

A Million Pictures



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

Newsletter # 14 | April 2018

Welcome to the last but one newsletter! In the midst of rounding up the last things, finalizing publications, proofreading our manuals and preparing the project's documentation, we found a moment to put together this newsletter, announcing several lantern shows, a workshop and parts of our already published project documentation.

Enjoy the spring time with some yellow Alpine flowers, preserved for you at our partner Royal Albert Memorial Museum, Exeter!



In the meantime, we turn back to work and will present an extensive last newsletter in less than two months. Here we go!

Digital image © 2015 Royal Albert Memorial Museum and Art Gallery, Exeter. Image available at <https://slides.univ-trier.de/slide/index.php?id=5094282>

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From the Project Coordination

Give away: the cleaning up of the project office starts. We have 7 copies of Claire Dupré-la Tour's PhD thesis, "Intertitre et film narratif de fiction. Genèses, développements, et logiques d'un procédé filmographique, 1895-1916.

L'exemple de la production aux États-Unis et le cas d'Intolérance (D.W. Griffith, 1916)" (in French), which she defended on 29 February 2016 at Utrecht University. Her thesis contains a chapter entirely dedicated to the change of projecting intertitles: first, intertitles were written on magic lantern slides and projected with magic lanterns until the titles became part of the film. The thesis also contains images of such slides, in full colour.

If you wish to receive a copy, please send an e-mail to Sarah before 1 May.

Do not miss your last chance to share with the *Million Pictures* Community your information, thoughts and findings! All items for the next and final newsletter should be submitted by e-mail to Sarah Dellmann: s.dellmann [at] uu.nl

no later than

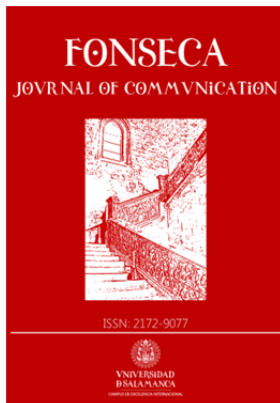
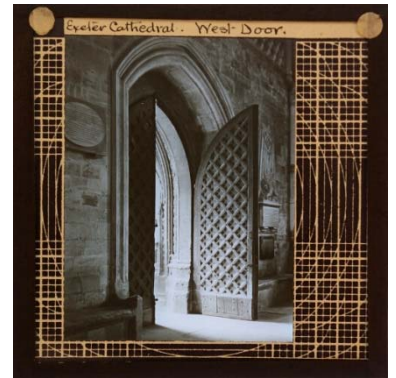
12 May 2018

Project News

The report on Workshop #4 in Exeter is now online. Read about the talks and discussions in the workshop notes written by Gillian Moore:

<https://a-million-pictures.wp.hum.uu.nl/notes-workshop-4/>

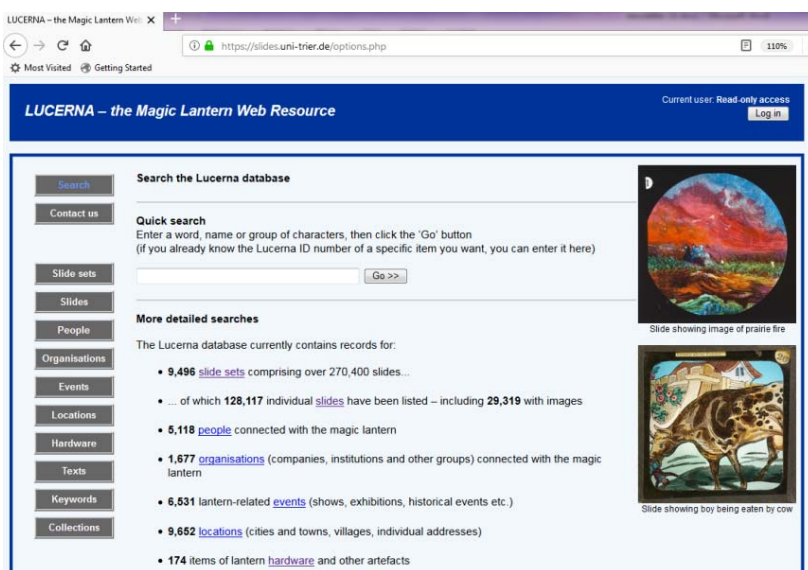
Also online are notes from a discussion of our evaluation of experiences with the creative re-use projects and activities that we developed in the course of the *A Million Pictures* Project. The discussion was held at the Research Team Assembly on 13 January 2018, after Workshop #4. <http://a-million-pictures.wp.hum.uu.nl/discussion-creative-reuse/>



The articles submitted for the special issue of Fonseca – Journal of Communication on the Magic Lantern are currently under review. The special issue of this peer-reviewed, Open-Access online journal is scheduled for publication in June 2018. See the journal's website for updates.

<http://revistas.usal.es/index.php/2172-9077>

The number of slides in **Lucerna – the magic lantern web resource**, is growing



and we are close to documenting the 30,000th slide online! See

<https://slides.uni-trier.de/>

These numbers were the count on 3rd of April 2018....

The Lucerna database currently contains records for:

- **9,496** [slide sets](#) comprising over 270,400 slides...
- ... of which **128,117** individual [slides](#) have been listed – including **29,319** with images

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 favourites. In this newsletter, the floor is to Karen Eifler.



I discovered my favourite slide in an inconspicuous cardboard, I opened in 2010 in the National Co-operative Archive in Manchester where I undertook some research for my PhD project. It was accompanied by the handwritten note "Box 10. Grays Industrial Co-op Society Ltd.", the red sticker "fragile" pointed to something valuable inside: The box contained numerous glass slides which were used in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to spread the idea of co-operation. As I had neither the technical equipment to digitize these slides nor the opportunity to come back, I took at least a photograph of the slide that appealed

Series: Favourite Slide (continued)

to me most (therefore the reflex of the lens) : In front of the Grays Co-operative Store, besides two boxes with co-operative soap is a board announcing a “Lantern Lecture” on the following Saturday in an assembly room, free of charge. I was impressed by the reciprocity of advertisement: for the lecture in front of the store, for the store and for future lectures during lantern lectures. In this kind of loop, (potential) co-operators were permanently reminded of co-operative concerns – and of the regular opportunity to view lantern pictures.

Unfortunately, the text above the announcement which may reveal the title or subject of the lecture, is not readable. As the photograph is undated, we don’t know when exactly the advertised lantern lecture took place. However, exploring the historical background of the production and the use of glass slides by the Grays Industrial Ltd., I was able to find answers to the question when and for what purposes this slide was probably used.

The Grays Co-operative Society was founded in 1866. Its store was opened in



1867 with the aim to provide members with food and other basic commodities at an affordable price: The co-operative movement wanted to enable working-class families to lead a stable economic existence. It also laid particular stress on educating its members.

Local societies were encouraged to hold weekly discussions and courses for adults. From 1890 on, they were called upon to regularly organize lantern lectures and to contribute to the building of a central slide stock by producing (more) slides. This was linked to the urgent concern of extending and strengthening the co-operative movement as a whole.

Series: Favourite Slide (continued)

Obviously responding to these calls, the Grays Co-operative Society announced this lantern lecture to attract (potential) members: just as the co-operative products, the board was placed in front of the store, but slightly at a slant and standing closer to the middle of the pavement. The chance of a free lantern lecture could be the means of arousing the curiosity of passers-by and maybe luring them into the next lantern exhibition where they would get more 'substantial' information.

During the lantern lecture, it was important to impress and to permanently engage co-operators. In and around Grays, this slide and other 'local views' could be used to enhance sympathies towards their organizers: co-operators who saw 'their' store and maybe even some other well-known scenes on the screen, certainly felt proud of local co-operative achievements. The performances, comprising of a lecturer, musical accompaniment and the singing of songs were attractive features.

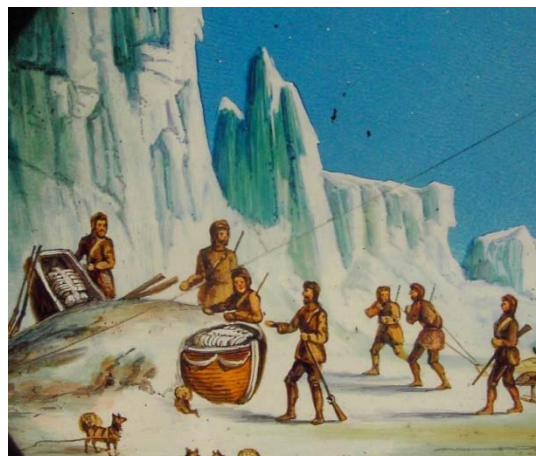
Probably this slide was combined with slides from other societies or dealing with more general co-operative subjects to make audiences realize the 'greatness' of the co-operative movement. Being encouraged during the events to participate directly through the common singing, stage appearances, competitions and the tasting of chocolates, co-operators felt being members of this community. However, when the slide was integrated into lantern performances elsewhere than in Grays, for example to illustrate the diverse co-operative activities in Britain, audiences also became aware of their being part of an audience which reached beyond the actual exhibition – a nationwide, dispersed audience: My inconspicuous slide points to the substantial contribution of social organizations such as the co-operative movement to establish the screen as a centre for visual communication in Britain.

Dr Karen Eifler is an independent researcher, editor and author. Her book "The Great Gun of the Lantern: The use of lantern slides by social organizations in Britain (1875-1914)" (in German) has been published in 2017.

Contact: karen_eifler@web.de

News from other projects

Our Associated Partner EYE Film Institute Netherlands organises a lantern show. Lanternists Annet Duller and Wim Bos will give a **Magic Lantern Show on Sunday 15 April**, at 12:00 and at 13:40. The show is part of the Imagine Film Festival (11-21 April 2018) taking place at EYE in Amsterdam. This year's topic is the fantastic film, and the lantern show is announced to be fantastic, too. The show is not suitable for small children. Tickets can be reserved via the festival's website: <http://imaginefilmfestival.nl/what-is-happening/de-fantastische-toverlantaarn>



Lanternist Frans Mooi will give lantern shows at the **“Lentemaarkt” (Spring market) on Saturday, 12 May** in the fortress WKU in Tullen ‘t Wall, The Netherlands. Short presentations of 20 minutes each will be given regularly between 11:00 and 16:00. If it is sunny, take your bike and visit the place, profiting from, among others, a series of circus slides.

The Programme of the **workshop “The travelling Lantern. Mobility and Migration in the (Trans)national Practice of the Magic Lantern” (18 May 2018)** in Antwerp is now available online at



<https://www.uantwerpen.be/en/projects/b-magic/> .

If you want to join, please register via the link on that website. “The travelling lantern” is the first workshop of the project “B-magic: The Magic Lantern and its Cultural Impact as Visual Mass Medium in Belgium (1830-1940)”, which builds on the work of the A Million Pictures project. B-Magic runs from 2018-2022.

News from other projects (continued)

The **Pre-Cinema Museum in Padua (IT)**, based on the collection on lanternist Laura Minici-Zotti, celebrates its 20th anniversary! See all events on <http://www.miniczotti.it/>



The interdisciplinary **Conference of the Heritage in the Limelight** project in Australia will take place from **4- 6 September 2018** in Canberra, Australia. The paper proposals are currently being reviewed.

Confirmed keynote speaker include Jennifer Tucker (Wesleyan University), an expert in the visual and material culture of technology, science and art, Vanessa Agnew (University Duisburg-Essen), an expert in historical reenactment, and Performance Artist, William



Yang who has had a 30 year theatrical career using projected slides! More information will be made available, soon on the project's website.

<http://soad.cass.anu.edu.au/events/call-papers-performances-heritage-limelight-interdisciplinary-conference>

The **Bill Douglas Cinema Museum, University of Exeter (UK)** offers short term stipends for research in their collection. The museum has over 80,000 artefacts on the long history of the moving image from the seventeenth century to the present day, including material related to magic lantern culture. Deadline for applications is 4 May 2018. See for more information

<http://www.bdcmmuseum.org.uk/research/research-at-the-bill-douglas-cinema-museum/stipends-at-the-bill-douglas-cinema-museum/>

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 Karen Eifler.