

A ROOM

WITH

A VIEW

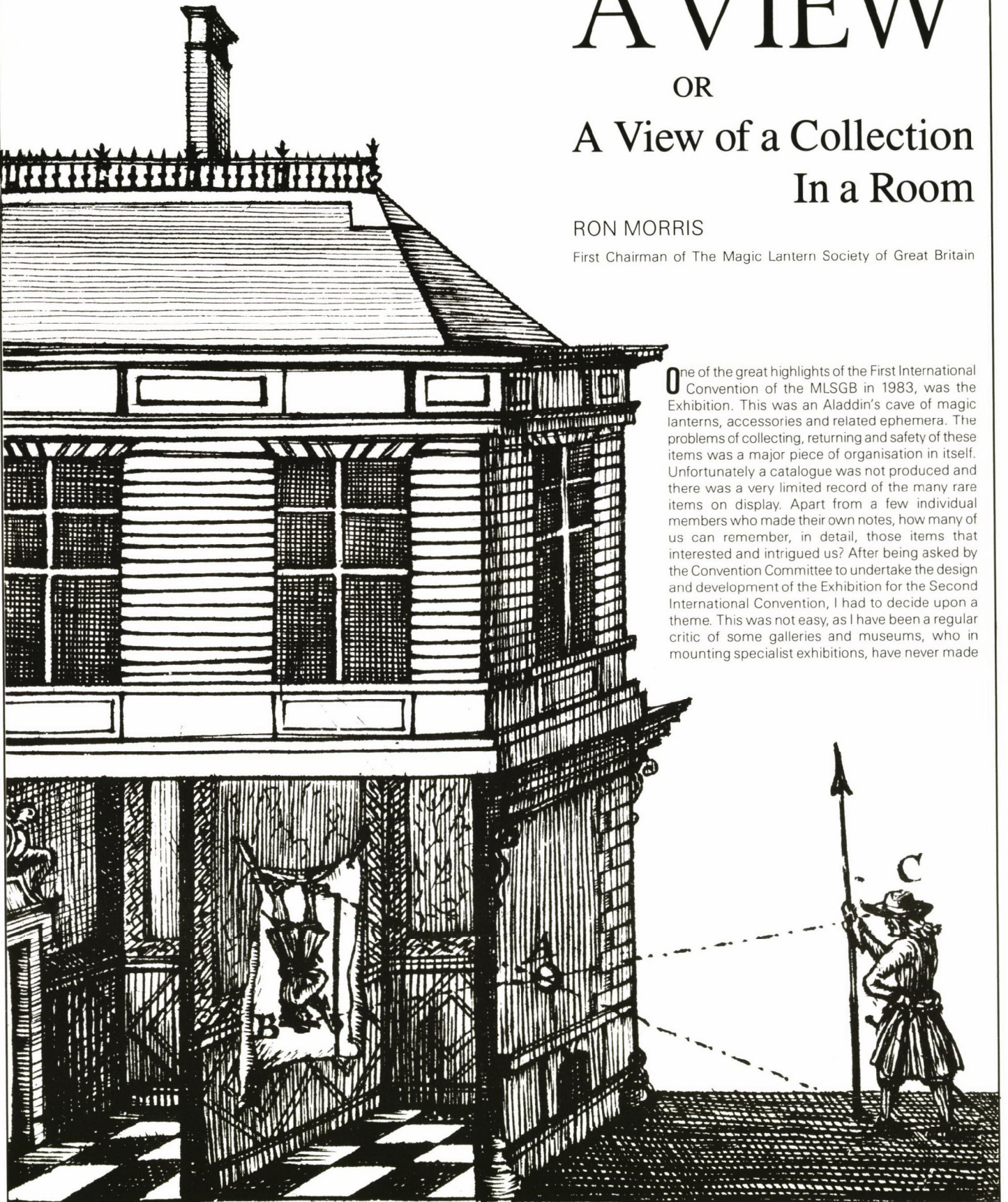
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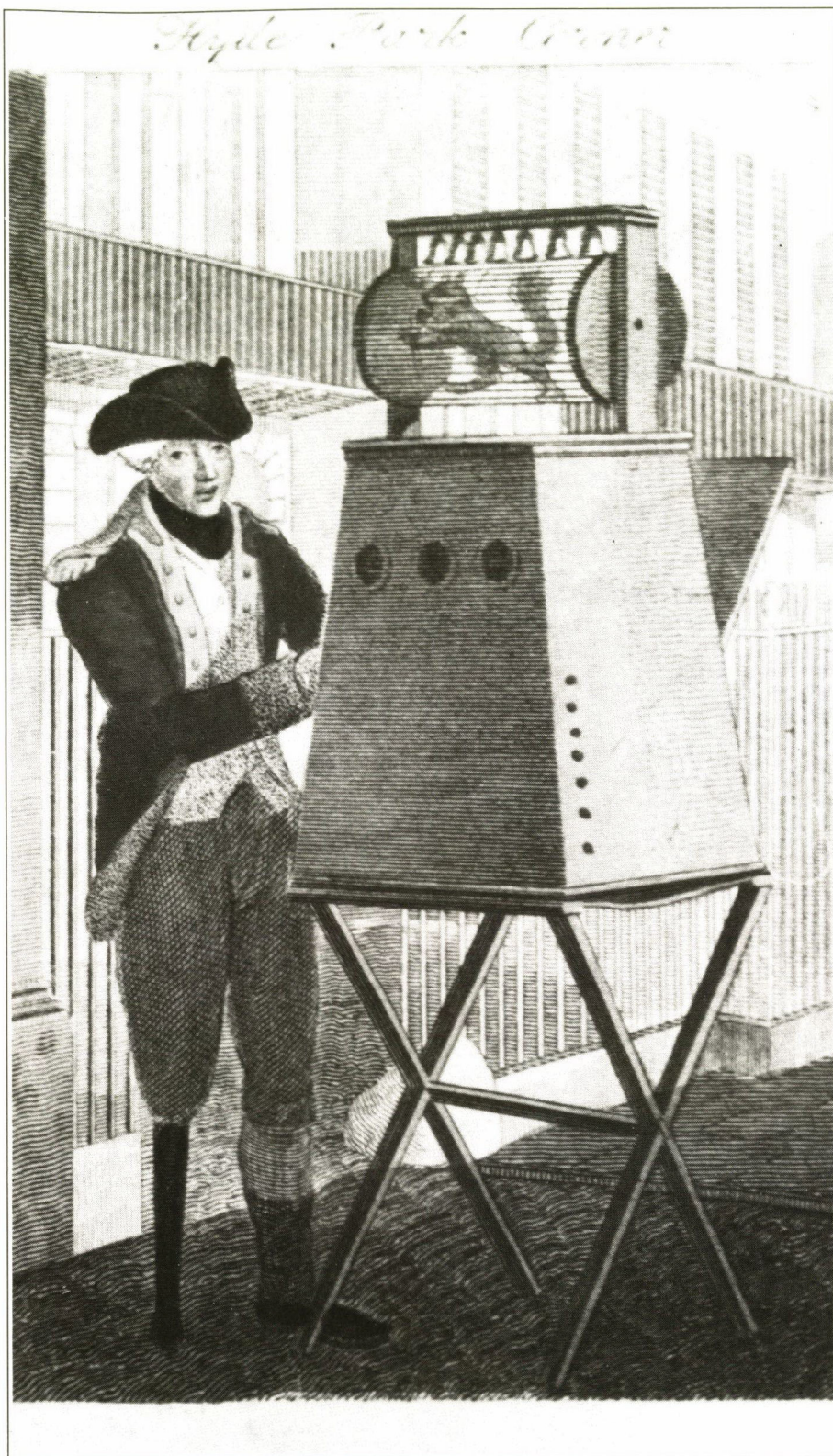
A View of a Collection In a Room

RON MORRIS

First Chairman of The Magic Lantern Society of Great Britain

One of the great highlights of the First International Convention of the MLSGB in 1983, was the Exhibition. This was an Aladdin's cave of magic lanterns, accessories and related ephemera. The problems of collecting, returning and safety of these items was a major piece of organisation in itself. Unfortunately a catalogue was not produced and there was a very limited record of the many rare items on display. Apart from a few individual members who made their own notes, how many of us can remember, in detail, those items that interested and intrigued us? After being asked by the Convention Committee to undertake the design and development of the Exhibition for the Second International Convention, I had to decide upon a theme. This was not easy, as I have been a regular critic of some galleries and museums, who in mounting specialist exhibitions, have never made





view and that of the Panorama Panoptique, the cut brass silhouette slide and the Ombres Chinoises shows, the kaleidoscope lantern lens and the many forms of kaleidoscopic toy, the variety of moving slides and the development of movement from the thaumatrope to the mutoscope.

I hope this Exhibition, although only the tip of the 'optic-berg', will show members the possibilities for widening their collecting and collections. The result can only strengthen the knowledge of the Society as a whole. For those members who have the 'dealer' instinct in their blood, it might be worth noting (...although I really don't know why), that in the last few years at auction or on the market stall, the price of lanterns has dropped but the prices of simple 'paper' optical toys has risen out of all proportion ... and it is regretted that many are destined to leave the country, the country of origin. All part of our history and the history of the search to understand the persistence of vision, of movement and colour, which to both young and old, is not only the magic of yesterday but also that of today and I hope through us, as collectors and conservators, will be part of the magic of tomorrow.

These opening comments on the Exhibition 'A ROOM WITH A VIEW', are I believe, mainly for my own benefit to justify it to myself. If on entering the room, it changes or widens your views as a collector, increases your knowledge of the OPTICAL TOY and also enables a small part of our heritage to remain in this country, then the room will indeed have had a view. The Exhibition is designed in six areas and these are titled as follows:

- THE PEEP VIEW
- THE SHADOW VIEW
- THE VIEW BEYOND
- THE COLOURED VIEW
- THE VIEW OF MOVEMENT
- A VIEW OF THEMES

There is no strict chronological sequence to the Exhibition, although most of the items, where possible, are dated. In the next few pages I shall browse through the Exhibition commenting on some of the exhibits and making asides that may lead both of us, you and I, into further searches and 'finds'.

THE PEEP VIEW

The travelling showman, the Savoyard, the gallant man and the story teller were those who introduced the delights and magic of the peep-box, in its many forms, to the populace of Europe. THE SHOWMAN (1), welcoming you to the exhibition, shows in his box, a scene, typical of the period. It can be lit front or back to give the day and night effect.

View boxes came in many shapes and sizes and by the end of the eighteenth century paper and card peepshows began to appear throughout Europe and Britain. In many cases they were produced as souvenirs of visits to cities, exhibitions, royal and state occasions. Some can be found that give a three-dimensional view of a fable, story or ballad. PEEPSHOWS (2) are still being made and marketed today, some as souvenirs of special occasions and even though they are no longer hand cut and painted they still have a certain magic like those of the past.

The light panel shows further examples of 'day and night' or changing scenes (transformations) that are brought about by altering the direction of the light. Some of these scenes are designed to be viewed in boxes, others can be held to a light source. From the early paper scenes of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries to the 'hold-to-light' postcards of the twentieth century, the Exhibition gives some indication of the fascination of the 'changing' view. Some of the most skilfully produced of these were SPOONER'S PROTEAN VIEWS (3), produced and marketed by W. Spooner of 377 The Strand, London in the late 1830s. Other examples can be found in the printed sheets for the

it clear as to what were their aims and objectives. I will have tried through the Exhibition, this article and my talk at the Convention itself, to have both an aim and an objective that include thoughts and ideas that will remain with you long after the three days of the Convention itself ... you will be the judge of whether I have succeeded or failed.

In my final address to you as Chairman, at the NFT in January 1983, I simplified the composition of the Society's membership into two groups: COLLECTORS and SHOWMEN ... on further reflection both of the groups are COLLECTORS and therefore the majority of the membership come under this general heading. So with this in mind, I felt I could give this Exhibition a purpose, other than to entertain ... to look at the world of the OPTICAL TOY, including the optical device that 'educates'. Many believe that these devices were the pre-

rogative of our Victorian grandfathers, in my case (in yours, your great grandfathers). The Exhibition will show that this is not so, the majority of these very collectable items are being manufactured in many guises today. In some cases the design has completely changed, although the scientific concept still remains, in others they repeat the design of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Ah, but I can hear you say, 'we are the Magic Lantern Society of Great Britain, is this really part of our brief, look at our Constitution; in the objects of the Society we clearly state THE MAGIC LANTERN' and I was in the Chair of the Society at the time this Constitution was agreed. I believe, at that time, it was never intended to limit the activities and interests of the membership simply to the Magic Lantern. The links with the lantern can be clearly seen in the exhibition: the magic of the dissolving



3. Spooner's Protean Views, day and night

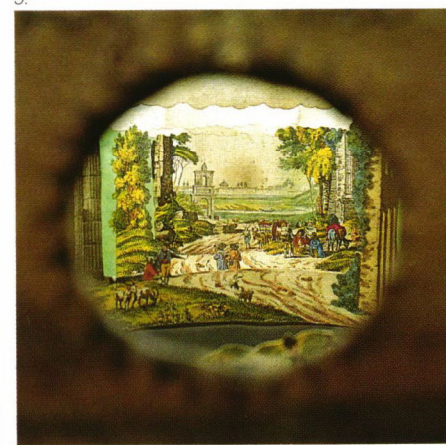
toy theatre, where the scene can be changed by the use of back or front lighting ... a volcano can be made to erupt. Another example of the Victorian souvenir trade is the PEEP EGG (4). These were usually made of turned alabaster and contained one or more hand-painted etched scenes of seaside towns or special happenings. In some cases shells, small rocks and crystals were included and all could be viewed through the simple magnifying lens in the

top of the egg. The translucent quality of the alabaster allowed the light onto the scene. The 'exploded' view of the model in the Exhibition shows the method of construction.

Views of this kind were not only put into eggs, but also into monoscopes, glass and metal funnels and other simple containers, where the light was allowed to enter by means of perforations or translucent panels. Also in the Exhibition are shown

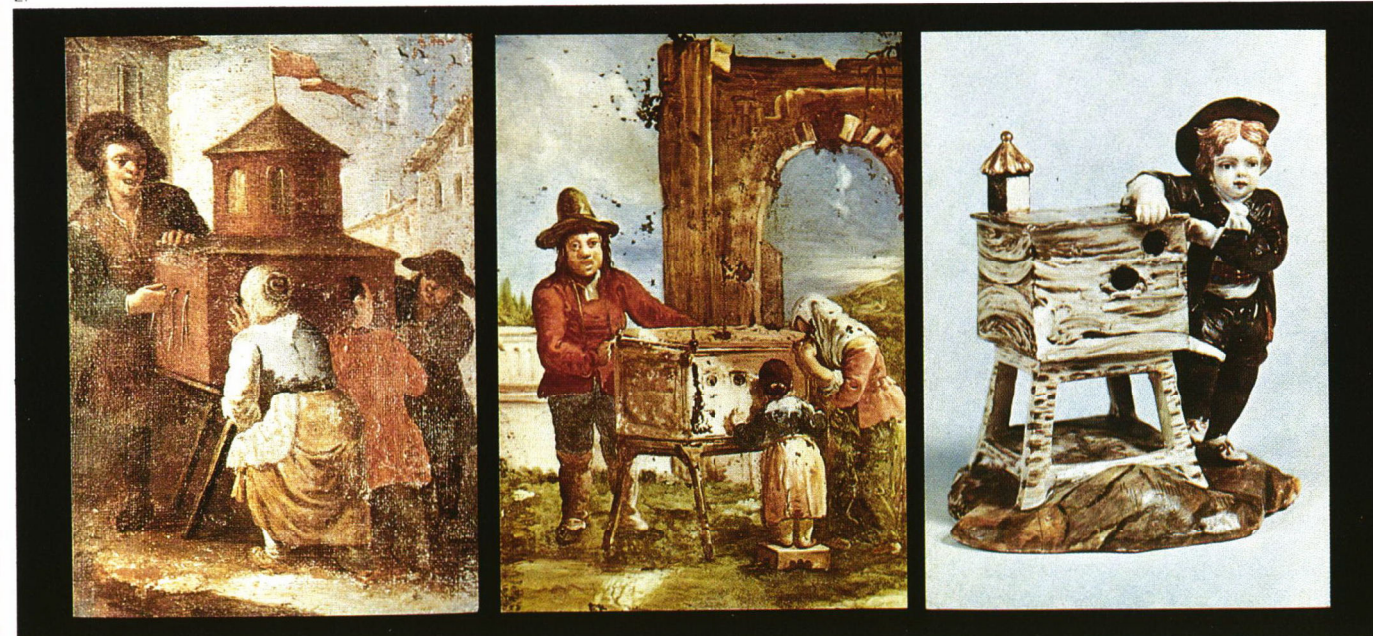
examples of PEEP BOXES (5), these were made of glass and brass and were purchased empty, their new owner could then arrange inside 'bits and pieces' of their choice. These would be selected for colour, texture and shape and could then be viewed through the lens at the top, the objects being lit through the glass sleeve showing fairy-like wonderlands.

Although recognised by most as an adult form of



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Museo Nazionale del Cinema de Torino



entertainment and education, the Panorama and Diorama exhibited in purpose-designed buildings as well as by travelling showmen, soon became popular as children's toys. Although the difference between the larger versions of the panoramas and dioramas were clearly recognised, as a toy the names were indiscriminately used, and most were simply scenes that could be changed in a box. The Exhibition shows some of these toys, where the name is not really important, but the delight of the changing picture is. Their modern counterpart is being made today, in plastic form, but does not appear to have the simplicity and beauty of its predecessor.

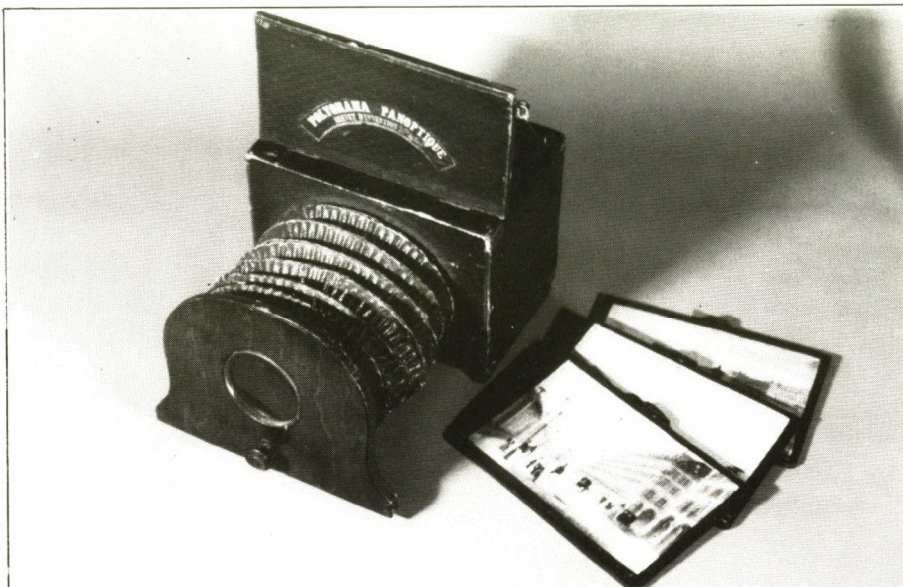
One of the more sophisticated of Europe's toy peep boxes was the POLYORAMA PANOPTIQUE (6), which was offered in three sizes. It had a sliding bellows, allowing the viewing lens to be focused, the scenes were made of paper on wooden frames, hand-coloured and sometimes cut to allow inserts of coloured tissue or further painting, these enabled the scenes to be changed. The changes could not only be from 'day to night' but a complete change of action or venue. It is a small wonder any of these have survived, but I feel certain the majority did not find their way to the nursery but were kept and operated by Papa on special occasions.

This section of the Exhibition can only show a few items, but for the new collector there are still exciting finds to be made.

THE SHADOW VIEW

The shades, as the silhouette was originally called, can be traced back to the very beginnings of drawing and painting. Early cave dwellers are known to have traced the outlines of animals and figures on the walls of their caves and then filled them with colour. The Etruscan potters used black silhouettes to decorate their pots and plates. The word silhouette came into general use during the nineteenth century and is said to have derived from one, Etienne de Silhouette, a one-time French Controller General of Finance (1709-67), whose interest was in cutting profiles of his contemporaries in black paper. The art of cutting silhouettes prospered during the later eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries and many good examples can still be found today. In the Exhibition a few are shown, one of which can be viewed in two positions showing two different heads. A number of devices were made to aid the silhouettist in drawing the original prior to cutting, an illustration shows Lavater's special silhouette chair. The market stall and the dealer's print folio are good sources and well worth the search time for early silhouettes. Some excellent modern examples are of Chinese origin, and although in colour show the delightful art of cut paper and the scenes when displayed give beautiful versions of the 'shades'.

SHADOW PUPPETS (7) are really animated silhouettes. The earliest of these are said to be those of a Chinese Court magician, made as far back as 121 BC, although it is much later that there is written evidence and illustration of these. They appear in many parts of the world, the easiest to collect are from China, Java and Turkey. The exhibition displays a beautiful Chinese shadow puppet, which shows the translucent quality of the coloured shadow, when on the screen. The WAYANG PURWA SHADOW PUPPETS (8) of Java are well known and their modern counterparts can be purchased today. The skin from which they were made was that of the buffalo and the strips of the horn from the same animal were used as the main support rod. The puppets were richly decorated and pierced, much has been written about them and good examples can be seen in many museums throughout the world. The Exhibition does not attempt to show the full range or history of the shadow puppet, which would have to include puppets from the great Turkish and French shows and many others, including the cinematic versions of the film maker, Lotte Reiniger.

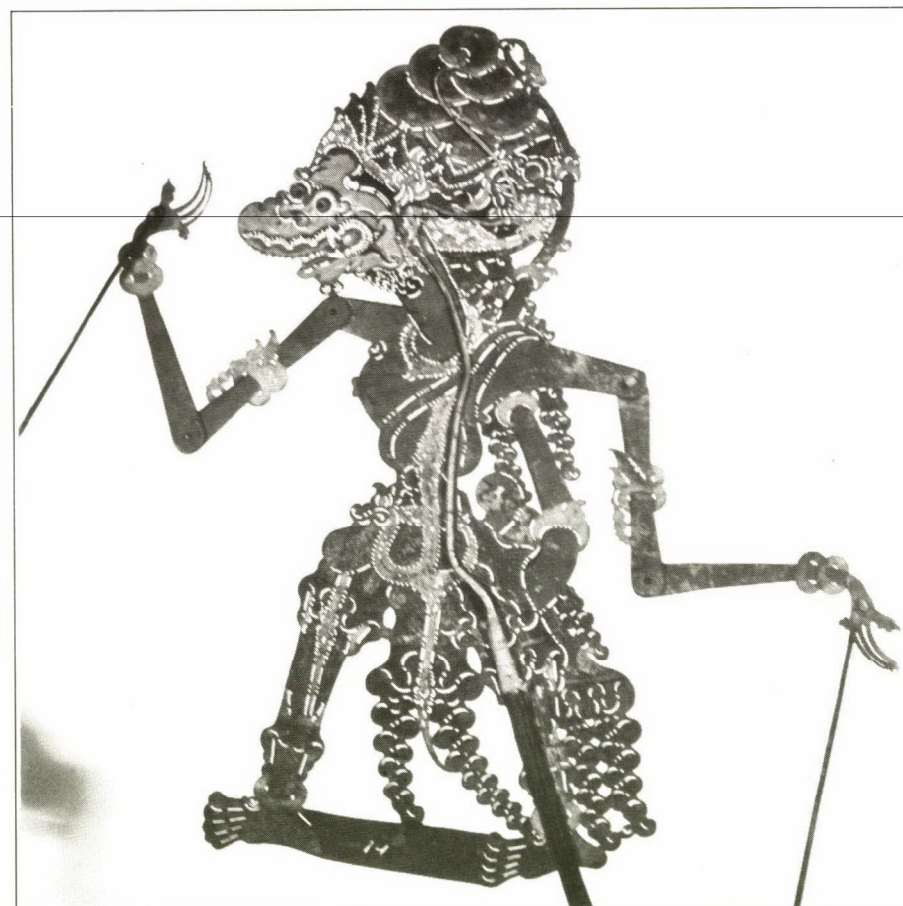


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Both the silhouette and shadow puppet can be found in slide form for use in the magic lantern, the latter being made in cut sheet brass and mica, animated by the means of levers.

Shadow shows make use of the simple silhouette through to the fully articulated shadow puppet. Some of the most impressive were in the French Théâtre d'Ombres, finding their way onto the printed sheets for the OMBRES CHINOISES (the Chinese shadows or shades, 9). Printed sheets for making shadow puppets at home, were designed

and produced in most European countries, during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, as the examples show these require very careful cutting and assembly. Originals and also facsimile sheets can still be bought today: Mike Bartley has produced excellent copies from English originals. The Exhibition displays both shadow shows and sheets.

There are other 'shadows' that are of interest to the optical toy enthusiast. The cut paper or 'white shadow', which when properly lit shows the positive

of the negative on the screen or wall. Hand shadows were very popular both as home and theatre entertainment during the nineteenth century. Sir David Wilkie's picture titled 'The Rabbit on the Wall', shows a simple example of the technique and there were many books published on this subject, many have become collector's pieces in their original form, but can be bought as reprints (Dover Publications). Postcards, trade cards and advertisements show how the art of hand shadows can be practised. Many children, in the past, found in their Christmas stockings boxed toys containing all forms of shadow shows and silhouette 'kits', some of these are on display in the exhibition.

The lithophane and the Japanese mirror, the carved sphere and the walking stick handle are further examples of other artefacts that cast shadows in their own particular way. It is hoped you will be able to make your own silhouette of a friend or partner at the exhibition, a do-it-yourself souvenir of the 1986 Convention.

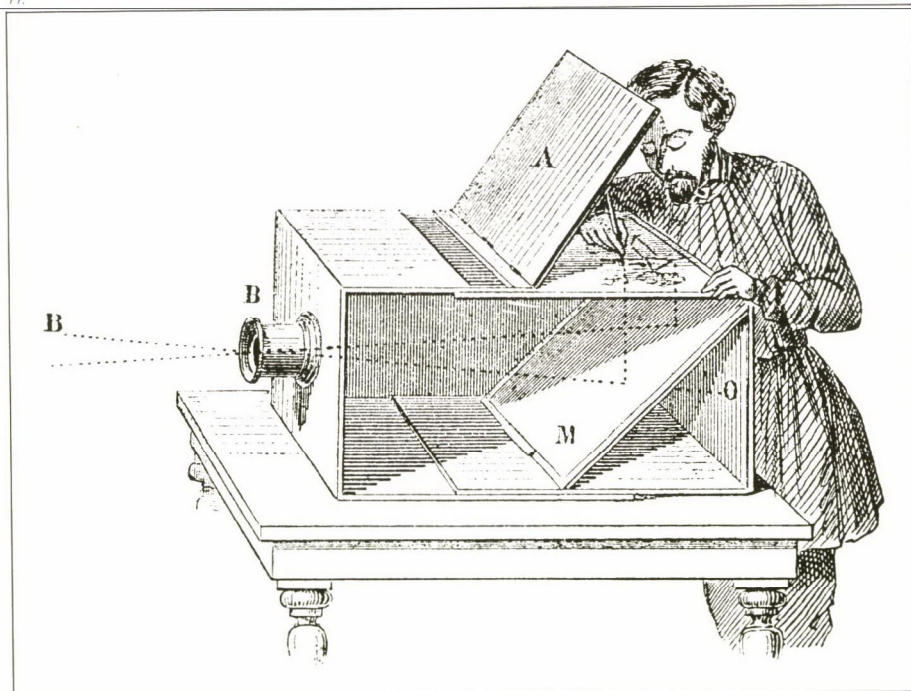
THE VIEW BEYOND

The perspective view, or the 'view beyond', has concerned artists and scientists throughout the history of man. Much has been written on the subject both by early mathematicians and scientists. Many optical devices have been designed and made to aid the artist both with his original drawing and in viewing the final result.

The ZOGRASCOPE (10) or optical diagonal machine first appears in the eighteenth century and Edward Pinto in a recent newspaper article, titled 'What is a Zogrscope?', suggests it was possibly invented about 1750, by whom it is not known. It would appear that the main purpose of the 'machine' was to view the copper engraved prints of the period, many were printed in a small format with considerable detail and it is said that the fashionable society of the day, not wishing to be seen wearing spectacles, were able to view their prints in a magnified version. The zogrscope became very popular again during the middle part of the nineteenth century. A number of optical instrument makers list these in their catalogues of this period, George Adams, scientific instrument maker to the Crown, being one. Also on offer were CAMERA OBSCURAS (11) with 'additional heads' to convert them for use in viewing perspective prints. J.A. Chaldecott, Assistant Keeper at the Science Museum, London, presented a very authoritative paper on the subject to The British Society for the History of Science in February 1953. The Exhibition



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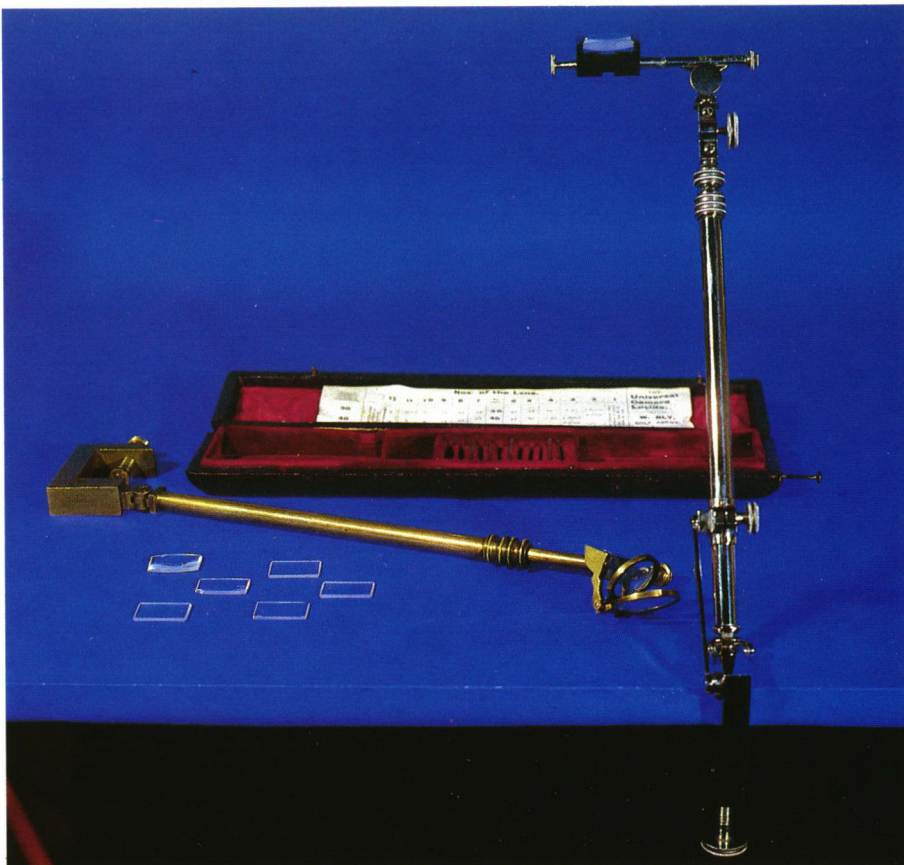


shows both the zograscope and its special prints, 'vue d'optiques'. Many of these engraved prints were printed and hand-coloured in France, but can still be found today, at reasonable prices. Also on display is a toy zograscope, with its own collection of miniature prints . . . a rather rare item. If correctly viewed the prints have both stereoscopic and perspective qualities. Auction prices today vary between £80 and £200 for a zograscope, but can still be found in some antique shops described as 'Georgian shaving mirrors' at a lower price.

The CAMERA OBSCURA and CAMERA LUCIDA are two other optical devices to aid the artist in mastering the art of drawing. The early discovery that light travelled in a 'straight line', was made use of in the 'pin-hole' picture and the theory can be clearly understood in the illustrations showing 'the room with a view' in many early books on optics (the heading to this article shows such an illustration). Many different versions of the camera obscura can be found dating from the early eighteenth century, where the pin-hole is substituted for a lens and the room for a box. Many well known artists are known to have traced the scene as it appeared on the glass wall of the camera obscura, and this would be used as an aide memoire for their final work. The Exhibition enables you to use a facsimile of one so that you can view the present day scenes of Bedford Square. The larger camera obscuras with their public viewing platforms, can still be visited in a number of towns and cities, two excellent examples are at Edinburgh and Dumfries. The CAMERA LUCIDA (12) is another optical device to aid the artist and was very difficult to use, the eye had to be just at the edge of the prism, so that the paper and the reflected view of the object through the prism could be seen simultaneously – thus giving the illusion that the image of the scene existed on the paper, enabling it to be copied. From the simple camera lucida was developed a more complex version having a series of interchangeable lenses to add magnification to the final image. A number of toy versions were produced, although not bearing the name 'camera lucida'. These are still being made today, to help the young artist.

ANAMORPHIC ART (13) . . . the distorted drawing appearing regular from one point of view, from the Greek 'anamorphoo' . . . transform. Various examples of distorted drawings and paintings are on display in museums and galleries throughout the world. The transformation of the distorted picture can be brought about by either the use of a cylindrical mirror or by changing the viewing point . . . (looking from the edge of the picture through its length, rather than looking straight onto it). There can be found a large number of erotic or pornographic prints of European and Far Eastern origin, that can be clearly understood when viewed through a cylindrical mirror, but are a jumble of lines and shapes when seen without. Early prints and paintings, some on wooden panels, complete with their own mounted mirrors, are very rare and command high four figure prices at auction. There are still nineteenth century anamorphic sheets to be found, many of French origin, but in most cases the mirror appears to be missing . . . what happened to all those cylindrical mirrors with their turned wooden bases and tops? Toys are still being made today and these even allow the child to colour anamorphic prints with felt-tipped pens!

The other type of distorted picture can be readily seen in advertising material today, our membership card for 1984, designed by Patricia Dugdale, was an excellent example. Victorian pictures giving two or three different views can still be bought, but 'time has taken its toll' in many cases due to their fragile nature your purchase may need very careful restoration. The Scottish National Portrait Gallery in Edinburgh has an excellent example of a painted wooden panel, said to be a portrait of Mary, Queen of Scots, which changes to a skull when the viewer changes his position. It is dated about 1550 by an unknown artist. Modern artists, such as Mitsumas Anno and his wife have published a number of



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'anamorphic' books, one called the *Magical ABC* showing beautiful coloured drawings using anamorphosis, complete with silvered plastic to make your own mirror. A friend of mine is at present designing a computer programme to bring anamorphic pictures to the small screen. I have not dealt with the three-dimensional view in this section ... stereo to holography, as this would require two or three major exhibitions in itself.

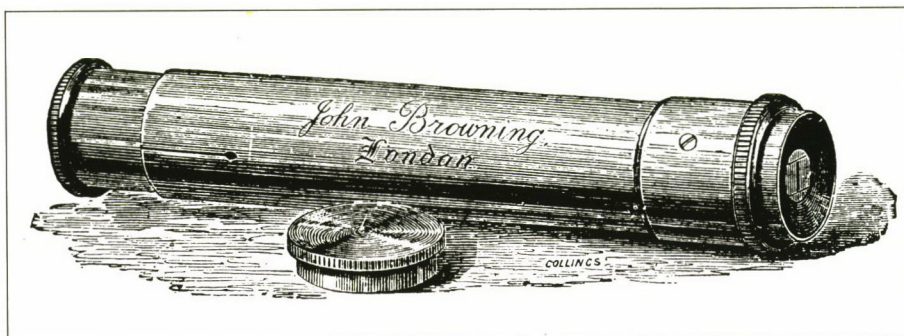
THE COLOURED VIEW

Much has been written about colour and many theories expounded and countered, in the names of Newton, Tyndall and other scientists. The exhibition only attempts to show colour and its place in the development of the optical toy and other devices of interest to the collector; for those lanternists who wish to study further the phenomena of light and colour, it is suggested that they read the book published in 1882 by Lewis Wright, *LIGHT – a course of experimental optics, chiefly for the lantern*.

Isaac Newton's work on the nature of colour, began in 1666, the results were published in 1704, titled 'OPTICKS'. As every school boy and girl knows, Newton allowed a beam of light to pass through a prism on to a white surface, so showing the spectrum ... hence nature's 'raindrop' prisms giving the rainbow. The SPECTROSCOPE (14) allowed the prism to be housed in a brass tube with a sliding control to regulate the slit-size through which the light would pass, when held to the light it produced a spectrum without the full blacking-out of the room. Many instrument makers produced a variety of designs and one of these should be in every 'optical-buff's' collection.

After Newton's discoveries, the mixing of colour became a fascination for both young and old, many colour wheels, tops and spinning devices were made both as toys and as more serious aids to the student of colour. They ranged from primary colour wheels (red, yellow and blue) to those with interchangeable colour discs. When spun they could mix colour for all the varied hues, in some cases producing 'white' ... more usually 'a pale grey'. One of the more complex toy versions was the KALEIDOSCOPE COLOUR-TOP (15); this wooden top had a selection of shaped and perforated card discs of various colours, when the discs were interchanged and spun, patterns and changes of colours could be produced that were as wonderful as those of the chromatrope slide. John Gorham's excellent article on his colour top was published in *Recreative Science*, Volume 1, 1860 and gives a detailed explanation as to how these changes can be obtained. There are many other forms of spinners, colour tops and wheels of this period and some of these are on display in the exhibition, including an interesting 'toy version' of Gorham's top, also some modern counterparts.

Colour, pattern and movement intrigued the early scientist and still intrigues many collectors today. One of the most simple yet popular devices invented, was the KALEIDOSCOPE (16), first described by Richard Bradley in 1717 in a work on garden design, and subsequently re-invented by Sir David Brewster, as a result of experiments first started in 1814. The kaleidoscope was extremely popular from its first marketing and thousands were sold not only in Britain and Europe but also shipped to the East Indies and other ports-of-call on the trade routes. They were made in many forms, from the simple one penny tin toy providing a very poor image, to the sophisticated 'table' models in both turned wood and ornate brass and in some cases of richly decorated papier-mâché. The design and craftsmanship of these models was of a very high standard, some even had their own special light sources provided in the form of lamps or extension arms that would hold a lighted candle. The design and manufacture of kaleidoscopes has never stopped, since the 1820s, both simple plastic toy models and beautifully crafted examples are being



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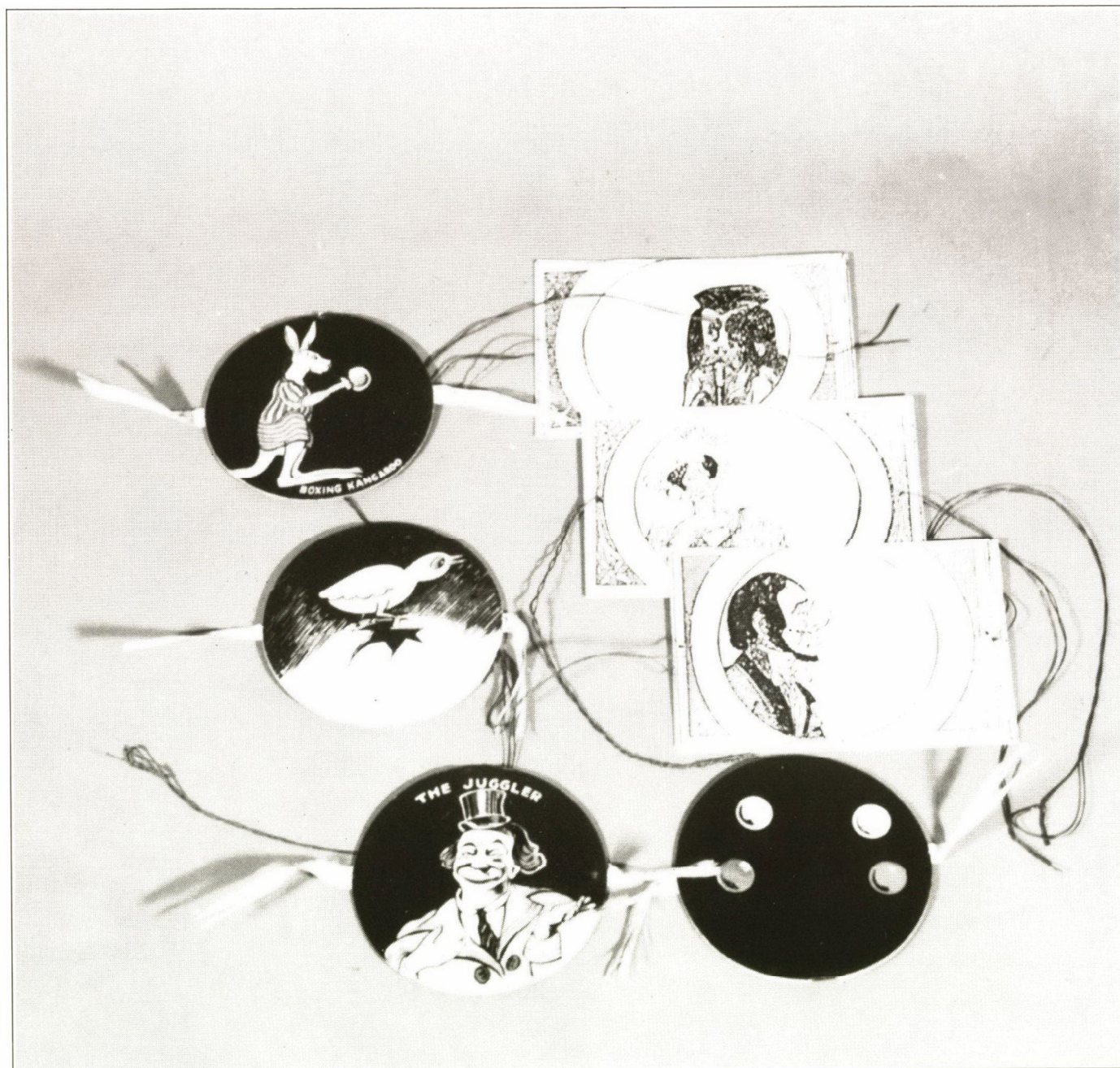


produced in Britain, France, Italy and the USA today. Many of the very cheap toy versions are from the Far East and can be bought for as little as 33 pence. Not only are a full range of these shown in the exhibition, but also a large working model, which gives a continuous view of beautiful changing patterns.

Some of the toys and devices made used the principle of the kaleidoscope but were given other names, one of the best known is the Designoscope, an aid for the artist-designer . . . so the advertisement says! Also one can find modern examples of the early French DEBUSSCOPE where coloured card or objects are placed between two angled mirrors so showing kaleidoscopic designs. There were other nineteenth century toys, such as the POLYSCOPE . . . the multiplying optical viewer, using a faceted lens when looked through multiplied the view into a pattern. Similar toys are being offered today, using other names, the favourite being the Optiscope. Recently a Brewster's Patent Kaleidoscope, circa 1830, in its own case with a dozen interchangeable discs, was sold for £800 at a London auction . . . but there are still kaleidoscopes to be found for a few pence. The Exhibition also displays other toys where colour plays a part in their viewing or use.

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THE VIEW OF MOVEMENT

The theory of 'the persistence of vision' is understood to have been discussed and written about as far back as 65BC and many eminent scientists continued to do so right up to the early nineteenth century ... but as far as it is known no apparatus was designed or built to prove the theory. The well known physical example is that of holding the 'sparkler', lighted firework or burning stick and twirling it round and round, those looking on see the complete circle of light ... the full image is retained by the eye. It was in 1826 that one of the first positive demonstrations, calling on the persistence of vision, came about, this was the invention of the THAUMATROPE (18) by Dr. Paris. Two dissimilar pictures, when 'twirled', became one. The eye retained the image of the first and also seeing the second, a bird *and* a cage ... a bird *in* a cage. This section of the Exhibition shows many of the optical toys and devices that were invented to show movement, in the optical sense. One of the few museums to offer a comprehensive range of working models, is the Science Museum, London, in its gallery of the History of Photography. It is regretted that too many galleries and museums show these as static exhibits. Herman Bollaert's article on the Optical Toy in this publication, gives more detail of the toys of movement, so I will restrict

my comments to those I feel will be of further interest to the collector. The Thaumatrope has been produced in a number of different versions, since its invention in 1826; these include 'the penny plain and tuppenny coloured' sheets of the nineteenth century to the 'naughty spinning discs' of the 1930s. More recently there have been some delightful imports from Taiwan, made of cane and paper, which are 'twirled' by a cord as used in the spinning of tops.

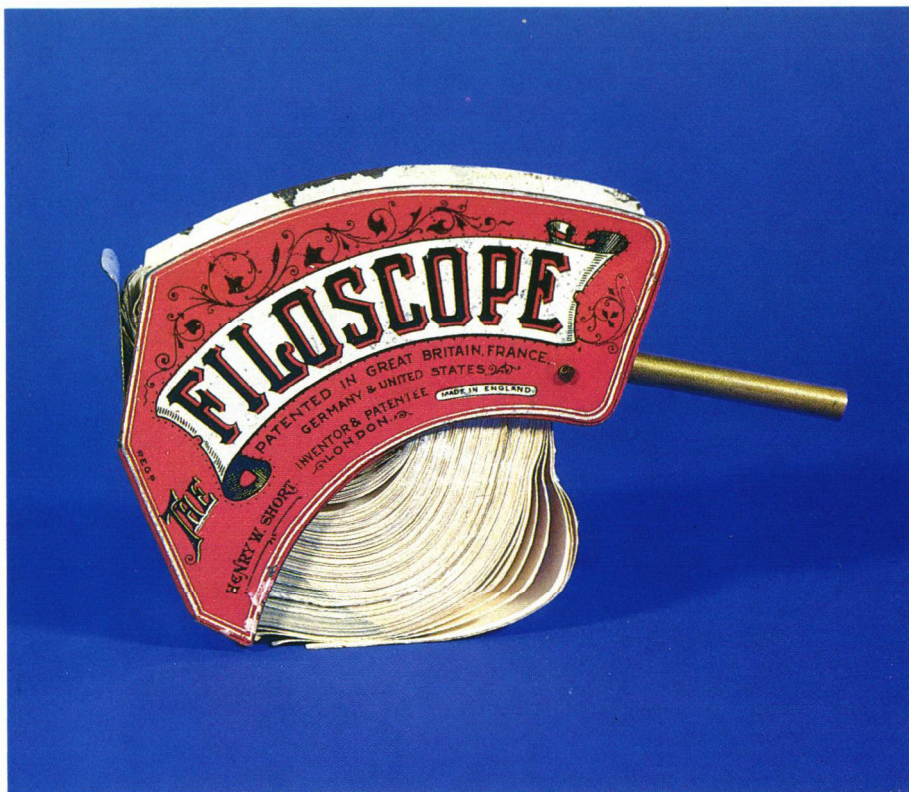
Dr. P.M. Roget's paper of 9th December 1824, titled *Explanation of an optical deception in the appearance of the spokes of a wheel seen through vertical apertures*, also referred to in Monsieur Bollaert's article, was a very important milestone in the history of movement. From the collector's viewpoint, it is worth noting that copies of such papers or 'Philosophical Transactions' can be found and purchased for a small sum, adding to the ephemera of interest.

Other working models in the exhibition include the PHENAKISTISCOPE (19), THE ZOETROPE (20) (Zootrope, or Wheel or Life) and the PRAXINASCOPE ... all of these, in one form or another, being well known to the collector. There are others, like the HELIOCINEGRAPHE ... a form of phenakistiscope, using a shutter disc, mounted with its picture disc behind, on the same spindle and revolving at the same speed. It was introduced



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by one Franz von Uchatius in 1850 (a working model is in the Science Museum, London). Another, being the ANORTHOSCOPE, has on its rear disc a distorted picture or design (anamorphic) which revolves clockwise; while the front disc, which has four equidistant slots, revolves anti-clockwise ... as a result one sees the 'regular' image (working model in the Science Museum, London). A working model of E.J. Marey's zootrope of a 'bird in flight' (1887) from his photographs of a flying bird is also on display, he was working at about the same time as Eadweard Muybridge, on the locomotion of human and animal figures. A 'Ross Wheel of Life' type lantern slide showing a mica disc of a 'Muybridge' trotting horse is also in the Exhibition.

There are many other optical toys that were produced using the persistence of vision principle, some of these are on display, dating from the early beginnings to the present day. One of these is the FLICKER BOOK (22), the toy version of the MUTOSCOPE (23) and the KINORA (24) machine; drawings or photographs depicting a series of movements or even gestures are 'flicked' in front of the eyes, which in turn, suggest to the brain ... MOVEMENT. One of the more sophisticated of these was the FILOSCOPE (25), patented in 1898 (British Patent No. 2315) by H.W. Short. He used half-tone prints, the same size, from the original cine-film negatives by R.W. Paul (1896), the Filoscope on display has 160 prints from the Spanish series of short films, this being No.14 'Andalusian Dance' first shown at the Alhambra Theatre on the 22nd October 1896. The film was taken by Henry Short during a five week tour of Spain and Portugal.

What of the TACHYSCOPE, the MARIONETTE TOP and the VIVISCOPE ... these and others? They all played a part in the 'View of Movement'. One hopes that the proposed Museum of the Moving Image in London will give a comprehensive area to the optical toy and other devices. The first two chapters of H.V. Hopwood's book *Living Pictures*, published in 1899, gives a good reference source for those who like 'quicker-reading' methods.

Although most of the original optical toys are commanding high prices at auction and in the market place, many modern versions can be found for the collector who wishes to understand the principles of the persistence of vision. Some of these on display can be bought from the local toy shop, station bookstall or museum shop.

A VIEW OF THEMES

Many collectors start their collecting in a very general way and either through lack of space (I had 142 magic lanterns and projectors at one time) or through a particular interest, decide to specialise. The philatelist who decides upon 'first-day' covers or stamps with a theme ... 'royalty' or 'flora and fauna' is a perfect example of the 'Theme' collector! The themes available to the magic lantern or optical toy enthusiast are as many and varied as you like to make them, but should not necessarily be selected for their ease of collection, rather for their interest value. Two examples are on display, one is an historical theme and the other one is of both story and design interest. The historical interest is in the building and opening of Brunel's Thames Tunnel. The official opening to the public gave the Victorian souvenir trade the opportunity to produce a plethora of peep-shows, peep-eggs and other optical viewers, alongside of these came a mass of publications, maps, 'protean' views, silk handkerchiefs, magic lantern slides, medallions and pottery. The second example is a story *The New Tale of a Tub* by F.W.N. Bayley with the original illustrations designed by Lieutenant Cotton and drawn by Aubrey. Mr. Bayley (1803-53) was the first editor of *The Illustrated London News* and a later review of writers of the period suggests that he (Bayley) is remembered for 'nothing very flattering except the clever tale about a tiger'. Without that tale would there have been those boxes of slides ...

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titled 'The Tiger and the Tub'? Those sets of slides range from the hand-painted wooden framed to the children's transfer versions (the author still keeps finding different sets). The additions to this 'theme' collection of slides can be in the many published books and even children's bricks of the same period.

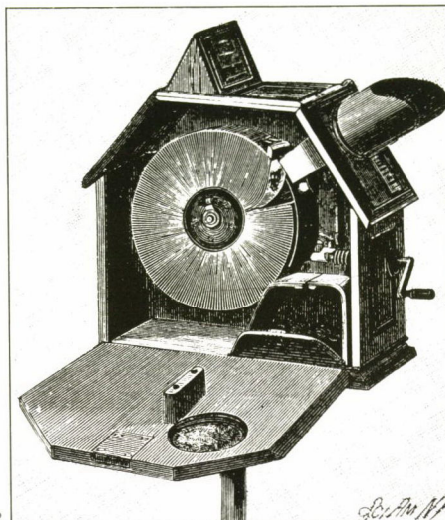
Choose your own theme, whether it be a collection of slide carriers or a particular optical device ... the 'hold-to-light print'. The bookworm may find interest in the catalogue ... not only the specialist catalogue of lantern manufacturers, but those of the scientific instrument maker and wholesaler and the toy catalogues of the great toy bazaars. Whatever the choice, this will add not only another facet to your collecting but also to our combined knowledge of the subject as a Society.

It is hoped that the Exhibition will interest, intrigue, entertain and educate and that new doors may be opened which lead to new collections being started under the general heading of the Optical Toy. Remember yesterday's free gift can not only

become a collector's item tomorrow, but also of value in the not-too-distant future. The *Children's Encyclopaedia and Newspaper* of the 1930s gave away a number of free paper 'optical toys', one of these called the Magic Mirror, a simple example of anamorphic art, fetched £30 at a London auction in January 1983. What will the cornflake boxes and the free gifts of 3D cards fetch under the hammer in the year 2000? Whatever their present or future value, they still have a place in the continuing history of the optical toy and its importance to the knowledge of perspective, colour, movement and vision.

The Exhibition, A ROOM WITH A VIEW, has attempted to give you, the member, another view of collecting, possible research, further conservation areas and interest ... has it succeeded?

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