

A Million Pictures



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

Newsletter # 13 | February 2018

The New Year started as vibrantly as we finished the old: in January, we held the last workshop of our *Million Pictures* project in Exeter, and although this project approaches its end, our colleagues in Trier are about to launch their tools for digital lantern research, our colleagues in Australia are about to reach the summit of their work and a large project on the cultural impact of lantern culture in Belgium is about to start.

But we, too, have four more months ahead, several articles and reports to write, a festive closing event in May and two more newsletters to inform you about our project outcomes and those of our partners. 2018, again, promises to be another fruitful year of lantern research!



Image taken from *Lucerna Magic Lantern Web Resource*,
www.slides.uni.trier.de/slides/index.php?id=5102927

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From the Project Coordination

The DVD “**A Million Pictures. Magic Lantern Heritage Today. Examples of Creative Re-Use**” is still available, but be quick if you want to obtain one of the last 10 copies. The DVD is a compilation of 12 short films that were created as part of the creative re-use activities of the project.

To order a copy, e-mail Sarah Dellmann. The DVD is available free of charge. First come, first serve!

If you have **something to share, be quick!** This project will only have two more newsletters (April 2018 and end of May 2018) and I am especially still looking for items for the “favourite slide” series.

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 should be submitted by

30 March 2018

Impressions from the Exeter Workshop, 11-12 January

by Gillian Moore & Joe Kember. Photos by Ana David Mendes.

The final workshop of the *Million Pictures* Project was held in Exeter, where over fifty participants arrived for two days of presentations, discussion, and entertainment. The workshop took place at the Royal Albert Memorial Museum in Exeter and was formally opened by Camilla Hampshire, the Museum's Director, who welcomed the delegates and reflected on the symbiosis between the Museum's strapline of "Home to a Million Thoughts" and the project. Joe Kember, PI for the UK project, acknowledged the central role the RAMM had played in the course of the project, and thanked Camilla and other staff for the time and attention they had given to research concerning lantern slides across the last three years. This was an excellent example of partnership between the University, a European project, and the Museum.

Typifying the variety of material presented at the project, Jason Bates' research into the historical use of magic lantern slides in medical teaching from as early as the 1850s; Karen Eifler's paper on use of the lantern in social reform; and Michael Hammond's account of 'Roll of Honour' films which presented images of Great War heroes and the deceased to cinema audiences in a fashion that strongly resembled a lantern style of presentation. All three papers spoke to the growing diversity of lantern research and the multitude of disciplines, from medical history, to social history, to film studies, in which it is beginning to gain a more prominent foothold.

The second panel dealt with questions of performance and aspects of practice-based research. Tony Lidington, showman and performer, detailed his work on his peep show, which incorporated dozens of slides digitised by *Million Pictures* from the RAMM. Jeremy Brooker then outlined his fascinating research into Henry Jackson Morton, a college lecturer at Philadelphia Technical Institute, who had to make the choice between an academic career in science and an



alternative one as a showman and magic lanternist. Brooker concluded his presentation with a fascinating demonstration of the range of ways a science lantern could be used. Nick Hiley used the lantern for a show on a seafaring theme. Working through some beautiful slides and great renditions of lantern stories, the high point of the show came with Nick's rendition of a temperance hymn, which came with some tuneful contributions from the audience!

Friday began with a panel dealing with ongoing aspects of the project, including Sara Dellmann's update on introductory manuals for users of the LUCERNA database, and Sabine Lenk's update on the Digitisation Working Group. Following this, Kurt Vanhoutte presented the B-MAGIC project of which he will be the principal investigator. B-MAGIC will write a history of the Magic Lantern and its Cultural Impact as mass medium in Belgium between 1830-1940 (see article in this newsletter).

Ian Christie discussed the use of early projectors which could show either slides, or films, or a mixture of both, ending with some useful and open questions concerning this largely untrodden aspect of media history. Francisco Javier Frutos Esteban and Maria Carmen Lopez San Segundo presented their research project on magic lantern slides as educational resources for teaching in Spanish secondary schools. Ariadna Lorenzo Sunyer presented a paper on Ad Reinhardt's use of magic lantern slides in Art Education.

Mary Borgo described a ground-breaking methodology for lantern research, which combined Geographic Information Systems (GIS) with accounts of magic lantern performances to pinpoint the locations of magic lantern shows.

Matched against data already held on the LUCERNA database this information could be used to create a map of the locations of the slides in LUCERNA and re-imported to the database. John Plunkett outlined his research into local opticians' participation in the circulation of magic lantern slides between the 1820s and 1880s. Joe Kember returned attention to global trade patterns, summarising his recent research into the international peregrinations of celebrity lecturers and their magic lantern shows, research which could well benefit from GIS technology.

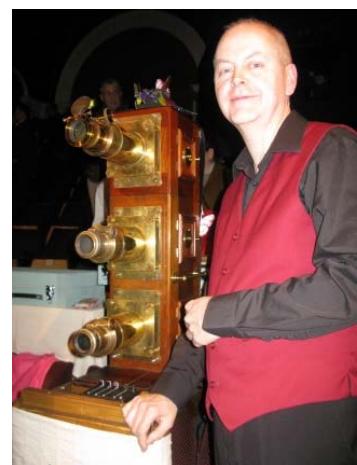
The final panel drew things back to questions of Museum and educational contexts for lantern slides. Jenny Durrant from RAMM explained how museums

can use their magic lantern slide collections to engage with the public. Ana David Mendes focused on the ways in which the Museum of the Moving Image in Leiria used lantern heritage in interactive displays, educational facilities, and as resources for researchers and artists. Phil Wickham's paper concentrated on the use of lantern slide collections at the Bill Douglas Cinema Museum. He emphasised the importance of the contextualisation and reinterpretation of the information which slides offer, and provided several examples of innovative teaching using magic lantern slides.



In the final session of the afternoon Ine Van Dooren mused on the theme of change, modelling a sequence of cleverly-crafted millinery to emphasise the series of changes initiated by the *Million Pictures Project*, by new forms of research, and by new patterns of university funding and archival practice. Delegates were regaled by an "M.P. hat" adorned with optical entertainment devices, an "old archivist hat", a "digital hat" complete with computer, a "director's hat", "top hat", "bowler hat", and a "flame hat". Replacing the conventional closing address, this astute combination from a renowned 'millinerista' provided a fitting conclusion to two busy days of presentations and was warmly appreciated by an enthusiastic audience.

The final show of Million Pictures took place at Exeter's Barnfield Theatre, featuring Richard Navarro, Nicholas Thurston and Miriam Gould who provided music, poetry, and dance in startling combination with beautiful magic lantern projections provided by Jeremy and Carolyn Booker. The theatre was packed and the show was greeted with rapturous applause. The lantern images including images projected onto live human bodies. Thanks to everyone who participated in producing this show, and thanks, too, to Richard Crangle, who masterminded the logistics of projecting and performing in this space.



Joe Kember and Richard Crangle would like to thank everyone who participated in and attended the workshop, and also our gracious hosts at the RAMM.

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 Martyn Jolly.

Here is a new set of life model magic lantern slides I have just acquired. I love the twin perspectival vanishing points of the first painted backdrop, the photogrammed snow flurries in slide two, and the weirdly frozen Beckettian choreography of the passers-by in the final slide. They were made by Bamforth and Co after 1897 in the UK. The song originates from the US in 1877 and is by George W Persley, Arthur W French, George Clare. (Although interestingly it was re-published in 1887 under the names of the American stage actress Miss Jennie Calef and producer H. P. Danks, after they had used it in their play “Little Muffets” — a clear case of IP theft and copyright infringement.) Later Bamforth and Co. recycled the original shots as postcards with the choruses as printed captions. I’m looking forward to one day projecting these slides, perhaps life size and outside in an urban setting, accompanied by a singer, as part of our project *Heritage in the Limelight: The Magic Lantern in Australia and the World*.

Underneath the gas light's glitter,
Stands a fragile little girl;
Heedless of the night winds bitter,
As they round about her whirl.
While the thousands pass unheeding
In the evening's waning hours;
Still she cries with tearful pleading,
Won't you buy my pretty flowers?
Refrain.

There are many sad and weary
In this pleasant world of ours,
Crying in the night winds bitter.
Won't you buy my pretty flowers?

Ever coming, ever going,
Men and women hurry by.



Series: Favourite Slide (continued)

Heedless of the tear drops gleaming.
In her sad and wistful eyes.
While she stands there sadly sighing,
In the cold and dreary hours,
Listen to her sweet voice crying,
Won't you buy my pretty flowers?
Refrain.

There are many sad and weary
In this pleasant world of ours,
Crying in the night winds bitter.
Won't you buy my pretty flowers?

Not a loving word to cheer her.
From the passers by is heard;
Not a friend to linger near her,
With a heart by pity stirred.
On they rush the selfish thousands,
Seeking pleasure's pleasant bowers;
None to hear with sad compassion,
Won't you buy my pretty flowers?
Refrain.

There are many sad and weary
In this pleasant world of ours,
Crying in the night winds bitter.
Won't you buy my pretty flowers?



Martyn Jolly is Associate Professor at Australian National University, Canberra and Chief Project Investigator of the project "Heritage in the Limelight: the magic lantern in Australia and the world". We took this article from the project website of "Heritage in the Limelight" where it was published last year.

E-mail: Martyn.Jolly@anu.edu.au.

To learn more about favourite slides of our Australian colleagues, visit their website at: <http://soa.anu.edu.au/heritage-limelight/favourite-slide/favourite-slide>

Breaking News: Funding for Research on Lantern Culture in Belgium

The *Excellence of Science* programme in Belgium has granted 3.7 million euros to fundamental research into the history of magic lanterns, the first visual mass medium in Belgium. In collaboration with an art college and international partners, six teams of researchers at two Flemish and two French-speaking universities will spend four years researching the magic lantern in Belgium. The project's title is "B-Magic. The Magic Lantern and its Cultural Impact as Visual Mass Medium in Belgium (1830-1940)".



One of the slides held in Belgium Collections

"The magic lantern was one of the first visual mass media. It was used for visual communication in education, religion and politics, but also in science and art", explains Prof Kurt Vanhoutte (University Antwerp). "Our team therefore consists of researchers from cultural history and history of science, media and communication science, and film and theatre history. Together, we will investigate the role of the magic lantern in the first hundred years of Belgian history."

More than 100,000 slides exist in various collections held in Belgian libraries and universities. The subjects are very diverse and vary from geography, anatomy and microscopy to astronomy. Politicians, the clergy and freemasons

Breaking News: Funding (continued)

also projected images of the lives of saints, distant journeys, colonies and symbols in order to help spread their ideas.

A first meeting of the project team is held while this newsletter is sent out. We will inform you about recent developments in the upcoming newsletters. For inquiries, you can contact the spokesperson and coordinator, Prof. Kurt Vanhoutte (University of Antwerp): kurt.vanhoutte@uantwerpen.be.

The other principal investigators are Prof. Ilja van Damme (University of Antwerp), Prof. Dominique Nasta, Prof. Karel Vanhaezebrouck (Université libre de Bruxelles), Prof. Kaat Wils (KU Leuven), Prof. Philippe Marion (Université Catholique de Louvain), Dr Edwin Carels (KASK Gent) and Prof. Frank Kessler (Utrecht University).

B-MAGIC on TV News

On Monday, 22 January 2018, B-MAGIC was on the Belgian TV news of RTBF. Watch the clip three-minute clip (in French) to get a first impression of the material and objectives of the B-MAGIC project.



https://www.rtbf.be/auvio/detail_les-lanterne-magiques-ancetres-du-projecteur-cinematographique?id=2301733

News from other projects

The **Call for Papers and Performances** for the conference “The Magic Lantern in Australia and the World” is now open!

The conference will take place at Australian National University in Canberra held be from **4-6 September 2018**.

This conference is the major event of our Australian Sister project “Heritage in the Limelight”. It promises to be an important conference for international exchange on lantern studies. The deadline for abstract is 30 March 2018.

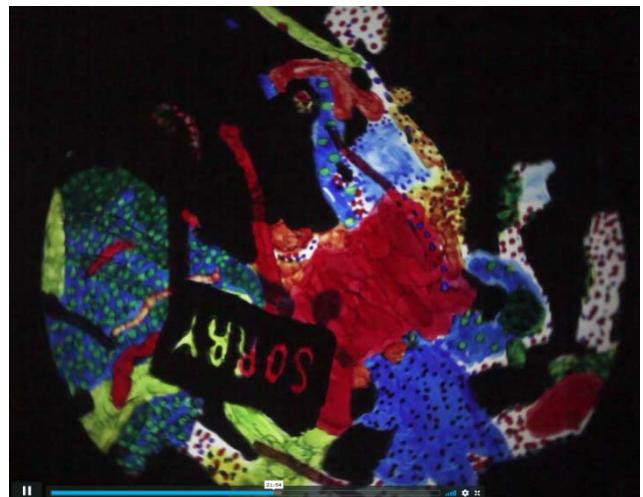
The Call for Papers and more information is available at

<http://soa.anu.edu.au/event/call-papers-and-performances>

And at

<http://soa.anu.edu.au/heritage-limelight>

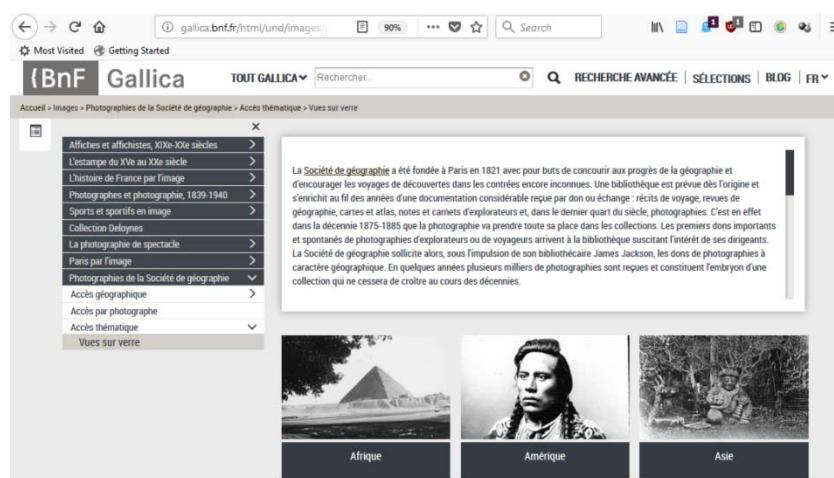
More news from down under: **The Video-Documentation of the *Heritage in the Limelight* Workshop performance**, held in September 2017, is now available on Vimeo: <https://vimeo.com/238873564> (38 Minutes, English) This magic lantern show was performed at the conclusion of the Heritage in the Limelight project's workshop in September 2017. The performance was done with a pair of Steward Dissolving View Lanterns from the 1880s. The show was a melange, combining sets of historic commercial slides with slides made by contemporary artists at the ANU School of Art and Design working off nineteenth century glass. Our colleagues Martyn Jolly and Elisa deCourcy operated the lantern.



The Bibliothèque Nationale de France has created a new online access to browse their **lantern slide collection of the Société de géographie.** on Gallica.fr

The lantern slides are organised by continent and accompanied with information on the location. Visit the collection at

<http://gallica.bnf.fr/html/und/images/photos-SG/acces-thematique/vues-sur-verre>



We also received a **digital new year's wish** from the Magic Lantern Museum Scheveningen (Toverlantaarnmuseum Scheveningen – TOMU), The Netherlands. watch the clip on Youtube: [nieuwjaar 2018002 - YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KJyfjwzXWQo)

The temporary exhibition ***Light! Magic Lantern and the Digital Image.***

Affinities between the Nineteenth and Twenty-first Century is prolonged and will be on display at Museu del Cinema, Girona until 8 April 2018. Entrance is free. Do not miss the digital lantern projection tool that was designed especially for this exhibition! For more information, see the trailer on Vimeo <https://vimeo.com/223658539> or visit the website: <http://www.museudelcinema.cat>



The **Conference of the European Academic Heritage Network** Universeum takes place from 12-15 June in Glasgow. The topic is “Working Together: Partnerships, Co-creation, Co-curation.” The Cfp is closed but registration for conference and the pre-workshop “University Object’s Journeys: From the stores to sharing with different user communities” are open. For more information, see <https://www.gla.ac.uk/events/universeum2018/>



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 Martyn Jolly, Joe Kember, Gillian Moore and Kurt Vanhoutte. Photos by Ana David Mendes.