



Volume 2 — Number 2

THE NEW MAGIC LANTERN JOURNAL

January 1982 — £1.50

Once again we are proud that one of the two major contributions to this, the fifth edition of *The New Magic Lantern Journal*, comes from Hermann Hecht. Head and shoulders above most other members of The Magic Lantern Society in his scholarly research into lantern matters, as readers will remember from his contribution to our third edition (*NMJL*, Vol. 1, No. 3), Hermann has followed his work on transfer slides with a fascinating piece on Lantern Patents, originally given as a paper to The Society's Annual General Meeting in January 1981. A little late in coming to print you may remark, but never-the-less, like all good things, well worth waiting for.

In addition to Mr Hecht's contribution, I am sure everyone will share my delight in publishing not one, but two contributions from Willem Tebra, one of the Dutch members of The Lantern Society.

Mr Tebra addresses himself initially to the question posed in the editorial of our last edition, namely that of Giovanni Fontana, and whether or not his mysterious illustration represents a magic lantern of 1426. Tebra says categorically not — but tantalizingly bases his paper on an illustration we did not publish, thereby, for your editor at least, neatly adding to our knowledge of a fifteenth century scholar but begging the question as to what that illustration in our last editorial really was!

The second contribution from Willem Tebra is a review of "Magie Lumineuse" — that wonderful French publication by Remise and Van der Walle. Hopefully the first of many reviews we shall have the pleasure of publishing. Hopefully also a challenge to all you knowledgeable English collectors, sitting on exquisite libraries or collections and from whom we are still awaiting a first contribution.

Our grateful and delighted appreciation to you Willem — when are you going to make it over to England for a Society meeting — we'd all love to meet you.

Our centrefold this time is courtesy of Chairman Morris — a promotion from his regular page two slot of this journal. A charming offering we feel and of particular interest to the musically inclined members of the Society. Note the date of the original — 1826.

Finally a new feature — the Production Team's annual competition on our back page. Readers are asked to date and identify the illustration on

page 16. A suitable prize will be offered to the person who, in the opinion of the production team, submits the least boring entry. Accuracy will be taken into account but not to the exclusion of all else. Closing date is April 1, 1982.

Hemmed in by snow and ice, pressurised by our publication deadline, readers must forgive me for resorting to the editor's annual trick, namely the end of year soliloquy.

The Magic Lantern year began with the A.G.M. of The Lantern Society. Patricia and I have just about recovered from the trauma of carting half our collection down to the meeting and putting it on display. Hopefully we might have persuaded others to follow in our footsteps. However, be warned — cover it with perspex if you do. There's nothing quite like seeing a novice banging his St Bruno out on the spine of your 1671 edition of Kircher to increase the pulse rate and consumption of strong whisky!

Our 14 year old son was sufficiently inspired by Hermann Hecht's lecture on patents at the A.G.M. to give a confident lecture on the history of the magic lantern to his schoolfellows as one of his weekly tasks. Depositing him, together with a huge Wrench lantern and a grubby fistful of early 19th century slides on the Brompton Road at 9.00am led to a recurrence of the previously mentioned accelerated pulse rate, but all went

well and now another thirty or so young teenagers know what a magic lantern is.

The really big news of 1981 was Mike and Janet Barclay's signing the lease on their cinema in Monmouth. How fantastic — we wish them well on everybody's behalf and look forward to the first society meeting to be held at the Magic Lantern Theatre and Museum in Monmouth.

Mike and Janet's news was followed by an announcement that the British Film Institute has received the go ahead for its long awaited Museum of the Projected Image, covering everything from Chinese Shadow Plays to Twentieth Century Cinema — all in the capable hands of our own David Francis once again. Scheduled opening is 1983 I understand — watch this space for more details.

1981 also saw a continued increase in the value of lantern material. The Society's own annual auction, held at the Berkamstead meeting, produced a successful bid of £101 for a slide carrier! Although your editor was not present at the meeting I understand that it was a little bit special so don't all flood the next auction in January with those boxwood carriers you have by the thousand! High prices prevailed in auctions throughout the year — £260 for a French projecting phenakistiscope at Christies — the Elthorne Bi-Unial for £1200 — a splendid mutoscope for £1500 — and a kaleidoscope lens for £950. As to the last item, I should point out that it was sold with nine hundred pounds worth of slides, thus giving a true value to the lens of some £50. Nevertheless, it makes you think doesn't it...!

Following the special membership card for 1981 produced in full colour by Patricia Dugdale and Dennis Crompton, I am pleased to see an even more amazing card in preparation for 1982. Although I can't reveal the full secret to you in these columns, my informant reliably tells me that the Lantern Society is about to become the first club in the world ever to have a thaumotropic membership card...!

Finally it is Annual General Meeting time once again. We all look forward to new faces on the committee and an exciting collecting year in 1982. As ever, the journal team requires contributions — in return we promise to reduce the publication time between journals in future. Don't forget your competition entries and good luck with all your activities for the coming twelve months.



CONTENTS

EDITORIAL	1
SOME ENGLISH MAGIC LANTERN PATENTS. <i>Hermann Hecht</i>	2
LA LANTERNE MAGIQUE - CENTREFOLD. <i>Ron Morris</i>	8
THE MAGIC LANTERN OF GIOVANNI DA FONTANA. <i>Willem Tebra</i>	10
MAGIE LUMINEUSE - A REVIEW. <i>Willem Tebra</i>	12
DO-IT-YOURSELF LANTERN JIG-SAW	15
1982 JOURNAL COMPETITION	16

