if they wanted to signal: don't look at me, look at the screen. Compared to the first category, they are solid, but less heavy, smaller and much easier to transport, quick to mount and almost instantly to use, which makes them interesting for travelling lecturers. They bring the performance to the screen, they are not part of it.



Nevertheless, as they are good-looking objects, they seem to address a cultivated audience: a polytechnic institution, an academy or the university. One could call them the “*intellectuals*” as they seem to give the impression that they don't want to be appreciated for their looks, but for the power of their performance.

Big Lanterns (continued)

The third category is not attractive, but it does not look unhandsome either. These lanterns convey the image of the “hard workers”: solid, sober, often painted in black (to avoid disturbing light reflection), unobtrusive, but not unimpressive. They project whatever and in whatever way the owner has planned his / her presentation: as a narrative fictional show or a sober didactic demonstration, with or without optical effects, to amaze or for instructional purposes. They don't care where they project, as long as it is in a serious institution where looks don't count: a school, a church, an association. Let's call them the “servants”. They are in the service of the community, the intentions of the program, the performance on the screen. Once it's dark in the hall, they are forgotten, and that is how they want it to be.



A last category in the collection is the “do-it-yourself” lantern: not bought from a professional company but made by an amateur with technical skills (according to Laura Minici Zotti, who helped with the identification of the Vrielynck lanterns) it looks

mat and nondescript. Missing the proud radiance of the “entertainer”, the

Big Lanterns (continued)

steely eagerness of the “intellectual”, the voluminous black presence of the “servant” it gives the impression of a shy brother who knows that he is their sibling but feels a bit shabby in their presence as he has no official “birth certificate”, and also “naked” as no company logo adorns its body.

These are just some essayistic ideas. Nevertheless, more research into the relation between performance and performativity of professional lanterns may demonstrate not only which type was better suited for teaching in a classroom or university, and which were those that showmen preferred for their performances. It's certainly not innocent that today's lanternists all seem to privilege the “*entertainers*” as the spectator's closer look on the apparatus is an attractational part of their show which wishes to recreate the “*good old times*”.

Sabine Lenk is researcher at the research team Antwerp and documented the lanterns of the Robert Vrielynck collection. Email: Sabine.Lenk@uantwerpen.be

Illustrations:

“Entertainer”: Lantern by Hughes. Copyright digital image: Luc Schrobiltgen / MuHKA

“Intellectual”: Lantern by McIntosh. Digital image: Sabine Lenk

“Servant”: Lantern by Carpenter & Westley. Digital image: Sabine Lenk

“Do-it-yourself”: Digital image: Sabine Lenk

From the Archives: *Les Enfants peints par eux-mêmes*

Leonoor Kuijk from Ghent University, Belgium, sent us this archive piece, which she found while doing research for her PhD thesis on the representation of national types in illustrated literature in the nineteenth century. Her research project is based in comparative literature studies and investigates the interconnections between different national editions of type collections.

“In the wake of the publication of the English sketch collection *Heads of the People* (1838) and its French imitation *Les Français peints par eux-mêmes* (1839), both offering illustrated essays on people in their daily doing, a whole range of ‘lookalikes’ appeared across Europe. One of these books was *Les Enfants peints par eux-mêmes* (1841) of which the first sketch is titled ‘La lanterne magique’: <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k9739245d/f12.image>



Les Enfants peints par eux-mêmes stands out as it introduces in its first essay all the protagonists of the following essays by way of a description of a magic lantern-performance in which they perform. The children, who are presented, are themselves watching the presentation and the essay provides an interesting panorama. Not only does it introduce the rest of the publication but it also reflects on more common magic lantern performances as it notices that this time not the everyday ‘Mister Sun, Madame Moon and their little Stars’ will feature and that the children, who might feel too old for a magic lantern-performance enjoy it anyway.

Commonly, the sketch series around 1840 were illustrated with wood engravings but *Les Enfants peints par eux-mêmes* also stands out for its full-page illustrations, which are lithographies.”

Leonoor Kuijk is a PhD candidate at Ghent University: e-mail: l.kuijk@ugent.be

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



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 texts are written by Joe Kember, Frank Kessler, Noa Kollaard, Leonoor Kuijk, Sabine Lenk, Daniel Pitarch and Ned Thanhouser.