



Slides from *Kokon Tensho no Kotowari*
(*The Law of Reincarnation of an Old Fox*)

with the slide carriers to improve the movement and drama of the images. One of the many charms of this dynamic art form is that with one operator associated with each main character they can bring the image to life for the audience in a unique way.

Two of the most memorable stories I have seen Mitsue's group perform are *Tsutenaihi* (*The Sneak Thief*) and *Kokon Tensho no Kotowari* (*The Law of Reincarnation of an Old Fox*). In the first an unlucky burglar tries to rob a house where various objects – including an umbrella and a pot – start to come to life, at first behind his back. When he sees them the thief flees in alarm. In the second a travelling master, against the advice of his servant, eats the sushi and rice wine left as an offering at a shrine dedicated to Inari (one of the principal spirits of Shinto). The dish hits the head of a fox taking a nap, leading to the fox and man entering the mysterious process of reincarnation and the cycle of all creation. The dancing foxes was one of the most beautiful scenes I have ever seen performed by magic lantern.

Mitsue has also taken a close interest in the Toy Film Museum of her old friend Professor Yoneo Ota. Housed in an old artisan dwelling, this opened in Kyoto in 2015 – a real gem for all

magic lantern and early cinema aficionados. In limited space Professor Ota has an extensive collection of magic lanterns and optical toys on display. Last year Mitsue both performed a Nishiki Kage-e show and ran a very successful workshop – that is still being talked about – in the museum.

So what next for this extraordinary creative individual? Mitsue says: "I am continuing to research the Japanese wooden magic lantern 'Nishiki Kage-e' and all the possibilities it offers for artistic expression. Recently I have found some interesting facts about the very early Nishiki Kage-e, a subject in which many important points are unclear or unknown. I will certainly continue to hold workshops on Nishiki Kage-e where adults and children can enjoy this magical art for themselves." You can rest assured that Mitsue will not 'retire' and her interest in magic lanterns is profound. She will certainly continue to be involved in the research and activities of the Museum and run workshops, encouraging others to create lanterns (her sake box lanterns are simple and stylish), slides and shows – although most of us fall far short of her standards. But I suggest we watch this space and wish her every good fortune for the future.

BOOK NEWS

SHINING STONE

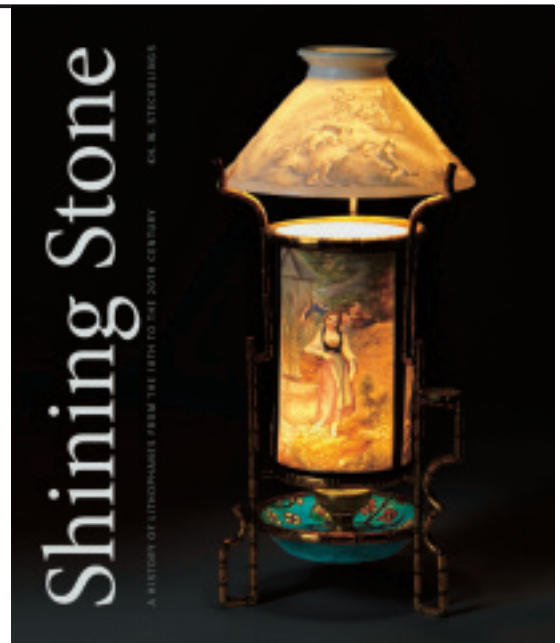
A History of Lithophanes from the 18th to the 20th Century

KH. W. Steckelings

In 2013, a beautiful book was published in Germany. *Leuchtender Stein*, the definitive history of the lithophane, was written by MLS member Karl-Heinz Steckelings. Gwen Sebus wrote an excellent review of the book in *The New Magic Lantern Journal*, Volume 11, Number 10. However, the text, of course, was in German. Now a PDF e-book version with English text is available. The English title is *Shining Stone* and the layout is practically identical to the original bound book with some slight slippage. All the superb illustrations are there in their original positions and you view with two pages side-by-side as in the open book. If you are using a laptop, the disadvantage is that, to read it, you have to enlarge the text, so losing the advantage of the full page on the screen.

Andy Cook, who members will remember gave us a splendid illustrated talk on lithophanes in 2013, is credited for editing the English language edition. The publishers also now offer the original book with an English language CD.

All versions can be purchased online from www.sandstein-verlag.de. The hardback German edition costs 78 euros, the e-book in English is 48 euros and the German hardback edition with English CD is 98 euros. If they mistakenly charge you for post and packing the e-book (as they did me) they will refund on request!



Jeremy Fisher