



B-magic
CONFERENCE /
WORKSHOP

PROJECTING PATHOS
Emotions and the Magic Lantern

4 December 2020

ONLINE – More info on b-magic.eu

ULB UNIVERSITÉ
LIBRE
DE BRUXELLES



CiASp
Centre de recherche en Cinéma et Art du Spectacle



Projecting Pathos: Emotions and the Magic Lantern

International online conference-workshop: December 4, 2020, 10:00 - 17:00

Please register [here](#) or at www.b-magic.eu by 02.12 to receive an invitation to participate in this online B-magic event.

Projecting Pathos will focus on the role of emotions in magic lantern performances. This international and interdisciplinary workshop is organized by the *Centre de recherche en Cinéma et Arts du Spectacle* (CiASp) of the Université libre de Bruxelles, within the framework of the EOS-funded project [B-Magic: The Magic Lantern and its Cultural Impact as Visual Mass Medium in Belgium \(1830-1940\)](#), and will explore the emotional strategies used during lantern performances, as well as their impact on the spectators. It will bring together prominent scholars working in different fields related to the magic lantern and emotions: media archaeology and the history of emotions.

The magic lantern was used by performers, by teachers and by various social groups to entertain and propagate knowledge, emotional norms and values. In doing so, magic lantern performances did not only represent emotions visually and through voice and text, they also produced them, having effects on the emotional state of the spectator. The medium's potential to provide emotional experiences for diverse audiences lies at the core of its power and appeal. Recognizing the role of emotions is essential in order to explore the cultural impact of the magic lantern. So far, Belgian slide collections have yielded a wealth of material for this area of research. Yet, the emotional scope of the magic lantern performance and the strategies to stimulate and steer emotions have seldom been tackled in media studies.

Keynote lectures will be held by: Anja Laukötter (Max Planck Institute for Human Development, Berlin and University of Strasbourg), Richard Crangle (Independent researcher and Magic Lantern Society) and Vito Adriaensens (Columbia University and ULB). Furthermore the conference-workshop presents live online presentations by B-magic principal investigators and researchers, as well as moderated Q&A sessions.

Programme

Session 1 Emotions and media history - panel chair: Kurt Vanhoutte (UA)

10:00-10:15 **Welcome:** Kurt Vanhoutte (University of Antwerp, B-magic spokesperson) and Dominique Nasta (Université libre de Bruxelles, B-magic Principal Investigator)

10:15-10:45 **Keynote lecture 1:** *Visual media and emotions in the educational context. Historical Perspectives on the beginning of the 20th Century*
Anja Laukötter (Max Planck Institute for Human Development, Berlin and University of Strasbourg)

10:45-11:05 *The optical lantern and the pathos of patriotism Belgian lantern propaganda in the neutral Netherlands (1914-1918)*
Klaas De Zwaan (Utrecht University, Postdoc B-magic)

11:05-11:30 Q&A

11:30-11:45 Break

Session 2 Brand new B-magic research - panel chair: Nele Wynants (ULB)

11:45-11:55 *Eugène Frey's "décors lumineux": A spectacular novelty, a disruptive technology or old wine in new bottles?*
Leen Engelen (University of Antwerp)

11:55-12:05 *The Battle for the Seafarers: The Lantern Projector as a Medium for Information, Education and Entertainment (1880-1930)*
Kristof Looockx (University of Antwerp)

12:05-12:30 Q&A

12:30-14:00 Lunch break

Session 3 Emotions in magic lantern slides and performances – panel chair: Karel Vanhaesebrouck (ULB)

14:00-14:30 **Keynote lecture 2:** *Other people's lives: how Life Model slides attempt to evoke pathos and sympathy (and sometimes succeed)*
Richard Crangle (Independent researcher, Magic Lantern Society)

14:30-15:00 *Affective aesthetics in the life model slides and early films of 'Maison de la Bonne Presse' (1908-1914)*
Dominique Nasta & Bart G. Moens (Université libre de Bruxelles)

15:00-15:15 Break

- 15:15-15:35 **Keynote lecture 3: *A Riot on 23rd Street: Lantern Tableaux Trigger Turn of the Century Tempers***
Vito Adriaensens (Columbia University and Université libre de Bruxelles)
- 15:35-16:00 Q&A
- 16:00-16:30 **Epilogue: *Closing remarks***
Philippe Marion & Sébastien Fevry (Université catholique de Louvain)



Abstracts and Participants

Anja Laukötter

Visual media and emotions in the educational context. Historical Perspectives on the beginning of the 20th Century

Keynote lecture 1

Abstract: This lecture relates magic lantern slides with health education films in Germany and the United States in the first decades of the 20th century, illustrating how these media developed their potential as a teaching tool capable of shaping the emotions and changing the behavior of audiences. The lecture argues that the films' educational goals were inspired by certain contemporary theoretical ideas on the relation between perception, cognition, and emotions. In concentrating on youth as a target audience, it traces the way in which the sciences of psychology and pedagogy discovered the significance of emotions to this specific age group's learning process. The lecture discusses the deployment of both general and specially created media in the classroom as a new educational practice, arguing that they can be read as a negotiation of the modern human subject and its emotion.

Dr. Anja Laukötter is a historian of 19th and 20th Century European history working in the field of social and cultural history as well as in the field of history of science and knowledge. She is a senior researcher at the Center for the History of Emotions at the Max Planck Institute for Human Development and Co-principle investigator of the ERC Advanced grant BodyCapital. The main field of her research is the transnational/global history of media, the history of museums and its collections, (post) colonial history, body history, the history of psychology and pedagogy and the history of emotions.

Klaas de Zwaan

The optical lantern and the pathos of patriotism. Belgian lantern propaganda in the neutral Netherlands (1914-1918)

Abstract: This contribution focuses on lantern propaganda during the First World War. I discuss how lantern slides were used by propagandists in the Netherlands in the process of creating emotional involvement with the Belgian cause. This rhetorical mode of pathos was not addressed through projecting 'spectacular' images of human suffering. Instead, lantern lecturers often showcased photographs of Belgian monumental architecture within an overtly patriotic discourse. The iconography of the images used was only one aspect of this lantern propaganda. Editing, performance, eloquence and the presence of an audience equally played an important role in addressing the pathos of patriotism.

My presentation is based on concrete examples from the many lantern lectures about Belgian architectural history given in the Netherlands. Studying newspapers reports allows present-day researchers to reconstruct at least some of the rhetorical strategies used by lantern propagandists during the war years. At the same time however, the reliability of these sources should not be taken for granted: historical research into the effectiveness of persuasion strategies is notoriously slippery. Nevertheless, I argue that doing such research is a necessary prerequisite to gain more

insight into the functioning of lantern propaganda. By doing so I hope to contribute to a better understanding of the value and scope of contemporary lantern heritage of the First World War.

Klaas de Zwaan is a postdoc in the research project B-magic. He also teaches media history at Utrecht University. His research interest lies mainly in the field of early popular visual culture and the appropriation and reception of war images in particular. Klaas has published on various subjects, ranging from audience reactions to war films during the First World War to local cinema history.

Leen Engelen

Eugène Frey's "décors lumineux": A spectacular novelty, a disruptive technology or old wine in new bottles?

Abstract: After being presented at the 1900 Exposition Universelle in Paris, the *décors lumineux* as invented by the Belgian-born painter and ombriste Eugène Frey toured several music-hall and vaudeville stages in Paris. Frey was then engaged by director Raoul Gunsbourg at the Théâtre de Monte-Carlo, where he created *décors lumineux* for dozens of productions, including *La Damnation de Faust* and *La Flûte Enchantée*. Frey's *décors* were always part of a larger scenography and stage performance. Over the years, his technology seems to have changed very little. Several of the Monegasque productions he participated in were also staged in the Théâtre de la Monnaie in Brussels. After his light faded in Monaco, Frey performed at several theatres in Belgium, including the Groote Schouwburg in Gent and the Théâtre Royal de Liège.

In the presentation I will explain how his technology functioned and outline Eugène Frey's trajectory in Belgium. I will also identify several potential research avenues.

Leen Engelen is a senior researcher at the University of Antwerp where she works on the EOS B-magic Project, and at LUCA School of Arts (KU Leuven). Most of her research focusses on film and visual culture in the 1910s and 1920s in Belgium. Among others she published on film (culture), sculpture and photography in relation to the First World War. Her research was published in several academic books and journals. She is co-editor of the forthcoming book *Revival After The Great War. Rebuild, Remember, Repair, Reform* to be published in open access at Leuven University Press in December 2020. To communicate her research with the wider public, Leen set up several science communication projects, including www.cinemazooologie.be, a trilingual website presenting the archive and programming of the Antwerp movie theatre Cinema Zoologie (1915-1936). Leen is president of the International Association for Media and History (www.iamhist.net), an association bringing together scholars and media practitioners with an interest in media (and) history.

Kristof Loockx

The Battle for the Seafarers: The Lantern Projector as a Medium for Information, Education and Entertainment (1880-1930)

Abstract: In the course of the 19th century, the growth of international trade and shipping increased the aggregate demand for seafarers, who often resided at the waterfront of foreign ports in between voyages. The vast increase in maritime workers ran parallel with a sharp rise of seamen's institutions worldwide and many were targeted at specific nationalities. Strong in

religious motivation and social philanthropy, the key aim of these private organizations was to create a feeling of home, instil Christian values and respond to social issues that were associated with the seafarer's urban world, such as alcoholism and exploitation. To counter the abusive practices at the waterfront, seamen's institutions considered the lantern projector an important medium as it provided the opportunity to inform, educate and entertain seafarers during services in the church and music evenings in reading rooms. However, we know little about the use of the lantern projector in the maritime sector. Seamen's institutions have caught the attention of historians, but the actual operation of these organizations remains understudied. Based on evidence in seamen's journals, newspapers and reports of seamen's institutions, the central objective of this research is to place the lantern projector at the centre of attention, which will provide insights into the organization of lantern shows and issues that were addressed at these events. In addition, this study will apply a world perspective because seamen's institutions concerned a global phenomenon during the period under scrutiny. More generally, the findings will also add nuance to broader social and cultural trends that marked the turn of the 20th century, especially because we know that the lantern projector was commonly used for informational, educational and entertainment purposes in different sectors.

Kristof Loockx specializes in 19th- and early-20th-century social history, with a particular focus on maritime, labour and migration aspects. He received his PhD from the University of Antwerp and Vrije Universiteit Brussel in 2020 with the thesis entitled 'From Sail to Steam: Two Generation of Seafarers and the Maritime Labour Market in Antwerp, 1850-1900'. He is involved in the B-magic project titled 'The Magic Lantern and its Cultural Impact as a Visual Mass Medium in Belgium', supported by the Research Foundation Flanders (FWO) under Grant of Excellence of Science (EOS).

Richard Crangle

Other people's lives: how Life Model slides attempt to evoke pathos and sympathy (and sometimes succeed)

Keynote lecture 2

Abstract: One useful way of looking at Life Model slides as, for example, in a 2018 article I co-authored with Joe Kember (*Folk Like Us: Emotional Movement from the Screen and the Platform in British Life Model Lantern Slide Sets 1880-1910*) is to recognise that one of their most immediate impacts lay in the representation of people having the same social background as the members of their audience. The assumption is that audience members were likely to recognise 'themselves' and therefore empathise with the situations and characters depicted.

That still seems to me to offer a correct interpretation, but in this presentation I want to develop the idea a little further. Although there is always the implication that audience members may recognise and reflect on their own lives in the light of the moral points illustrated by the on-screen models, at least some of the time there is also an implied dislocation. Rather than preaching directly that 'you should [or should not] live like this', typical Life Model slides and stories can be read as having a slightly more subtle effect: 'look with sympathy at these all-too-familiar unfortunate people, thank providence that your life is better than theirs, and aspire to keeping it that way'.

I want in particular to look at how this effect is generated through depictions of children, disabled

people, people living in poverty, and other visual 'evidence' presented in a selection of typical British subjects of the Life Model genre. For this type of effect to work, it is vital that its elements are recognisable to its intended target audience, yet also that they can simultaneously be interpreted as parts of 'other people's lives' which are worse than 'our' own.

Richard Crangle has a PhD in early film and related media and has been researching magic lantern slides for over twenty-five years, with a particular focus on British commercial slide manufacture of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. He is co-editor of *The Encyclopaedia of the Magic Lantern* (2001), *Realms of Light* (2005), and *Screen Culture and the Social Question 1880–1914* (2014), and author of numerous articles and conference papers. His most recent post was as an Associate Research Fellow at the University of Exeter, working on the 'Million Pictures' European collaboration project researching the use of the projected image in educational and heritage contexts in several EU countries. Among other projects he has been largely responsible for creating and developing the Lucerna Magic Lantern Web Resource, lucerna.exeter.ac.uk.

Dominique Nasta and Bart G. Moens

Affective Aesthetics in Life Model Slides and Early Films of 'Maison de la Bonne Presse' (1908-1914)

Abstract: This contribution discusses affective aesthetics as a visual and performative strategy in the life model slides and early films of the French publisher and slide manufacturer *Maison de la Bonne Presse*. Over the years, the relations between the simultaneous production of lantern slide sets and films of British producers such as Bamforth & Co have already been the subject of study. Nonetheless, the connections and differences between both related media created and distributed by this Catholic company haven't been studied before. Based on recently discovered sources we explore the lantern slides and films which were produced in parallel by *Maison de la Bonne Presse* between 1908 and 1914 to serve their Catholic apostolate. Under the direction of Father Honoré Le Sablais, the creative director of the service de projection, several life model slide sets and early films, such as *Noël de la petite aveugle*, shared the same narratives, actors and decors. These still and moving images both represent religious or fictional stories with strong religious connotations and typically share dramatic plots and/or emotionally charged moral dilemmas. Focusing on the emotional communication through these media, we analyze their aesthetic relations and affective differences, such as coloring, acting style and emotional rhythm. Moreover, by examining these closely related but distinct practices of affective aesthetics, this contribution sheds light on the creative production processes at the projection service of *Maison de la Bonne Presse*.

Dominique Nasta is full professor in Film Studies at the Université libre de Bruxelles and Principal investigator in the EOS B-magic project. She is the author of *Contemporary Romanian Cinema* (2013) and of *Meaning in Film: Relevant Structures in Soundtrack and Narrative* (1992) and has co-edited *Revisiting Film Melodrama* (2014), *New Perspectives in Sound Studies* (2004) and *La chanson dans les cinémas d'Europe et d'Amérique Latine 1960-2010* (2019). She is series editor for *Rethinking Cinema*, a bilingual collection published by Peter Lang, and has published widely on the aesthetics of silent melodramas, emotions and music in films, East-European cinemas.

Bart G. Moens studied Art Sciences and Archaeology at Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB) and specialized in 19th and early 20th century visual culture. Subsequently, he obtained a MA in Media,

Cultural and Political Philosophy at VUB. Since 2015 he has been a member of the scientific committee of several exhibitions on 19th century art. Bart currently works as a PhD researcher in Film and Media Studies on the EOS B-magic project at the Université libre de Bruxelles (ULB) and focuses on the interplay between the magic/optical lantern and the history of emotions.

Vito Adriaensens

A Riot on 23rd Street: Lantern Tableaux Trigger Turn of the Century Tempers

Keynote lecture 3

Abstract: In 1906, glass shattered as bricks were hurled through the booth of a poor lantern projectionist who was throwing his lantern images onto a canvas screen on the side of the Bartholdi Hotel in New York, on Broadway and 23rd Street. The Bartholdi Hotel was home to the headquarters of a newly minted political faction, the Independent Municipal League, who fought the notorious William Randolph Hearst as he tried, and failed, to run for Governor of New York. Hearst sympathizers, apparently blissfully unaware of the irony, were so unamused by the political caricatures that an iconoclastic riot ensued. The lanternist fled. The canvas was ripped to shreds. Five police officers were injured. The magic lantern did not survive.

The incident on 23rd Street was just one of many violent emotional reactions to projected still images in turn-of-the-century New York City, and, indeed, static tableaux in general. The Big Apple's complicated relationship with still images seemed to have been especially fraught when it came to those that had a live component and were fueled by light: vaudeville tableaux, living pictures, religious lectures, and political lantern wars, that will be the focus of this talk.

Vito Adriaensens is a filmmaker, writer, and cinema and performing arts scholar. He has been an adjunct assistant professor at Columbia University's School of the Arts Film Department in New York since 2016, and is currently also a postdoctoral researcher at the Center for Research in Cinema and Performing Arts (CiASp) at the Université libre de Bruxelles. Vito holds a PhD from the University of Antwerp, was a visiting scholar at the University of Copenhagen, and has also taught at the VU University in Amsterdam and the School of Arts, University College in Ghent. He also teaches small-gauge filmmaking as an instructor at the cinema-arts non-profit Mono No Aware, and was an executive committee member of Domitor, the International Society for the Study of Early Cinema. Vito's award-winning experimental films have toured festivals internationally. He is a co-author of *Screening Statues: Sculpture and Cinema* (2017), and he has published widely on the aesthetic, cultural and (art) historical interaction between film, theatre and visual arts.

Philippe Marion is professor emeritus of the School of Communication of the Université catholique de Louvain. His research focuses on the fields of media narratology and the comparative analysis of media and media discourses. He is a founding member of the *Observatoire du Récit médiatique* (ORM) and the School of Journalism at Louvain. His publications focus on the study of narratives in images, on contemporary media culture and genres, and the archeology of media.

Sébastien Fevry is professor at the School of Communication in the Catholic University of Louvain (UCLouvain) and coordinator of the GIRCAM research group. Sébastien Fevry works in the field of

Memory Studies, focusing especially on cinema and image. He has recently co-edited a collection of articles on the images of the Apocalypse in cinema (2012). His latest book, *La comédie cinématographique à l'épreuve de l'Histoire*, has been published by L'Harmattan (2013). He is also the author of numerous articles in journals such as *Image & Narrative*, *Espacetemps.net*, *Studies in French Cinema* or *Intermédialités*.

The conference-workshop is organized as a part of a series of workshops within the framework of the *B-magic. The Magic Lantern and its Cultural Impact as Visual Mass Medium in Belgium (1830-1940)* project funded by FWO and FNRS under the Excellence of Science (EOS) project number 30802346. B-Magic will write the as yet unwritten history of the magic lantern as a mass medium in Belgium. In doing so, it will provide an essential contribution to the study of the country's cultural history as well as to international media historiography. This workshop is organized by the CiASp research group (Université libre de Bruxelles) in collaboration with the B-Magic consortium partners.

Organizing committee: Prof. dr. Dominique Nasta and Bart G. Moens from the B-magic ULB-team and the *Centre de recherche en Cinéma et Arts du Spectacle* (CiASp, ULB)

