

AND THIS YEAR'S WINNERS ARE...

After the success of the inaugural Magic Lantern Society Awards last year, the judges (Dr Jeremy Brooker, Lydia Jakobs and Ine van Dooren) this year once again faced difficult decisions with two fields of strong contenders for the Mervyn Heard Award and the Dick Balzer Award.

The Dick Balzer Award of £300 will go to an exciting performance proposed by American lanternist duo Dawn Elliott and Joel Schlemowitz. *Elliott and Schlemowitz's Phantasmagoria* is inspired by the notorious showman Étienne-Gaspard Robertson and features the familiar imagery of death, demons and murderous nuns. Once completed, their ambitious performance will feature 70 hand-painted slides, a handcrafted fantascop, opaque projection, shadowplay, narration, various live effects and music. Their first presentations will have to be online but we hope they will be able to take their show 'on the road' soon.

In this category, we have also decided to honour two distinguished performers and their commendable efforts to keep the magic lantern alive in their communities with two Special Commendations of £100 each. The first will go to Martyn Jolly, Elisa DeCourcy and Alexander Hunter for their series of collaborative magic lantern shows in Australia between 2016 and 2020 that incorporated site-specific themes. The second goes to Laura Minici Zotti for her performance of *Belzoni's Travels Shown with the Magic Lantern* in Padova as part of the Solidaria festival in September 2020.

This year's Mervyn Heard Award will be split between two winners, who will receive £200 each. Both projects equally impressed the judges with their originality and timeliness. Since public gatherings have sadly been brought to a stop, our first winner, Samuel Grosdemange's *The Magic Lantern 3D Virtual Museum and Theater*, will create a virtual theatre that can be used for magic lantern performances and exhibitions of artefacts as 3D models (see illustration).

Collectors, archivists and researchers are often faced with the question of how to deal with problematic images and image descriptions. Our second team of winners Jeltsje Stobbe, Rosa Deen and Margriet van der Waal, has taken an innovative approach after the rediscovery of a collection of lantern slides at the Zuid-Afrikahuis in Amsterdam. They asked a group of researchers to select images from the collection and critically engage with them and the colonial history of this institution. One result is the essay volume *Magic Visions: Portraying and inventing South Africa with lantern slides*, that will soon be available to download or print-on-demand from their website.

An additional Commendation of £100 will go to Stephen Bottomore, who has proposed a framework for the full digitization (with advertisements) of the *Lantern Record*, a supplement to the *British Journal of Photography* published between 1892 and 1901. When completed this could become a valuable resource for our members in the future.

We would like to thank everyone who submitted their work and look forward to news about the ongoing projects.

Lydia Jakobs



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The Magic Lantern 3D
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