FRAME : ONE

December 17th 2024 - January 6th 2025
White Column Gallery and Platform, Leeds.

An exhibition in two spaces, introducing the work of the Early Cinema Research Group, Leeds.

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This exhibition and publication are presented at Leeds Beckett University for educational purposes only.

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The Early Cinema Research Group

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"When these cameras become available to the public, when all are able to photograph their dear ones, no longer merely in immobile form but in movement, in action, with their familiar gestures, with speech on their lips, death will no longer be final."

A journalist for *La Poste*, writing about the first Lumiere shows of December 1895.

INTRODUCTION

The Early Cinema Research Group, established this year at Leeds Beckett University, will encourage and facilitate research into all forms of visual media and will be presenting its work in a series of upcoming exhibitions and film screenings. At the heart of the Group's work is the Stephen Herbert archive, a collection of books, research paper and artefacts connected to the history of motion pictures and held by the Northern Film School at Leeds Beckett University. The archive contains a wide range of items including an original Talbotype, an original Eadweard Muybridge stereoscopic photograph, unpublished manuscripts and around 500 books on all aspects of film and television history. Researchers are welcome to contact the University to discuss a visit.

We are currently in the process of examining and cataloguing the archive, and so the *Frame : One* exhibition - and this booklet - are both small journeys into the unknown.

Stephen Herbert was a researcher, projectionist, writer, tinkerer, publisher and collector, and his work on the history of motion pictures was recognised around the world. He helped countless people with their own research whilst producing so much original work himself.

Stephen was head of technical services at the BFI Southbank cinema for several years, and organised technical operations at MOMI. He set up the Projection Box publishing house to produce works on media history, and was a technical consultant on Martin Scorsese's film, *Hugo*.

His books and papers, collected here as the Stephen Herbert Archive, is an invaluable resource for film historians.

EXHIBITION AS WUNDERKAMMER

Frame : One may be taken as a form of cinematic *wunderkammer,* an assemblage of artefacts whose categories are in flux due to the ongoing process of exploring the material within the archive from which all elements are drawn.

Viewing the exhibition thus, speaks to the idea of cinema itself as a modern, industrial, democratic and limitless 'wonder room'. This concept has historiographical utility - one of the figures central to the research of the ECRG is the inventor Louis Le Prince (see page 20) who was, for several years, a member of Leeds Philosophical and Literary Society, exhibiting various ceramic, painted and photographic works at its annual *conversaziones.*

It is conceivable that Le Prince's deep involvement with such progressive societies as the Phil and Lit informed his later vision for what motion pictures might mean to society, and is thus a potentially a rich seam for researchers. Lecturers at the society had been able, with magic lanterns, to show several hundred images on a screen, as opposed to 40-50 portfolio diagrams hung on a wall, taken off and replaced manually and vulnerable to wear and tear. Might Le Prince have envisioned his machines as the next step, industrial *wunderkammers* to be deployed, for the enlightenment of all classes, at Philosophical Halls across the nation? Did he intuit that he would be continuing the tradition of the Great Victorian Collector, only with new collections that would not be made up of skeletons and fossils and painted representations of life, but of life itself; life he had captured with a camera that he would come to call his 'receiver'?

"Last night I was in the Kingdom of Shadows. If you only knew how strange it is to be there."

Maxim Gorky

TALBOTYPES

In 1839, photographic pioneer, William Fox Talbot, revealed his invention, Photogenic Drawing, to the world. This process produced images from real life using paper coated in water and table salt, and a brushing of silver nitrate to sensitise it. Around the year 1840, he tried a new combination of chemicals, which included gallic acid. By adding this to his process, the light sensitivity of the paper was increased significantly which gave shorter exposure times and negatives which were less likely to fade. This meant that more copies could be made from them. Talbot's new images, which he renamed Calotypes (also known as Talbotypes) became the basis for the negative to positive copy system which, essentially, *was* photography until the digital age.

The qualities of gallic acid had already been observed by two scientists with links to Leeds. Reverend Joseph Bancroft Reade (born in the town) had discovered its qualities when pre-preparing light sensitive paper for his experiments with photomicography (taking photographs through a microscope). John Herschel, mathematician, astronomer, pioneer in the field of photography (and originator of the word 'photography,') had lived in Leeds and had close ties with the town's Astronomical Society. Herschel mentioned the use of gallic acid to Fox Talbot and it seems possible that the observations of Reade and Herschel at least informed aspects of Talbot's later work on Calotypes.

The wider story of photographic innovation and the town of Leeds - with its progressive intellectual societies, numerous workshops, and expertise in textiles (and associated work with chemicals for dyeing) - is a subject that is yet to be explored in depth and it is an aim of the ECRG to do so.

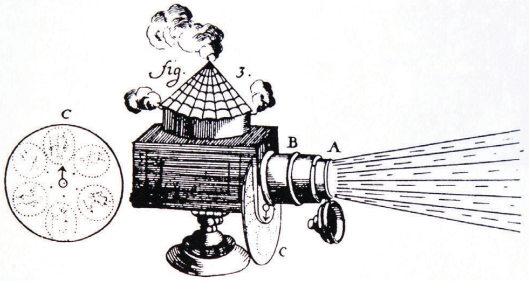
The Stephen Herbert Archive possesses an original Talbotype of Great Court, Trinity College, Cambridge (see background picture).

"The question of the moment is the possibility of obtaining a photographic image which moves and speaks!" Dr. T.L. Phipson, *Le Moniteur de la Photographie*, 1st May 1878

Kircher, incorrectly, has placed in front of the lens (instead of between the lens and the source of light).

NARRATOR
And with the slide placed in front of the lens as Kircher suggests, it will never work.

DISSOLVE



Johann Zahn's drawing of a magic lantern, probably the first correct representation. Go very close and pan as the narrator explains.

NARRATOR
The light from the lamp must pass through the illustration on the glass slide and the light beams must carry its outline through the lens all the way to the wall.

DISSOLVE BETWEEN

Different prints of Magic Lantern showmen, wandering through old European landscapes and villages.

Copper print of a show going on in a village inn.

HENNING CARLSEN AND THE STORY OF FILM

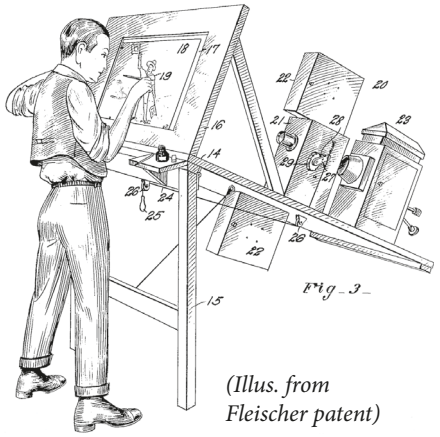
Henning Carlsen (1927-2014) was a Danish writer and director. His career began with documentaries such as *De Gamie* (*The Elderly* - 1961), *Familiebilleder* (*Family Pictures* - 1964) and *Ung* (*Youth* - 1965). This may have informed his subsequent work with feature films which were often shot in a *cinéma vérité* style. His film *Dilemma* (*A World of Strangers* in the UK) for example, was shot on location in South Africa, often using a hidden camera because of the film's critical stance on apartheid.

Dilemma was followed by *Sult* (*Hunger* - 1966), an adaptation of the novel by Knut Hamsun, was nominated for the Palm d'Or and is one of ten films listed in Denmark's 'cultural canon' by the Danish Ministry of Culture.

The Stephen Herbert Archive possesses what appears to be an unproduced screenplay by Carlsen titled, *A Dream Comes True*. It is for a docu-drama covering the history of motion pictures.

MUYBRIDGE/ROTOSCOPE

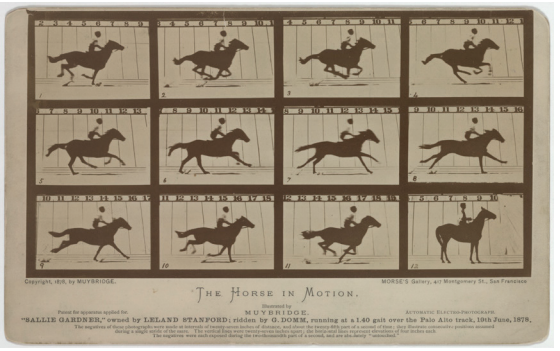
The Early Cinema Research Group will trace the, often unexpected, development of visual technologies over time. Take, for example, rotoscoping, a technique patented by Fleischer Studios in 1917 whereby an animator traces a subject in a photographic motion picture sequence in order to give their character particularly realistic movement.



(Illus. from Fleischer patent)

A similar technique was used by photographic pioneer, Eadweard Muybridge in the Nineteenth Century. When projecting back short sequences of movement, he had artists paint over the photographs to create a silhouette and then - to compensate for a foreshortening of the image which was occuring during projection - had them paint slightly elongated versions of the subject.

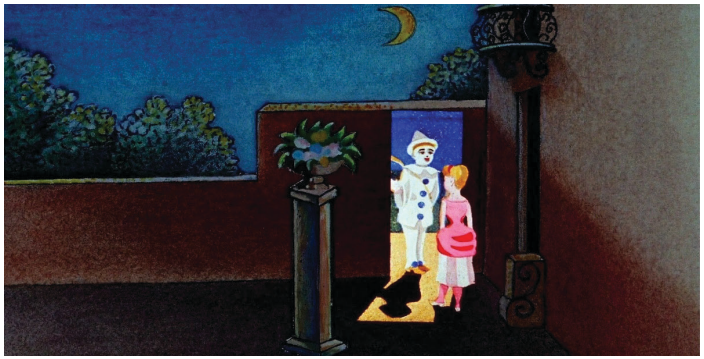
What is interesting to note is that Muybridge realised the creative potential of the technique and, liberated from the need to comply exactly with the underlying photograph, created more fantastical scenes (i.e. sequences that hadn't occured in real life) for example, a short loop of a boy somersaulting over a bull, a horse and rider galloping against a a tide of oncoming horses, flocks of birds and an invented horse race. The idea that what began as a solution to a technical problem, led to a new form of animation provides much scope for the study of creativity and its relationship with technology.



Note the difference in 'tone' between these two sequences. Painting the silhouettes of a subject and altering their length - which began as a solution to a technical problem - led to the creation of more whimsical sequences (below)

Before his work in chronophotography, Muybridge had established a reputation as a still photographer, travelling the American West in a horse-drawn portable darkroom called *Helios' Flying Studio.* The Stephen Herbert Archive possesses an original stereographic image of Nevada Fall, taken by Muybridge in 1867 and published in 1868.

ÉMILE REYNAUD AND THE FIRST CINEMA



When we think of the invention of cinema – of the cultural phenomenon whereby moving pictures are projected onto a screen to a paying audience - many of us might think of Thomas Edison, whose Vitascope threw its sequences onto a screen to astonished audiences in 1896; or perhaps the Lumière Brothers, whose Cinématographe delighted audiences at its legendary commercial opening at the Salon Indien, in the basement of a Paris Café, in December 1895. Some might even mention the series of brief sequences a month earlier, by the Skladanowsky brothers Max and Emil, at the Wintergarden Theatre, Berlin, which played throughout November 1895.

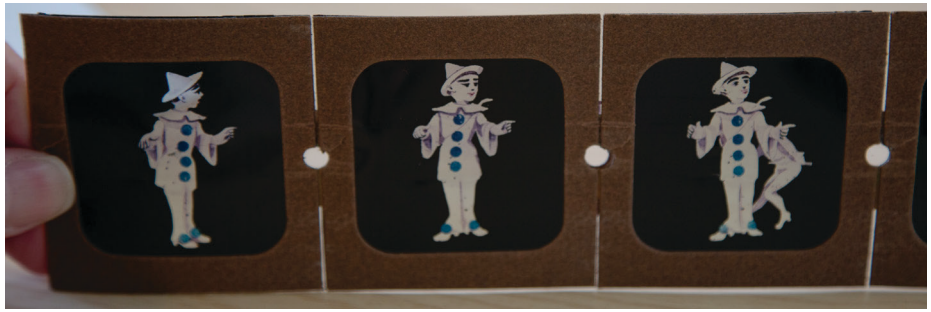
How many of us would go back a further two years and mention Émile Reynaud, whose show of living pictures, the *Pantomimes Lumineuses* - in colour, with music and sound effects, no less - would delight thousands of people, housed in the Théâtre Optique at the Musée Grevin in Paris, beginning in 1893?

The equipment on which Reynaud's films were played incorporated many of the mechanisms that would, for the next century, be understood as the constituent parts of film projection: A sequence of images of a subject in motion, on a long strip of flexible material; perforations along the strip to engage with sprockets that turn and move the strip along past a lens at a controlled rate; strong lighting behind the strip to ensure that images are 'thrown' through the lens and projected onto a screen.

Moreover, Reynaud's sequences would play for up to fifteen minutes, far longer than anything that Edison, The Skladanowskys or the Lumières would present to the world until several years later.

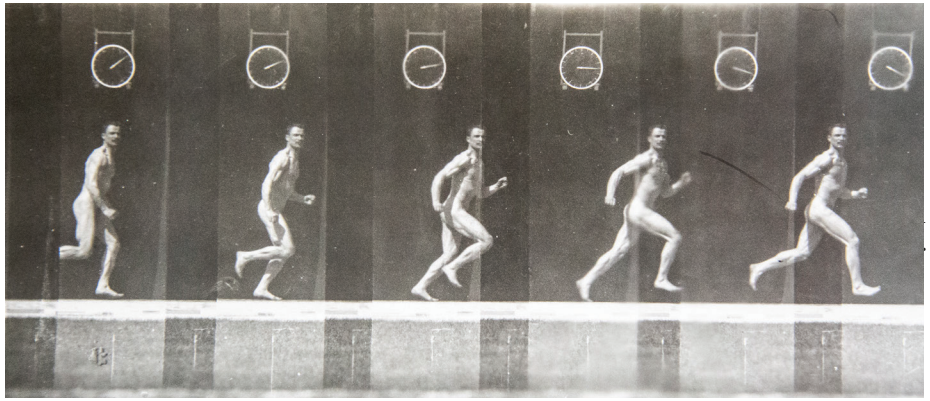
Considering the sophistication - and popularity – of the Théâtre Optique, it is curious why Reynaud is not better known – and why the Théâtre Optique is rarely celebrated as the first cinema. The answer, perhaps, is that the Reynaud's sequences were not photographic. The subjects of each of his presentations were painted onto gelatine strip, frame by exquisite frame.

Today, however, animation is held in high enough regard for us now to reassess the idea of the Théâtre Optique as the world's first cinema.



In Reynaud's Théâtre Optique, the background to the scene was projected separately to the moving subject (which was projected onto the background.) The Stephen Herbert Archive possesses replica frames from the sequence *Pauvre Pierrot!* (above) made by Julien Pappé and shown at the Musée Grévin in Paris in the 1990's. The Archive also possesses a reel of replica frames used by Stephen Herbert for his own reconstructions at the Museum of the Moving Image, London, in the 1990s.

ÉTIENNE-JULES MAREY

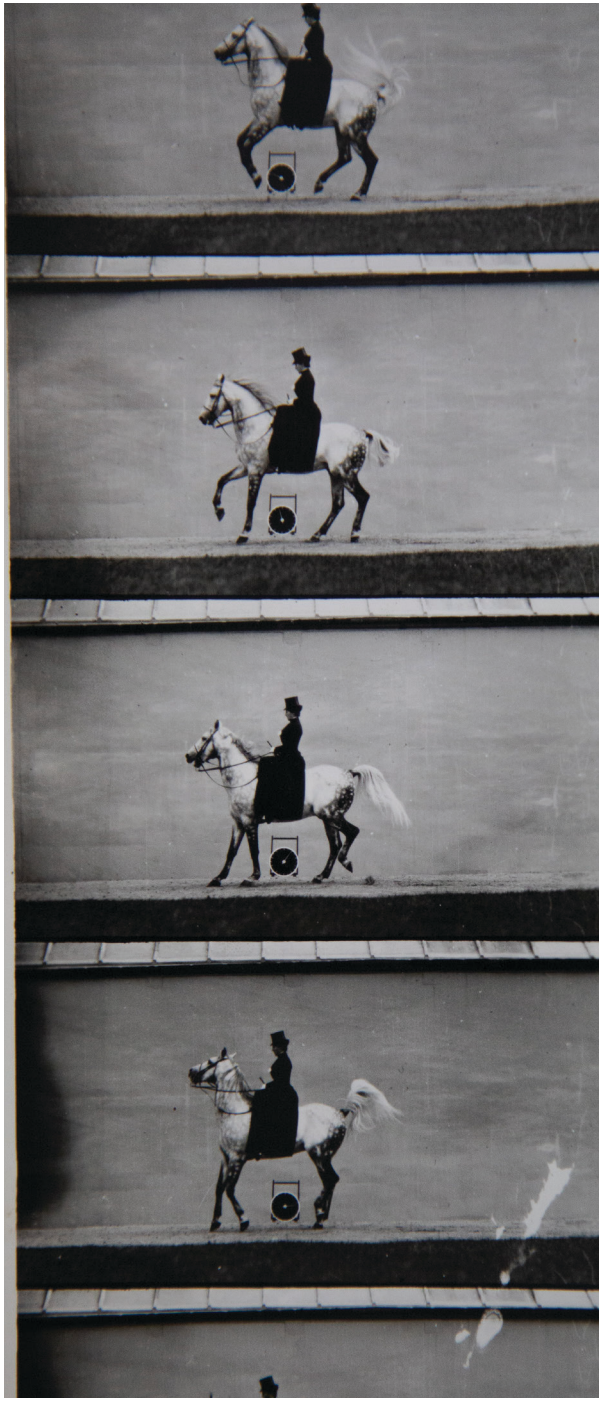


Étienne-Jules Marey (1830-1904) was a French scientist, physiologist and chronophotographer whose photographic studies were a profound influence on the development of cinematography. Marey had studied blood circulation in the human body, heart beats, respiration, muscles and human and animal movement. He used photography to help his analyses and invented cameras especially for this task - in 1882, he perfected his iconic chronophotographic 'gun' - a 'gun which does not kill' but instead took twelve consecutive pictures a second. Marey recognised then potential for playing back his sequences, and further work on his camera laid the basis for cinematographic technique for years to come.

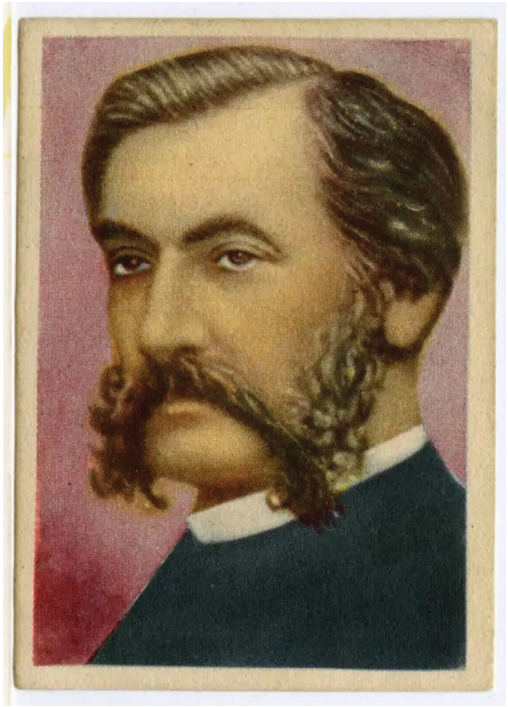
The ECRG is priviliged to have prints made from original Marey negatives in its Archive (see above and right for examples).

Lucien Bull (1876-1972) was assistant, and subsequently successor, to Étienne-Jules Marey at the Marey Insitute. His own work proved influential on several areas of scientific research such as electrcardiography and chronophotography, particularly the applications of spark illumination (creating his own high-speed) cameras.

The Archive contains literature and research material on both Marey and Bull.



LOUIS LE PRINCE



At the heart of the work of the ECRG is the desire to present to the world as accurately and comprehensively as possible, the story of Louis Le Prince who, in 1888, shot a series of motion pictures in Leeds, years before anything by Thomas Edison or the Lumière brothers.

Serious consideration of his work is rare and the real genius of this ill-fated inventor is still to be fully appreciated by the wider public. It is fitting that material in the Stephen Herbert Archive is located almost within the footprint of the workshop in which Le Prince managed, in the second half of 1889, to throw flickering motion picture sequences onto a sheet hung up as a make-shift screen. A plaque commemorating Le Prince's work was unveiled in 1930. It can be seen again now, at the front of Broadcasting House, the site of Le Prince's workshop.

LE PRINCE: MUSINGS AND MISCELLANEA #1

LE PRINCE TABLET UNVEILED.—The scene at 160, Woodhouse Lane, Leeds, yesterday, when the Lord Mayor (Dr. Hawkyard) unveiled a bronze tablet to the memory of Augustin Le Prince, the Leeds film pioneer. Mr. E. Kilburn Scott, Le Prince's former partner, is behind the Lord Mayor.

Le Prince's daughter, Marie, was present at the unveiling of the memorial plaque to her father in 1930. Where the workshop once stood - at 160 Woodhouse Lane - is now the location for Broadcasting Place (below). In 2017, the plaque was returned to the site in another unveiling ceremony, where it now resides, a mere thirty or so yards away from White Column Gallery.

AT THE COMMEMORATION OF HER FATHER, INITIATOR OF THE OF CINEMATOGRAPHY: MISS LE PRINCE AT LEEDS.
On December 12 took place the ceremony of unveiling a bronze plaque to the me of Louis Aimé Augustin le Prince, at Leeds, on the site of the workshop where he the first practical one-lens animated picture camera. Miss le Prince is seen examining an early form of animated film, after the unveiling ceremony.

LE PRINCE:
MUSINGS AND MISCELLANEA #2

Louis Aimeé Augustin Le Prince, a young artist, engineer and photographer, came to Leeds in 1866, worked in a brass foundry there, married and started a family and involved himself in the social and intellectual circles of the town. In 1888, he built a single lens camera with which he shot a number of films.

Amidst the many mysteries surrounding the story of these films, has been the failure by researchers to notice one fundamental aspect of his surviving work: that the three brief sequences (now known as *Roundhay Garden Scene, Leeds Bridge Scene* and *Accordion Scene*), whose fragile images have been digitised and brought back to life online, are most probably not the same sequences that Le Prince actually projected onto a white sheet hung up as a screen in his workshop in Leeds in mid-to-late 1889. Discovering this disconnect between his projected sequences and our perception of them, requires only a little light detective work. James Longley, Le Prince's assistant, described watching a section of *Leeds Bridge Scene:*

"…where the tram horses were seen moving over it and all the other traffic as if you was [sic] on the bridge yourself. I could even see the smoke coming out of a man's pipe, who was lounging on the bridge."

Looking at the fleeting remains of Leeds Bridge Scene, no-one can be seen smoking. And despite the presence of horse-drawn carts, actual tram horses and trams are absent. But it is the technical clues which suggest most strongly that the specific images we now associate with Le Prince's stuttering and secretive projection of films in Leeds are actually the ones he had left on the 'cutting room' floor:

Le Prince, working before celluloid became readily available, used rolls of sensitised paper in his camera. However, using such a material in a projector proved unfeasible as it would cockle and burn in the heat of the lights. Le Prince therefore used a specific form of sensitised paper which allowed him to peel off the exposed, emulsified images and mount them individually onto small glass plates which were strong enough to withstand a projector's heat.

With that in mind, let us look at four images from the *Accordion Scene* (right). Notice that some of the frames in the sequences overlap slightly, the top of one image just covering the bottom of another, for example. While it is no problem to separate digital versions of these images using computer software, the chemicals in the original negatives would have melded together making them difficult for Le Prince to put onto separate glass plates for projection.

Additionally, the borders around the images are black, and the frame numbers written on the edges are white, suggesting that the images we have today constitute an inverted copy of the original negative strip in its entirety, borders, annotations and all, the pictures fixed forever onto the original photographic paper rather than being put onto individual glass plates that could have been used in a projector.

The *Roundhay Garden* and *Leeds Bridge* scenes share similar qualities, films that

never made it to the screen – at least not for over a hundred years.

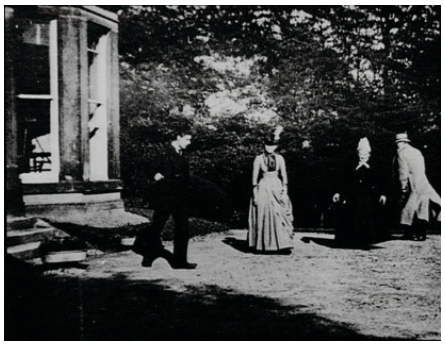
Why has this not been noticed before? Perhaps because Le Prince's sequences are no longer viewed as films but as mere symbols that represent an idea of 'firstness'. Perhaps we have simply stopped looking at his work which is a shame because his work is beautiful. Other film pioneers had rudimentary set ups - uninspired street scenes, for example, or a figure sneezing or waving, ill-posed and uninterested in saying anything other than 'look, the machine works'. Le Prince on the other hand, always added something extra. In *Roundhay Garden*, two women in the middle of the picture move around while two men circle them following paths designed almost certainly to keep them in shot at all times (Le Prince not just capturing these moments but directing them as well). The figures' fleeting interactions, their self-consciousness and amusement despite it all make Roundhay Garden a moment of quiet charm and subtle mischief. In *Accordion Scene,* Le Prince's son, Adolphe, plays the eponymous instrument, smiles broadly and executes a graceful side-step, framed by the doorway behind him; and in *Leeds Bridge Scene*, Le Prince shoots from an upper window ensuring that the bridge cuts a pleasing diagonal line right through the frame.

Le Prince's sequences were shot with an artist's eye but were any of them actually played back? Perhaps not the sections we now possess, but witness testimony seems clear that some, long-lost films were thrown onto a sheet by a projector with arc lights powered by a Crompton dynamo which was powered in turn by a Robey Semi-Portable Steam Engine (steam powered film!) In a final twist, however, much of this testimony was hidden away in boxes in archives for almost a century. In the late 1920s and early 1930s, Le Prince's first biographer E.K. Scott chose to publish only the most positive statements, setting aside the accounts that also mentioned Le Prince's frustrations and failures, for example woodworker William Mason's assertion that Le Prince's films were

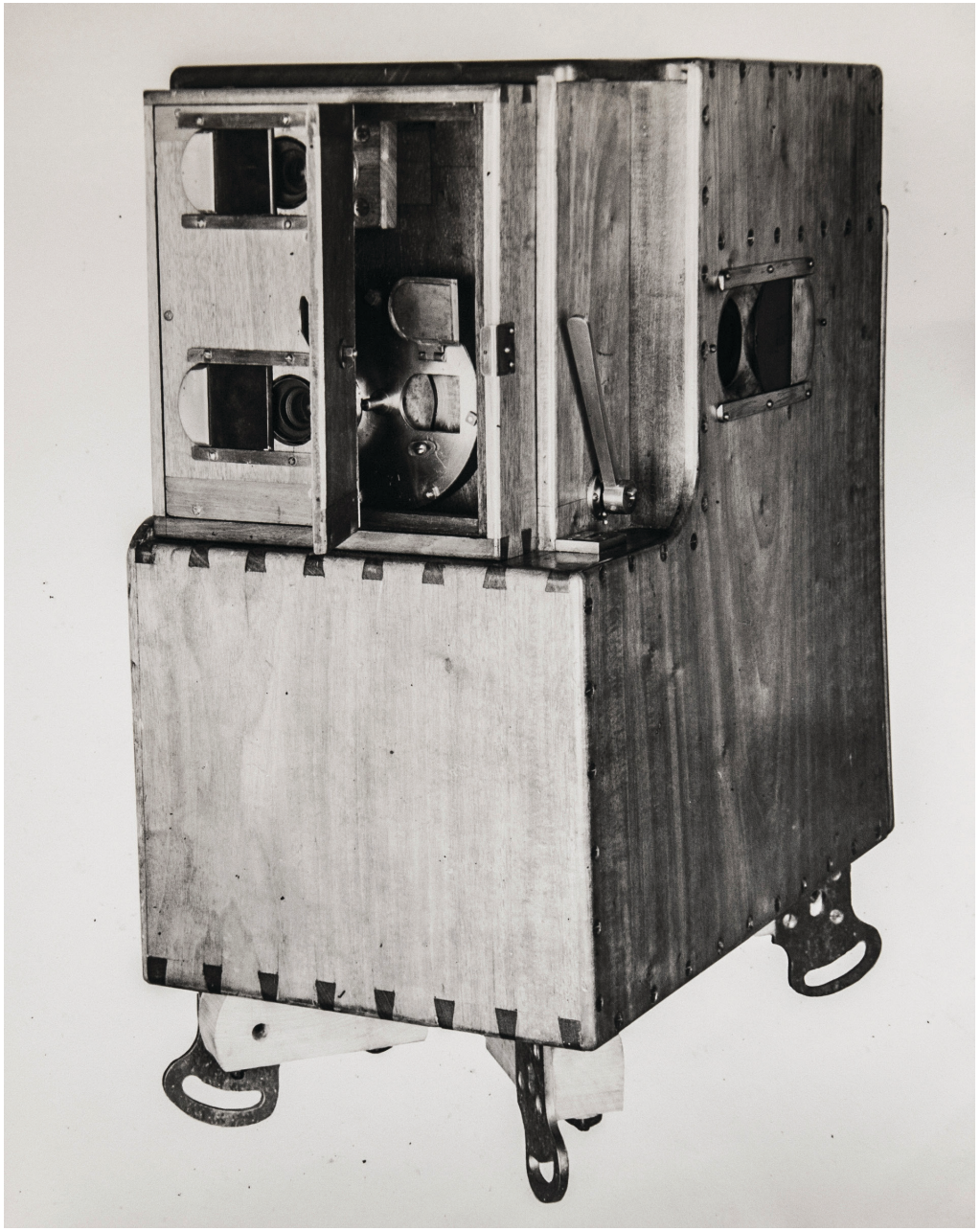
"not shown more than two or three times, because…the electric power was too weak"

The reason for Scott's reticence was almost certainly due to his efforts to secure a pension for Le Prince's widow, Lizzie, who, after her husband's disappearance, was struggling financially. Scott presented to the world a story, not of occasional successes punctuated by obstacles and unreliability, but of (implied) total success which, were it not for the inventor's disappearance, would have led to riches and fame. Ironically, by attempting to help the Le Prince family in the short-term, he undermined his subject's legacy by ignoring the less effusive but more plausible testimony to hand, and in so doing he also laid the groundwork for subsequent theories that Le Prince had been kidnapped by rival inventors such as Thomas Edison (for why else would someone on the cusp of unmitigated success disappear?)

There is, therefore, an accumulation of ways in which Le Prince's work has, in a sense, been lost to us - disappearance, misrepresentation and inattention being just three of them. The flickering images that were thrown onto Le Prince's white sheet may not have been the ones we thought, but pictures spluttered into life nonetheless. Perhaps it is time to look again at the life and work of this incredible character whose ingenious machines created such beautiful, neglected images.



A frame from *Roundhay Garden Scene* and a frame from *Leeds Bridge Scene*.



Louis Le Prince's one-lens motion picture camera, built in Leeds in 1888. A replica of this camera is on display as part of the *Frame : One* exhibition, courtesy of Armley Mills Industrial Museum, Leeds.

LE PRINCE: MUSINGS AND MISCELLANEA #3

Anyone looking online for Louis Le Prince's *Leeds Bridge Scene* will find a brief (approximately one second) sequence of images that have been digitised and looped. The twenty frames that make up this sequence come from a single glass negative plate (taken from paper originals) in the possession of the National Science and Media Museum, Bradford. For many years, these few frames appeared to be all that survived of the sequence.

In the Stephen Herbert Archive is an article on Le Prince from Meccano Magazine (February 1931) whose illustrations include three frames from *Leeds Bridge Scene* that are not part of the Science and Media Museum collection. They show the scene moments later and demonstrate (along with two frames printed in Leeds newspapers in 1930) that the original sequence was certainly longer than what we can observe today.

Small clues such as these 'new' images will help researchers to put together a more comprehensive survey of Le Prince's work than has been achieved to date. We hope that there are further small treasures to be found in the Stephen Herbert Archive.

Part of a series of Moving Pictures photographed with the single lens camera.

WORDSWORTH DONISTHORPE

There is only one book on Wordsworth Donisthorpe, a film pioneer whose connections to Leeds are many, and instrumental to the development of his motion picture cameras. The book, *Industry, Liberty and a Vision: Wordsworth Donisthorpe's Kinesigraph*, is written by Stephen Herbert. As custodians of the Stephen Herbert Archive we are intent on researching the story further and presenting the world with the most detailed account of Donisthorpe's life and work to date. The material collected by Stephen, as well as a discovery of letters in the North Yorkshire Archives at Northallerton, has helped us to start to piece together yet more of his story.

Nearly forgotten today, Wordsworth Donisthorpe accomplished many remarkable things in his life: he patented a moving-picture camera, helped found the British Chess Association, wrote prolifically on libertarian politics, and even invented a language. He came close to being remembered as an inventor of motion pictures. Instead, he became perhaps, motion pictures' first villain.

In 1876, Donisthorpe — an intellectually restless and ambitious man — obtained a provisional UK patent for the Kinesigraph, an apparatus designed to "facilitate the taking of a succession of photographs at equal intervals of time. . . . to give the eye a representation of the object in continuous movement" . In other words, a motion picture camera.

After an apparent hiatus, Donisthorpe returned to motion pictures. With the help of his cousin, William Carr Crofts, he created the Donisthorpe-Crofts Kinesigraph in 1888 — a very different design to the earlier 1876 patent, despite keeping the original name.

Many of the mechanisms seem to have come as much from the world of wool-combing and textiles as from the world of photography. For instance, a foot treadle turning a drive wheel powered everything inside the camera.

Sometime between the end of 1889 and 1891, having come across a new material called celluloid, Donisthorpe and Crofts shot a short film of Trafalgar Square. In his biography of Donisthorpe, Stephen Herbert speculates that around a hundred frames may have been shot at a rate of approximately ten frames per second, of which ten frames survive, leaving us with only the briefest glimpse of a distant time. It was the first motion picture of London, the first of any capital city.

In 1889, Donisthorpe and Crofts applied for a patent for their new camera under the title, "Improvements in the production and representation of instantaneous photographic pictures". The specification for the patent was completed in May 1890 and accepted in November of that year. A US patent, "Method of Producing Instantaneous Photographs", was published in 1891.

Experiments with projection do not seem to have been succesful, and in an effort to finance his work, Donisthorpe would even resort to the attempted blackmail of Bradford industrialist, Samuel Cunliffe Lister. This, too, failed, and when his cousin William Carr Crofts died in 1894, Donisthorpe's dream of motion pictures seemed to have died with him.

Brian Coe, one of the great historians of motion picture mechanisms wrote: "It is unfortunate that Donisthorpe could not develop his device further at the time, since of the several experimenters in the field, he was perhaps the nearest to success."

And so, after all this, we are left with the question — would the story of film have been different, had Donisthorpe been better at blackmail?

THEODORE BROWN

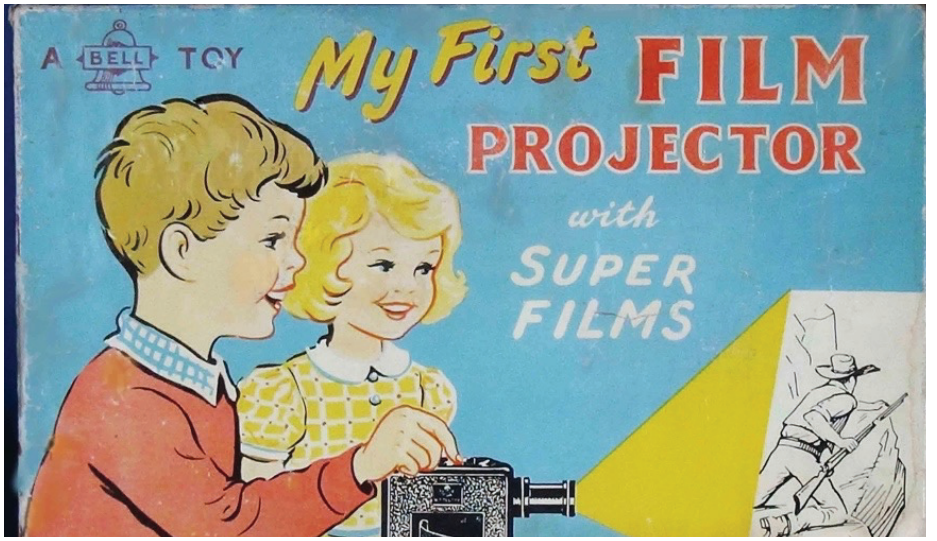
Theodore Brown (1870-1938) was a prolific and indefatigable 'experimenter in optical entertainments' - a figure devoted to all forms of visual technology, from stereoscopic motion picture projectors to magic lanterns; pop-up books to stereographic postcards; from home cinema to moving 'magic picture' books. Not a famous inventor, but a busy one, and as such, perhaps, emblematic of much of the Archive in his openmindedness towards low art and popular culture.

The Archive holds material on Theodore Brown, including Stephen Herbert's biography of him, *Theodore Brown's Magic Pictures*, as well as stereoscopic postcards created and sold by Brown, and original illustrations by him, for children's books. The majority of Stephen's material on Brown can now be found at the Bill Douglas Cinema Museum in Exeter.

The film historian, Luke McKernan, recognised the Edwardian inventor, Brown, as Stephen Herbert's 'hero and alter ego.'

Illustration, right. Part of a Theodore Brown magic postcard, a stereoscopic view that came with special red and green-lensed glasses.

TOY PROJECTORS



The research material in the Stephen Herbert Archive does not limit itself to famous inventors or momentus discoveries/technologies. How motion pictures have been consumed, experienced and used by the public - both old and young - was always a subject of great interest to Stephen (tellingly he spent a lot of time collecting flick books and repairing pinball machines!) and his archive reflects this, even to the extent that it includes a small number of toy projectors along with their accompanying film strips.

Stephen's own articles about toy projectors were usually infused with nostalgia, such as his reminiscences about his first movie projector (a Japanese 8mm Horipet-Super):
"This was a Christmas 1963 purchase, by mail order, price around 6 pounds, at the time more than a day's pay for the average worker. It was supplied with one 8mm film, *The Day the Earth Froze,* a very short version of a 1962 Fireball XL5 television episode by the famous puppeteers Gerry and Sylvia Anderson. I was envious of Steve Zodiac and his companion Venus as they flew around on their hover-scooters, a cool vehicle that I'm still waiting to try out for real."

EXHIBITIONS/MUSEUMS

Stephen Herbert's work for, and collaborations with, various institutions have resulted in a collection of material (now housed in the Archive,) on museums, exhibitions and festivals all over the world, from The National Science and Media Museum, Bradford, to the Cinémathèque Française, Paris. Alongside this material is a range of literature on the enterprises and institutions at the heart of the early days of motion pictures, such as the famous Royal Polytechnic Institution, and the travelling shows of the early Twentieth Century.

The material now in the Archive includes promotional material from museums and festivals across the world, as well as an invaluable wealth of notes on the planning of all manner of events and exhibitions. These constitute a vital resource for the study of how film has been - and might be - studied and celebrated.

Above and below - photographs from the Observer newspaper's '60 Years of Cinema' exhibition, London, 1956.

BIOSCOPE BANTER

Stephen was keen to make the exhibition or museum experience as vivid as possible. Here is what appears to be a script for an actor in the role of a barker at an early bioscope show.

'Ladies and gentlemen. Step right this way. the sensation of the age! Living, moving pictures for one penny! You've seen pictures of people in books, all frozen stiff. Now see 'em moving about, large as life and twice as ugly. Just like you and me.

My friends, could you but look beyond these walls, what a sight you would perceive. A Moorish Palace. An 'Alhambra. The dizzy heights of luxury. "Blimey!" you would say, "The sight of this here fine interior with its sumptuous furnishings is worth the price of a ticket alone!"

But that there is only the start of it. For once you've settled in your seat we shall then parade before you a veritable feast of kinematographical and Bioscopical delights...the like of which would have even Mr Thomas Edison 'imself leaping to his feet in approbation!

Spend your pennies on the cocoanut shy! 'Ave a trip in the 'andsome swinging boats! BUT FIRST...for the ridiculous sum of just One Penny, treat yourself to the wonder of wonders. Bring the dear children in for the treat of a lifetime. Did I say dear? Just an 'appeny each! We'll never get rich, but we'll be PROUD to have shared with you, the modern miracle of the electrical world - moving pictures.

SEE the chase of the motor carriage! The thrilling escape of the villainous Charles Peace! No need to go to London...we've got 'em 'ere! MORE...you can SEE London up there on the screen, and Gay Paree besides! Even - YES, it's true...A Trip to the VERY MOON itself! Just as if you were there!

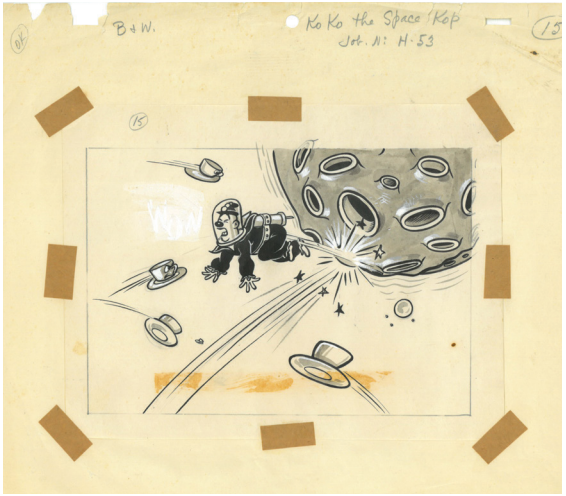
No damage to the eyes, and nothing to offend the ladies. Anyway, who's to know?

You, Sir!...you step inside wi' me. You tell me if I'm a liar!"

FUTURE PROJECTS

As well as exploring the content of the Archive, the ECRG will be looking to present its research through a series of projects and exhibitions, often in collaboration with other institutions. Here is just a taste of what we are hoping to do in the coming months.

ROTOVISIONS



Sketches of Koko the Clown courtesy of Fleischer Studios.

An exhibition of the history of animation slated for June 2025. Was Émile Reynaud's Théâtre Optique the world's first cinema? How did Eadweard Muybridge's chronophotographic work in the Nineteenth Century make way for Richard Linklater's *A Scanner Darkly* in the Twenty-First? And is it possible that motion picture pioneer, Louis Le Prince, somehow influenced the world's first cartoon? In collaboration with partners such as Fleischer Studios (*Popeye*, *Betty Boo*), *Rotovisions* will explore some of the ideas and technologies at the heart of animation and attempt to present a provocative new history of the form.

PETER WHITEHEAD

Peter Whitehead was a documentary maker who captured (and in so doing, helped to create) the Swinging Sixties. His innovative, often provocative, films (*Tonite Let's All Make Love In London*, *The Fall,* and proto-pop videos for The Rolling Stones and Pink Floyd) celebrated and questioned the tumultuous times in which the filmmaker found himself.
Whitehead would continue to make genre-defying films, as well as writing a series of novels and, for a period of two-decades, breeding falcons in England, North Africa and Pakistan.

De Montfort University is in possession of the Peter Whitehead Archive, an extraordinary assemblage of material by one of cinema's forgotten visionaries, and we are looking forward to a series of collaborations, bringing his work back to a wider audience.

LET ME PUT YOU IN THE PICTURE

Amongst Stephen Herbert's research papers are at least two science fiction short stories written by him. One, *Razzle Dazzle,* has clearly been published (Science Fiction Monthly, Vol 2 No. 8.) The other, *Let Me Put You In The Picture,* probably written in the late 1970s or 1980s, exists in the archive as a few pages of annotated typescript. Whether this story was published or not is unclear. Either way, we have great pleasure in presenting it to you here:

LET ME PUT YOU IN THE PICTURE
(Or, how the sun came out and sang to Michael Grant.)
by Stephen A Herbert

On his face, there was a smile. Mike Grant appeared to be asleep. The Inspector held his wrist.
"He's dead all right. Cold, too. Did you see anyone leave this apartment today?"
The man shook his bald head slowly, then:
"Yes, I think so."
"?"
"An old man. I saw an old man in a brown suit downstairs. He could have come from here."
The Inspector leaned over the body, then took a pencil from his pocket.
"What time was this?"
The bald man looked at the clock.
"About four hours ago, around eight o'clock."
The Inspector pushed the TV set's POWER button with his pencil. The snowstorm on the screen faded. He switched off the video cassette recorder the same way. He didn't touch the orange box, but he noted that there was a cord leading from the box to the metal cap on Grant's head.

He was there on the lawn in Washington D.C when the saucer landed.

He'd chosen to be one of the front row of spectators where he would get a good view. He looked around him. Around him! It worked. His imagination was providing the missing information.

Grant had always admired Michael Rennie's acting, and Klaatu was his favourite alien. Perhaps one day he'd be able to take Rennie's part; with practice. It was such a good script – hadn't it started out as a short story in ASTOUNDING back in the forties? He dimly remembered reading….Then Gort appeared. Gort, the perfect robot, the sun glinting on his golden casing. Golden casing. Golden? Not… golden! Something was wrong. Should be grey. Grant was confused, his head was swimming. Should be gray; shimmering Hollywood gray. THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL was made in black and white. The smooth features of Got were changing; now a pockmarked old man's face stared at him, lips moving. Then this:

"You're coming round gradually. Bit of a strain, the first time. It gets easier."

The voice became more distinct.

"Thought I'd better bring you out. You looked troubled."

Grant tried to focus his eyes on the scarred face. He looked over at the TV set; the screen was dead. He noticed a metallic glint from the floor; the control helmet! It came back to him in an instant - the old man, the trial run, the movie. Making an effort to return to reality he leaned forward and stopped the tape, then froze while his head cleared. The old man looked into his face; expectantly, nervously, greedily. Grant spoke again.

"Gort should have been gray."

An anxious flicker crossed the old man's face. He mumbled:

"I switched on the colour synth."

"Well it might be O.K. if you haven't seen the film before, but it's bloody disturbing if you have. I won't be using that button much."

Excitedly, the old face spoke out again.

"Apart from that, you liked it? You'll use it?"

Gradually the implications, the possibilities, the potential crowded Grant's head. He picked up the foil baseball cap and cord, ran his fingers over the square buttons on the orange box next to the Betamax TV VCR. He realised that he was nodding, slowly. The old face opposite cracked into a grin. He stopped nodding and spoke.

"But you'll have to go over the controls with me again."

The creased old man got up and shuffled over to the orange box.

"We're most grateful, sir. Most grateful," he puffed. "Need more market tests, consumer feedback…I'll explain the operation again, sir. If you'll just sign the customer section of this license."

Michael Grant scribbled his name in the blank space. The old man's voice, going through the same routine:

"…and remember to set the timer to the length of the programme you're to take part in."

In all his thirty nine years Mike Grant had never expected a chance such as this. All his life he'd loved science fiction. He remembered a day when he was seven years old, running home from the candy store in the High Road with a pack of bubble gum. He'd ripped off the wrapper and stopped dead when he saw the card inside. It was a picture of a rocket ship; smooth curves and clipped fins, bright silver and gold against the deep blue of space. He'd heard of rocket ships on the radio, but he'd never seen a picture of one; until now. He started walking and turned the card over as he went. He read the text, his lips soundlessly mouthing the words.

'Scientists tell us that within fifty years, in a rocket such as this, man may land on the moon.'

The moon! And he might live to see it, he would be only…fifty seven.

When he reached home, he had told his mother that when he was old he was going to see the films that the men who were going to the moon would bring back. He'd shown her the card, and she had laughed; "That isn't real, Michael. It's only science fiction." Three weeks later, the first Sputnik had taken the world by surprise.

In the sixties he'd studied astronomy after school, read Asimov and Clarke and dreamed of space. One night, while waiting for the Leonid shower, he had seen a satellite burn up on re-entry. That magnesium flare had re-kindled the flame in his heart, strengthened his yearning to be up there, in the silence between the stars. When Armstrong stepped out onto the moon Michael Grant had been watching, alone with the stillness of the house. His family were in bed asleep; already they took for granted what a dozen years before his mother had laughed at as an impossible dream.

He kept himself fit, and every time he read about another European being accepted for the colony his spirits rose. He was no astronaut, but he was a good office manager and in the new colonies they would need managers. His routine job with an insurance company was no challenge to him; gave him no hope, no raw material for his imagination. But science fiction and space flight provided the 'What if…?' that his brain needed. He had a special love for SF movies. Especially the classics; he had tapes of them all, he knew all the major parts off by heart. He would struggle home after a mind-numbing day at the office to spend another evening alone in his tired-looking bedsitter. First he would eat and then perhaps read a few pages of the latest issue of ANALOG or FUTURE LIFE, then run a tape on his TV. Before, he had had friends with similar interests, but during the last two years he had become bitter and withdrawn. And now he was alone. Only old baldy from the flat upstairs occasionally dropped in late for a chat and the chance of a free drink.

Once there had been real hope of a job in space, in the second O'Neill colony. He'd had his name down since '85. Then two years ago, in 1987, he had found out about his heart condition. When the results of his medical had come, condemning him to a life on Earth, something inside him had died. Now every day he lived knowing that he would never go into space. Every news item about rocket launches and orbital construction progress and people readying for the Great Adventure mocked him. Every moment of his waking hours he bore the knowledge that he would never know the indescribable delight of weightlessness.

He had seen the advertisement in the ADVERTISER:

'FILM FANS – LET US PUT YOU IN THE PICTURE. How Would YOU Like To EXPERIENCE Your Favourite Movies? Actuator Company needs volunteers to test new Act-U-Matic device. Plugs into your tv and VTR. Contact….'

And the old man in the crushed brown suit had appeared on his doorstep two days later.

A few minutes after the old man had left Grant felt confident enough to try it again, this time alone. He picked up the instruction manual and started to read.

'The CELESTIAL ACT-U-MATIC Mk II is the latest in the company's range of electronic participation devices, a direct development of the popular home video games of the 'seventies and 'eighties. The ACT-U-MATIC is a delicate instrument and should be handled with care at all times. Be certain that you have read and understood these instructions carefully before you attempt to use it.

HOW YOUR ACT-U-MATIC ACTUATOR WORKS

For half a century TV viewers have been passive observers of television programmes and TV films. Now, by the miracle of the ACT-U-MATIC actuator, the latest development of the Actuator company's research dept., you can take part in your favourite pre-recorded shows. Here's how it's done.

1) First, choose which character you wish to be. Unless you decide to be an 'extra' or minor bit-player in an old film, you will need to know the lines and movements of the character in order for the story to make sense. Failure to do so will mean that there is nothing for the other characters to react to, and the sense of reality will be lost. You may, of course, alter the lines and movements of the Chosen Subject, providing you take into consideration the consequences of those changes.

2) Having made your selection, run the tape and place the pointerpencil on the main body of the Chosen Subject when he/she first appears. The Actuator's minicomputer will now make that character disappear and extrapolate the nearby background, substituting the newly created background for the gap caused by the Chosen Subject's disappearance. Now wind back the tape to the beginning.

3) Place the control helmet on your head and start the tape. Imagine yourself in the place of the Chosen Subject. At your first appearance the Actuator's minicomputer will, through the control helmet, sense your imagined position and, using images of yourself extracted from its microprocessor banks, place 'you' in the appropriate position. Similarly, any sounds made by the Chosen Subject will be filtered from the soundtrack and your own vocalisations substituted. Thereby, anything you say will become the dialogue of the character you are playing.

4) The resultant image, featuring yourself in place of the Chosen Subject, will not only appear on your TV screen but will also be passed directly to the sensory centre of your brain via the control helmet. Thus, with extraneous sights and sounds eliminated, and all ambient distractions

done away with, your brain will receive all the information required to see yourself in the film in place of the Chosen Subject. In addition, Mk II models have a feature exclusive to the CELESTIAL ACT-U-MATIC. By locking in the PULSE mode before starting the tape, psychopulses are fed to the imagination center of the brain. These pulses trigger your brain into filling in the dimensional information required to enable you to see the film subjectively. You are no longer watching, but taking part! The film is now a fully dimensional experience. The Mark II model also provides for colour synthesization of old black and white films. This is made possible by…'

Grant skipped the next paragraph.

'WARNING

Participants who are in poor health or of a nervous disposition are advised not to take part in films or TV programmes that are known to include, or that are likely to include, exceptionally violent or disturbing scenes. The Actuator Company cannot be held liable for nervous disorders caused by participating in unsuitable motion pictures or television programmes. Participants are advised to take part only in pre-recorded programmes of known content. A list of approved, legally available films/TV shows is available from the Company on request.'

Grant placed the helmet on, plugged the cord into the socket in the orange box and pressed the appropriate black button. He heard the purr of a transformer. Glancing along the shelf of tapes – DESTINATION MOON, 2001, STAR TREK, THE FORCE – he found his favourite movie, reached for the cassette and slid it into the VCR. Apprehensively, he punched the PLAY button, sat back and waited.

"May I go now?" asked the bald man as he edged towards the door.

"You'll be needed as a witness. You will be contacted."

The Inspector knelt down beside the VCR and using his handkerchief picked up the cassette case which was on the floor. He noted the title of the film, and remembered seeing it eleven or twelve years before. He had queued for ages.

Five notes, repeated again and again and again. White light overhead, overpowering – almost painful; a huge shape lighting up the awed faces of the silent crowd. He zipped up the front of his red nylon coveralls and took his place on the end of the line. The woman was there, and the child. Memories of them lingered. He saw the look of wonder on the boy's beaming face and remembered another child, long ago, whose face had been lit up by the promise of the picture on a bubble gum card. He turned to face the ship. They were coming out now towards him: smiling, friendly. All the pain of the previous two years ebbed away at that moment, and he knew then that he was indeed to go. At last his forbidden dream was about to come true. Mike Grant strode purposefully forward and entered the huge craft. On his face, there was a smile.

AFTERWORD

In *Let Me Put You In The Picture,* the movie into which the main character is taken, is clearly Steven Spielberg's *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* - a film in which the troubled main character, Roy Neary, chooses to board a UFO in the hope of a new life. Viewing Steven (Spielberg's) film in the context of Stephen (Herbert's) story triggers a small epiphany: the spacecraft in the film could be seen as cinema itself. With its bright lights, its unforgettable five-note theme and its promise of escape to new worlds, it is what film has become for many of us.

However, this is a world away from what film originally was - in the first moments of motion pictures, the wonder they inspired came not from the creation of fantastic new scenarios - the opposite - it came from audiences' experience of realities resurrected exactly as they had first been. The instinctive impulse of motion pictures was documentary. Transitions have since occured, from film as the capture of the world as it is, to the creation of imagined life.

What film is, has been, and might still be, is infinite and it is not only the technology that changes, but the ways in which the images enthral, provoke, terrify, amuse, inform and inspire us. It is the understanding and celebration of these ever-changing visions to which the Early Cinema Research Group dedicates itself.

BIOS

Mathieu Copeland is a curator, lecturer and publisher. His exhibitions include *VOIDS. A Retrospective* at the Centre Pompidou, Paris and the Kunsthalle, Bern (2009); *Exhibitions to Hear Read* (2010-, presented in 2013 at MoMA, New York), and *Exhibition Cuttings* at the Hermès Foun-dation in Tokyo (2021)

Dr Copeland is Senior Lecturer in Fine Art. His research encompasses curating, radical museology, experimental exhibitions, void(s), art and ecology, activism as art, performance in museums, sound art, choreographing exhibitions, and film(ed) exhi-bition.

Professor Robert Shail is Director of Research in Leeds School of Arts. As an established researcher, Robert has produced internationally rec-ognised work on British cinema history and children's culture including comic books, films and television, and board games.

Irfan Shah is a writer and researcher with a particular interest in the sto-ry of film pioneer, Louis Le Prince, as well as the wider history of motion pictures. He is an Associate of Leeds Beckett University.

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LIST OF EXHIBITS

Please note, the definitive list of exhibits has yet to be confirmed at the time of going to press. The latest and most detail listing of exhibits will be put on the exhibition's page at https://whitecolumn.art (the official White Column Gallery website).

White Column Gallery
Replica of the Louis Le Prince one-lens motion picture camera, courtesy of Armley Mills Industrial Museum; Nineteenth Century stereoscopic viewer courtesy of Leeds Library; Toy projectors (models to be confirmed)
Films playing: *Roundhay Garden Scene, Leeds Bridge Scene, Accordion Scene* by Louis Le Prince; *Faust* by F W Murnau; *The Magic Roses* by Segundo Chomón

Platform Gallery
Toy projector (model to be confirmed) and accompanying box and films; *A Dream Comes True* original screenplay by Henning Carlsen; Theodore Brown original illustration;Theodore Brown magic postcards; original Talbotype; Muybridge stereoscopic view; reel of replica frames of *Pauvre Pierrot!* by Charles-Émile Reynaud; group of replica frames of *Pauvre Pierrot!;* photos of the replica Théâtre Optique at work at MOMI; photographs of Louis Le Prince motion picture cameras and sequences; photographs of the 1980's reconstruction of Le Prince's 1880's *Leeds Bridge Scene*; prints of motion sequences taken by Lucien Bull from original negatives by Étienne-Jules Marey; various books on the history and technology of motion pictures, sound, animation, photography and pre-cinema history.

In memory of Stephen Herbert (1951-2023)