

AND THE WINNERS ARE . . . The MLS Awards 2023

Along with my fellow judges Ine van Dooren and Frog Morris I have great pleasure in announcing the winners of the Magic Lantern Society Awards 2023.

The **Dick Balzer Award** recognises original and creative uses of the magic lantern and we were hoping for something we had never seen before. We were not



disappointed. Our winner, **Melissa Ferrari**, has created what she describes as an 'experimental documentary' titled *Relict: A Phantasmagoria*, combining her own handmade magic lantern slides with digital projection, pre-recorded audio and (in true Phantasmagoria style) even a fog machine (see photo for Melissa's twin-screen projection set). Through the generosity of a sponsor, we were also able to recognise the poet and photographer Edward Murray for his exquisite 'Magic Lantern Poem', *Rorschach Hearts*. The slides are created in a highly original manner, combining mirror images of near identical slides to striking effect.

The **Mervyn Heard Award** goes to **Sandra Lawrence** to support her continuing research on the renowned horticulturalist Ellen Willmott, focusing on a cache of Willmott's magic lantern slides held by the Museum of the History of Science in Oxford. The judges were especially impressed by Sandra's willingness to explore different avenues to enhance her research – particularly through engagement with other MLS members. We were also delighted to recognise **Dick Moore** for his recent presentation on the magic lantern and the circus, the result of many years of collecting and researching these twin passions. We also recognised PhD candidate **Elizabeth Grimshaw** whose work on Charles Dickens puts his close connection with the magic lantern into the context of his wider engagement with the world of Victorian popular theatre and entertainment.

We hope to feature more about the winning projects in *TML*.

Jeremy Brooker