

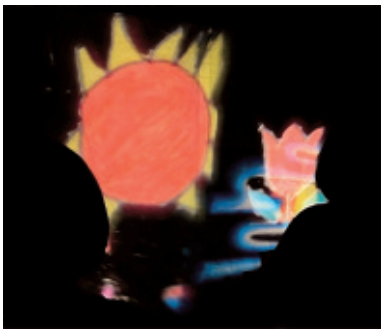
'LET'S MAKE AND PROJECT NISHIKI KAGE-E' PERFORMANCE AND WORKSHOP

Mitsue Ikeda-Tanaka

First of all, it gives me great pleasure to tell everyone that the activities of 'Nishiki Kage-e' have officially resumed. The wonderful members of 'Nishiki Kage-e Ikeda-Gumi' (see *TML* 16, p.8) gathered again, even though I have now left the University, and I was able to put together an event with them. So at the end of November 2018 we gave a performance and held a workshop at the Civic Centre in Osaka.

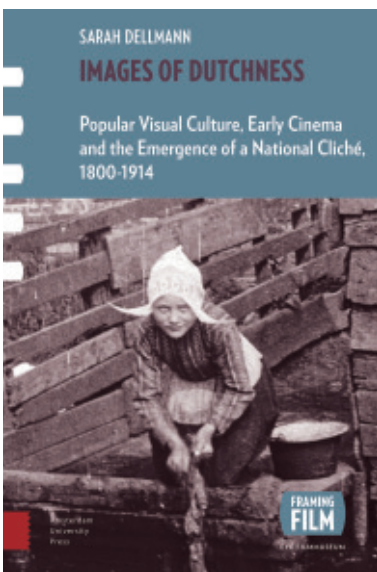


Following my brief explanation of the origins and form of 'Nishiki Kage-e', the event started with the troupe performing two short stories – *Douke san-nin shu* ("Three clowns") and *Karinsha*. *Douke san-nin shu* is a fun story about circus acts with appearances by a balloon man and an elephant, a bellows man and a crocodile, a spring man and a lion. *Karinsha* features three rotating chromatropes and brightly-coloured spinning flowers that together create a beautiful fantasy world. From behind the screen we could hear the audience gasp with surprise and laugh during the performance – which encouraged and pleased us too.



After the performance we held a workshop for about 20 people with the age of the participants ranging from 3 years to over 70. We divided the participants into groups, each working on a different short story to perform. They drew their own images on transparent plastic sheets and added colour. They then assembled the 'Taneita' (slides, usually with multiple images and movement) kit so that one picture would replace another when the plastic plate was drawn across. The three stories were: *A lion in the grass*, *A boy chasing insects* and *In the sea*.

Next our participants learned the basic operation of the 'Furo' (Japanese wooden magic lantern). A 'Furo' made of paulownia wood is so light that even small children can operate it by holding it in their hands. As soon as they had mastered that, the lights were turned off and the groups took turns in presenting their shows. While trying to keep pace with the story that was narrated by one of the troupe, everyone was busy moving animals, shaking the grass and shining the stars. People from both sides of the screen were joining in and cheering. They were amazed to see the animals, grass, stars, insects, flowers and fish they had just painted magnified and brought to life as they moved about on the screen. From the youngest to the oldest participant, they all enjoyed a special day when they learnt more about 'Nishiki Kage-e' and experienced the joy of creation.



BOOK NEWS

IMAGES OF DUTCHNESS

Popular Visual Culture, Early Cinema and the Emergence of a National Cliché

Sarah Dellmann

Amsterdam University Press, October 2018

Paperback, 424 pages, ISBN 9789462983007 (€39.95)

www.aup.nl/en/book/9789462983007/images-of-dutchness

MLS member Sarah Dellmann's authoritative book is not exclusively about lantern slides but they do appear as an important part of the wider visual culture of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Many MLS members helped Sarah, especially Gwen Sebus, other fellow Dutch members and Richard Crangle. The book looks at why early media present the Netherlands as a country full of canals and windmills, where people wear traditional costumes and wooden shoes, while industries and modern urban life are all but absent. Sarah investigates this through diverse sources, ranging from magazines to tourist

brochures, from anthropological treatises to advertising trade cards, stereoscopic photographs, picture postcards, magic lantern slide sets and films of early cinema. The publisher says: "This richly illustrated book provides an in-depth study of the fascinating corpus of popular visual media and their written comments that are studied for the first time. Through the combined analysis of words and images, the author identifies not only what has been considered 'typically Dutch' in the long nineteenth century, but also provides new insights into the logic and emergence of national clichés in the Western world."