

Travelling Cinema in Europe (Luxembourg, 6–8 Sept 07)

Brigitte Braun

Travelling Cinema in Europe

Luxembourg, 6 - 8 September 2007

An Event of Luxembourg and Greater Region European Capital of Culture,
Hosted by Cinémathèque Municipale de Luxembourg and Trier University,
Curated by Martin Loiperdinger in cooperation with KINtop

Before and during the emergence of permanent film venues, a variety of travelling enterprises offered film shows in different places of public entertainment all over Europe. The big 'Picture Palaces' of renowned showman families were among the main attractions of fairground amusement before the First World War. Smaller companies performed their film shows in town-halls, music-halls, hotels and cafes, or gave even benefit shows in hospitals and asylums. Film trade was a free international business from the beginning, and, thanks to the well-established European railway system, bridging wide distances and crossing borders was not a problem for travelling cinemas at all. Travelling cinemas formed an important branch of European entertainment business between 1896 and the Great War, and thus prepared the ground for the success story of cinema as the new mass medium of the century.

In contrast to its formative potential and importance before the First World War, travelling cinema still is one of the dark areas in media history. Usually, nothing more seems to be left than letters to city administrations, a few programme sheets, sometimes adverts and reports in the local press. Only recently has research on travelling cinema made an enormous step forward, in Britain, through the restoration and exploration of the Mitchell & Kenyon collection by the British Film Institute and the National Fairground Archive. It became clear that travelling cinemas played an important part in communicating the local, besides attracting audiences with fantastic films and views from abroad. Local films and other local and regional extras of the show (as lecturing in local vernacular etc.) have been crucial for box-office results.

Programme of the Conference

Thursday, 6 September 2007

13.00 Conference Opening

Panel 1: Travelling Cinema in Europe Before World War One

13.30 - 15.00

Vanessa Toulmin (Sheffield): "The World at Your Doorsteps":
Travelling Cinematograph Shows in the United Kingdom

Matthew Solomon (New York): Méliès and the Fairground

15.00 - 15.30 Coffee Break

15.30 - 17.00

Guido Convents (Brussels): International Travelling Cinemas in Belgium

Mustafa Ozen (Utrecht): Travelling Cinemas in Istanbul

17.30 - 18.00 Coffee Break

18.00 - 19.30

Daniel Fritsch (Berlin): Attraction or institution? The Austrian
travelling showbusiness magazine Die Schwalbe

Jeanpaul Goergen (Berlin): Memories of Travelling Cinema Showmen

20.00 Dinner

Friday, 7 September 2007

Panel 1 continued

09.00-10.30

Ralf Forster (Potsdam): Film technology for travelling cinemas in
trade catalogues

Joseph Garncarz (Siegen): Travelling Cinema - A European Institution

10.30-11.00 Coffee Break

Panel 2: Non-commercial Uses of Travelling Film and Picture Shows

11.00 - 13.30

Torsten Gärtner (Trier): The Church on Wheels - Travelling Magic
Lantern Mission in Late Victorian England

Christian Kuchler (München): Catholic Mission through Travelling Film
Shows in Bavaria

Yvonne Zimmermann (Zürich): Advertising Brands through Travelling
Corporate Film Shows in Switzerland

13.30 - 15.00 Lunch Break

15.00 - 16.30

Urszula Biel (Gliwice): German and Polish Agitation through
Travelling Cinemas in Upper Silesia

Thomas Tode (Hamburg): Agitprop through Travelling Cinemas on Rail in
the Soviet Union

16.30 -17.00 Coffee Break

Panel 3: Travelling Cinema Today

17.00-19.00

Short Presentations of Current Activities (Cinéma Numérique in
France, Movimiento - Short Films on the Road, Ciné Fleuve in the
Greater Region, Crazy Cinématographe)

20.00 - Crazy Cinématographe, Schueberfouer, Luxembourg

Saturday, 8 September 2007

Panel 4: Travelling Cinema in the Greater Region

09.00 - 10.30

Uli Jung (Trier): Travelling Cinema in the Greater Region - an Overview
Paul Lesch (Luxemburg): Travelling Cinema in Luxemburg

10.30 - 11.00 Coffee Break

11.00 - 12.30

Gerhild Krebs (Saarbrücken): Travelling Cinema in the Saar Region

Brigitte Braun (Trier): Travelling Stand-Alone Film Shows in the
Greater Region

12.30 - 13.30 Lunch Break

Closing Discussion

13.30 - 15.00 Closing Discussion

Commentator: Deac Rossell (London)

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