



**DISCOVERY
SEASON**

BOX OF LIGHT



**REWRITING THE BOOK
THE LIBRARY OF BIRMINGHAM**

WELCOME, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, TO BOX OF LIGHT.

Pull up a seat. Try to imagine a world without 24 hour rolling news, or instant global communication, or films on phones. Without any films at all in fact; a world where cunning machines and tricks of the light created the illusion of movement, and transported people to places they could only dream of visiting.

This is a celebration of the magic lantern, and that fascinating wild-west period before cinema eclipsed theatre as the nation's favourite form of mass entertainment. There's a chance to get a taste of what lantern shows were like, and to make your own, but we won't just be looking backwards. Special attractions including Julien Maire and The Icebook have picked up the baton from the showmen of the past, bringing that same spirit of invention and wonder into the digital age.

IAN FRANCIS, FLATPACK FESTIVAL
WWW.FLATPACKFESTIVAL.ORG.UK

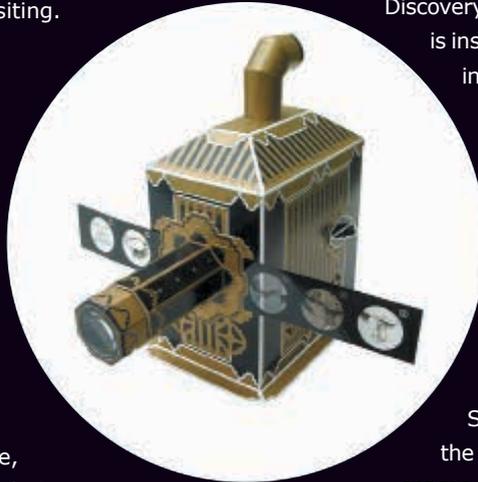
DISCOVERY SEASON

Produced by curators Capsule in collaboration with the Library of Birmingham, the

Discovery Season programme is inspired by the Library's internationally important archives and special collections, and draws on content as diverse as one of the world's largest books, Victorian children's games and toys, and even train and bus tickets. The Season will bring to life the Library's stunning new

spaces, from the Studio Theatre to the towering rotunda and the outdoor garden terraces, and will play host to installations, events, performances and workshops for every age and interest.

For more information and to see the Discovery Season programme, go to www.libraryofbirmingham.com/discoveryseason



THE HAUNTED SCREEN

22-27 OCTOBER IN DISCOVERY PAVILION

Film Ficciones presents an unusual and exciting artistic challenge. The Haunted Screen turns the Discovery Pavilion into a mysterious "film set". Selected participants and library visitors will get involved in all aspects of shooting using old-fashioned black and white Super 8mm film, including camerawork, special effects, lighting, sound and performance. The source material for the films will be provided by the horrible histories of ne'er-do-well 19th century Brummies, and location backdrops for scenes will take inspiration from the Library's collection of glass photographic slides. After being hand-processed, the finished films will be shown on Saturday 26th October in the Pavilion - now transformed into a Victorian Cinema. Live musical accompaniment will be provided by The Haunted Screen Band (pictured), who might well invite participants to join in!

For more information on the project and to sign up, go to www.thehauntedscreen.wordpress.com



The Haunted Screen Band



Julien Maire

BOX OF LIGHT VARIETY SHOW

AT 7.30PM ON FRIDAY 25 OCTOBER
AT THE NEW LIBRARY OF BIRMINGHAM FOR ONE NIGHT ONLY

UNPARALLELED VISUAL ENTERTAINMENTS!!
OPTICAL TRICKERY TO STARTLE AND DELIGHT!!
FEATURING A TRIPLE-BILL OF ACCLAIMED ARTISTES...

PROFESSOR HEARD'S PEERLESS **MAGIC LANTERN SHOW**

Frights, sights, odd stories and amazing mechanical moving images are presented on an old showman's lantern, together with a commentary of unreliable facts and unnecessary information.

THE PHYSIOSCOPE

A Victorian experiment in light and mirrors, recreated for the first time in over a century by Bristol-based artist Mr Roderick MacLachlan.

MR. JULIEN MAIRE PRESENTS **OPEN CORE**

Inspired by the live anatomy shows of the 16th century, a series of cameras, turntables and projectors are dissected and redeployed to create ingenious lo-fi visual machines.

TICKETS: £8 FOR BOTH GENTLEMEN AND LADIES

Which may be obtained at the New Library of Birmingham on Broad Street, and by means of the internet.

The management accepts no responsibility for any excitement of the senses which audiences may experience as a result of this event.

TWO FANTASTIC FREE WORKSHOPS RUN BY MIRROR MIRROR, BOTH SUITABLE FOR AGES 5 UPWARDS. PARENTS AND CARERS ARE ENCOURAGED TO GET INVOLVED TOO!

DO-IT-YOURSELF MAGIC LANTERN SLIDES

**SATURDAY 26 OCTOBER / 11-1PM,
2-4PM / CHILDREN'S LIBRARY**

A chance to create your own lantern slides and then see them projected on the big screen.

COLOUR SCIENTISTS

**SUNDAY 27 OCTOBER /
11-1PM, 2-4PM / CHILDREN'S
LIBRARY**

Chromatic scientists Daphne and Delia present a fun, interactive and theatrical workshop examining the effect of colour immersion on visitors young and old, using moving screens and a range of overhead, slide and digital projectors.

MAGIC IN MOTION

**26 AND 27 OCTOBER / 12-4PM,
ON THE HOUR / CHILDREN'S LIBRARY**

The Library's Story Steps become a little cinema for the weekend, screening a selection of short films for all ages inspired by the Box of Light programme. Look out for shadow puppets, flipbook fun and games, and cut-out characters that magically come to life. Total running time: 40 mins approx.

OPTICAL TOYS WORKSHOP

**26 AND 27 OCTOBER / 11AM-1PM,
2-4PM / MEZZANINE FLOOR,
ABOVE CAFE**

Well before the invention of the cinema people would have been familiar with moving pictures, thanks to optical toys with wonderful names such as Thaumatrope, Phenakistoscopes, and Zoetropes.

Join us making amazing moving images with only paper and pens, and discover how your eyes can trick you into seeing things that aren't really there! No experience or drawing ability is necessary, everyone welcome. Suitable for ages 5+ when accompanied by an adult.



BIRMINGHAM DE LUX

**11AM AND 1.30PM / MEET AT
PAVILION IN LIBRARY FOYER
TICKETS: £5**

Birmingham de Lux is Ben Waddington's exploration into the city's people, locations and moments that led up to the creation of cinema. The story of the transition from theatre to picture house is one of bold experimentation, imaginative use of simple devices, intriguing prototypes and assorted forgotten wonders that prefigure our long-term fascination with the moving image. The tour takes place in and around the city centre and lasts approximately 90 minutes.

Sensible footwear is recommended

THE ICEBOOK

**SATURDAY 26 OCTOBER /
12–5PM, PERFORMANCES ON THE
HALF HOUR / FLOOR 3
TICKETS: £5**

A huge hit at the 2012 Flatpack Festival, we're excited to welcome Davy and Kristin's magical, intimate show back to Birmingham for Box of Light. Using miniature projections and delicate paper cut-outs to create an immersive world, The Icebook is designed for a maximum of 15 people so booking ahead is recommended. Suitable for ages 7+.

MITCHELL & KENYON IN BIRMINGHAM

**SATURDAY 26 OCTOBER / 12–4PM /
BEAT BOX, LOWER GROUND FLOOR**

Local films were an important attraction in the 1900s, before proper cinemas arrived and moving pictures were screened at fairgrounds or public halls. Blackburn filmmakers Mitchell and Kenyon were commissioned by showmen to capture special events and huge crowds, and this half-hour programme offers a rich variety of Birmingham subjects: from athletics in Edgbaston to a 1905 Aston Villa game; from Joseph Chamberlain at Highbury to factory-workers in Smethwick.

SHOW AND TELL: RODERICK MACLACHLAN

**SATURDAY 26 OCTOBER / 2-4PM /
FLOOR 3**

Following his gruelling Physioscope performance at the Variety Show on Friday night, Rod MacLachlan will be setting up a couple more examples of his work, using modified OHPs and slide projectors to create uncanny and magical effects.

www.rodmaclachlan.co.uk

THE ASCENT OF MONT BLANC

**SATURDAY 26 OCTOBER /
3PM / FLOOR 3**

Albert Smith was a Victorian journalist, author, entrepreneur and itinerant panorama showman. Locally-based lanternists Mike and Theresa Simkin will be showing a unique set of extremely large, hand-painted Victorian magic lantern slides describing his ascent of Mont Blanc in 1851, based upon paintings and drawings by travelling companion William Beverley. A spin-off from Smith's famous 1850s panorama show at the Egyptian Hall in London, the original performance featured attendants dressed as Alpine handmaidens and St Bernard dogs who brought chocolate to the audience.

Members of the Birmingham Photographic Society enjoying their mutoscope collection



MAGIC LANTERNS: THE BIRMINGHAM CONNECTION

**SATURDAY 26 OCTOBER / 4PM /
FLOOR 3**

As outlined in the introduction, Birmingham has always been fertile territory for the magic lantern; both as a venue for shows, and as a place of manufacture. The Library of Birmingham remains home to one of the UK's largest collections of photographic lantern slides, and in this short talk Pete James (Curator of Photography Collections at the Library) will explore how the collection came about. He'll also look at the role of Birmingham Photographic Society in popularising the lantern, as well as later proto-cinematic devices like the mutoscope (pictured).

THEATRICAL DELIGHTS

THE MAGIC LANTERN IS AS MUCH ABOUT PERFORMANCE AS IT IS ABOUT VISUALS, AND WE'VE TEAMED UP WITH BIRMINGHAM REPERTORY THEATRE TO COMMISSION TWO SPECIAL BOX OF LIGHT ATTRACTIONS FOR THE REP'S PUBLIC SPACE...

BEN PACEY PRESENTS: PROFESSOR PEREGRINE'S ILLUSTRATED HISTORY OF BEARMINGHAM

**21-27 OCTOBER / 10AM-8PM /
REP FOYER**

Welcome to our house in the woods!
World famous explorer (and bear) Professor Peregrine has padded his way across the world, and heard some pretty tall tales along the way. In his 'Illustrated History of Bearmingham', he tells the extraordinary story of Bearmingham: the city, its people, and its bears. A narrated slideshow for audiences (and bears).

Artist Ben Pacey presents an apocryphal history of an oddly familiar city in this digital re-imagining of the magical lantern show, loosely inspired by the early showman lanternists.

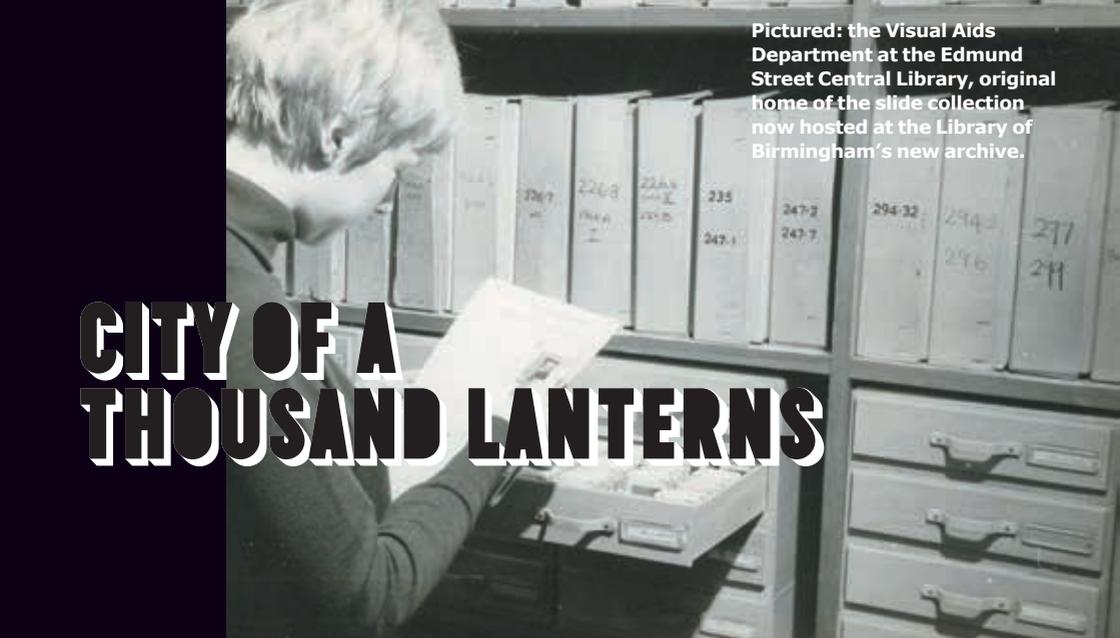
LITTLE EARTHQUAKE PRESENT: PROFESSOR HARRY HACKETT AND HIS BOX OF TREATS

**25-27 OCTOBER / 10.30AM-
6.45PM / REP FOYER**

Discerning Lovers of Daring Entertainment!
I, Professor Harry Hackett — Greatest Showman of This or Any Age — have combed the Empire for the Weird and the Wonderful, the Magical and the Mysterious! I proudly announce my Grand Return to Birmingham! We'll TOUCH your hearts and TICKLE your fancies — within the confines of Taste and Decency!

Search for my BOX OF TREATS hidden in this Theatre! Look for Angelo — the stripy-suited candy floss seller roaming the foyer! Call him by name and begin the game! Follow the clues and see our secret show! But remember... Shhhhh! It's a secret!





Pictured: the Visual Aids Department at the Edmund Street Central Library, original home of the slide collection now hosted at the Library of Birmingham's new archive.

CITY OF A THOUSAND LANTERNS

The Magic Lantern is the earliest form of optical projector, invented in the 17th century. Its culture, technology and intricate optical effects significantly influenced the evolution of early cinema. On an international level it has always been a tool for storytelling and disseminating information throughout society and across cultures, engaging audiences with spectacular entertainments and illustrations for education.

In Birmingham the instrument has a similar reputation for thrilling the public in all aspects of its repertoire, both in public halls and outdoors on New Street or Victoria Square during election nights. The magic lantern featured at the heart of civic life, with regular shows at the Birmingham and Midland Institute and a huge collection of 60,000 slides in the original Central Library, which offered a loan service between 1915 and 1955 for national, home loan and public lectures in other local libraries.

Elsewhere the lantern provided services for cinemas and theatres (including the Rep) with special effects, programme information, song slides and advertisements for local companies. It was employed in schools, universities, factories and church services, and not surprisingly the city also manufactured all manner of lanterns, slides and accessories for an international market.

With the arrival in Birmingham of Box of Light as well as the Magic Lantern Society's convention at the BMI, it's wonderful to see this tradition endure in the city.

MIKE SIMKIN LANTERN COLLECTOR

*Mike will be presenting a lantern show on Saturday 26 October with his wife Theresa; see *The Ascent of Mont Blanc* overleaf for details.*

CALENDAR

FRIDAY 25 OCTOBER

10am – 8pm	Illustrated History of Bearmingham	The REP foyer
1pm – 6.45pm	Harry Hackett's Box of Treats	The REP foyer
7.30pm – 9.30pm	Box of Light Variety Show	Studio Theatre

SATURDAY 26 OCTOBER

10am – 8pm	Illustrated History of Bearmingham	The REP foyer
10.30am – 6.45pm	Harry Hackett's Box of Treats	The REP foyer
11am – 1pm, 2 – 4pm	Do-It-Yourself Magic Lantern Slides	Childrens Library
11am – 12.30pm, 1.30pm – 3pm	Birmingham de Lux	Meet at Discovery Pavilion
12 – 2pm, 3 – 5pm	Optical Toys	Mezzanine Floor
12 – 4pm	Magic in Motion	Childrens Library
12 – 5pm	The Icebook	Floor Three
2 – 4pm	Show and Tell: Roderick MacLachlan	Floor Three
3 – 3.45pm	The Ascent of Mont Blanc	Floor Three
4 – 4.45pm	The Birmingham Connection	Floor Three

SUNDAY 27 OCTOBER

10am – 8pm	Illustrated History of Bearmingham	The REP foyer
10.30am – 6.45pm	Harry Hackett's Box of Treats	The REP foyer
11am – 1pm, 2 – 4pm	Colour Scientists	Childrens Library
11 – 1pm, 2 – 4pm	Optical Toys	Mezzanine Floor
12 – 4pm	Magic in Motion	Childrens Library
12 – 4pm	Mitchell and Kenyon in Birmingham	Beat Box

UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED EVENTS ARE FREE ENTRY, BUT YOU CAN BOOK PLACES FOR EVERYTHING EXCEPT THE OPTICAL TOYS WORKSHOP THROUGH BOX OFFICE.

BOX OFFICE: 0121 245 4455

BIRMINGHAM-BOX.CO.UK

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WWW.LIBRARYOFBIRMINGHAM.COM/DISCOVERYSEASON

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