

Two unique panoramas endangered

Two of the world's rarest classical panoramas are currently being endangered. This concerns the 1881 Panorama Mesdag in The Hague, Holland and the 1895 Panorama 'Battle of Mount Isel' in Innsbruck, Austria. They are two of a unique category to which only very few other panoramas in the world belong, cherishing the original combination of painting, foreground, building and daylight-illumination. Panorama Mesdag and 'The battle of Mount Isel' are two of the best preserved specimen of the panorama era between 1870 and World War I. World wide that was the era of panorama phenomenon, the optical illusion that preceded cinema. It is also the art form for the general public that keeps alive the memory of a violent period of war and mass destruction in Europe and the world. In more recent years classical panoramas have also been, and still are being, erected in Asia. More than a century ago panoramas used to be moved from town to town, which is one of the reasons that only very few examples have survived.

The survival of these two top ranking species of world cultural heritage is being endangered by similar developments, although there also are differences. In Holland the danger is through a building permit for an underground parking garage in the unpredictable sub-soil of the coastal city of The Hague, that causes the panorama rotunda to shift unexpectedly. In Austria the panorama rotunda is planned to be demolished by a development deliberately planned by the city of Innsbruck, including moving the painting to a modern museum building, destroying the original illusion technique of the classical panorama phenomenon.

Hundreds of millions visited panoramas in their reign supreme, before the movie theatre replaced their function, at first with silent film. Those panoramas that have survived still attract millions of visitors each year. Visitors are attracted by their virtual reality effect, which also is highly relevant today. Many Schools of Art, for instance, stimulate and facilitate new 3D or virtual panoramas, finding a way back to the historic panorama phenomenon that was originally an invention of the Irish painter Robert Barker in 1787, at that time living in Scotland.

The International Panorama Council urges both City and National Parliaments and all relevant organisations for Monuments and Cultural Heritage to prevent these catastrophes from happening. Visit for actual information: www.panorama-mesdag.com/news and www.riesenrundgemaelde.at. Please forward your reaction and the action you are able to take also to the IPC Secretary at info@panoramapainting.com or post it at www.panoramapainting.com.

Panorama Mesdag is sagging by surprise

'Panorama Mesdag' in The Hague, a Dutch state monument, is in serious danger of being damaged by building activities next door. At a distance of some 2 meters from the panorama building (rotunda), a two story deep parking garage is being built in the unpredictable sub-soil of the Dutch Government city at the North Sea coast. City Council members, the project plan developer Lirema and the Dutch based contractor BAM assure that the panorama rotunda and its 1680 square meter historic panorama painting will not suffer. But the panorama management drew a different conclusion after monitoring showed that some columns of the original rotunda building, dating from 1881, have moved up to 9 mm already, instead of the maximum of 3 mm permitted by the city. And the neighbouring works have only just started.

The panorama management has applied for an injunction against the developer and the contractor, pleading vainly for time to have independent new studies done on the unexpected danger for the panorama painting and on the resilience of the panorama building. Also a court appeal versus the city of The Hague is being prepared, because of the city's neglect to restrict possible consequences while issuing the permits not complying with the required distance for building activities next to monuments. The Hague, boosting itself as an international city of peace, justice and security, surprisingly seems not to be aware of the international heritage of Panorama Mesdag, says Panorama managing director Ms. Marijnke de Jong (mdejong@panorama-mesdag.com).

Panorama Mesdag is an independent and certified museum. It is being preserved on a voluntary basis, without any structural outside subsidy or government grant, by descendants of the painter couple Hendrik Willem Mesdag (1831-1915) and Sientje Mesdag-van Houten (1834-1909). But without outside help they are unable to resist this surprise attack. Actual information in English: www.panorama-mesdag.com.

'Battle of Mount Isel' to be transferred?

The Panorama 'Battle of Mount Isel' (painted in 1895 by Zeno Diemer, Franz Burger et al., measuring) in Innsbruck is endangered by a project of transferring the panorama painting into a new building, in which the traditional soul of panorama painting, which is in the combination of painting, foreground, building and daylight-illumination, will not be respected. The original Panorama rotunda from 1906 is planned to be demolished with consent from the City Council.

The Executive Board of the International Panorama Council appealed to the responsible persons in Innsbruck, to save the unity of building, painting and

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www.panoramapainting.com

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three-dimensional foreground. Innsbruck is a rare example where one still can see the effects of the old art- and media-form 'panorama'. Officials are being informed about the importance of the panorama in Innsbruck for the whole panorama world.

Parallel to the action of the IPC the sub-committee for Culture, Science and Education of the Council of Europe switched itself on. In the middle of December a fact-finding mission of a member of the committee took place in Innsbruck. The Secretary to IPC Patrick Deicher was invited as a technical advisor.

See: www.riesenrundgemaelde.at and the project for the new museum building on Mount Isel: <http://www.stoll-wagner.at/p001-mbi.html>

Restoration of Panorama 'Waterloo'

On 10th September restoration works on the 1912 building of the Panorama 'Bataille de Waterloo 1815' in Braine l'Alleud/Belgium started. Completion is planned for the autumn of 2008.

The panorama painted by Louis Dumoulin (1860-1924) was first presented to the public in 1912 and remained until today more or less in its original unity of painting, foreground, building and day-light-illumination.

The restoration will be implemented very carefully, so that the building is secured, but as much as possible of its original elements is preserved. The structure and the zinc roof will remain. The only compromise is the reconstruction of the ventilation lantern on top of the building in stainless steel. The restoration will not include a reinstallation of a metal plank on the top of the facade which had been removed during World War I. The total investment will amount to € 1,6 million, of which Wallonia Region will cover 91%. The rest will be paid by the City of Braine l'Alleud, the Province and the Intercommunale 'Bataille de Waterloo 1815', which is the owner of the building.

Visitors can access the panorama during the work. For information go to www.waterloo1815.be

Cyclorama v1 'Battle of Gettysburg' sold

In March 2007 Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, USA sold the first version of a Battle of Gettysburg cyclorama that it received as a gift from the late Winston-Salem artist Joe King. The university sold the painting to three buyers who wish to remain anonymous. Wake Forest has not disclosed the sale price. Throughout the time the university has owned the cyclorama, the university has worked toward selling it. The university has estimated that restoring the painting and building a facility to display it will require a multimillion dollar expenditure. The cyclorama, known as 'The Battle of Gettysburg', was the first of four versions, painted in Paris by French panorama artist Paul Philippoteaux. All four depict the famous Civil War battle in Gettysburg in July 1863.

Source:

www.wfu.edu/news/release/2007.05.03.c.php.

Second 'Battle of Gettysburg' will move

The well known second Pickett's Charge version of the Panorama of the Battle of Gettysburg is the one that used to be on exhibit on the Gettysburg Battlefield in Pennsylvania, USA. After it was painted in Paris it was first on show in Boston in 1884. The U.S. National Park Service, owner of the panorama (cyclorama) since 1947, plans to have the Richard J. Neutra and Robert Alexander designed Visitor Center and Cyclorama Building pulled down after opening a new facility. It was built in 1962 to house the panorama. From 2005 on the building is closed to have Olin Conservation, Inc. of Great Falls, Virginia complete the rehabilitation of the painting, to which some of

the Polish IPC members assist. Attendees to the 12th IPC Conference in New York in 2004 witnessed the first stages of the immense conservation and restoration works, to be completed in the summer of 2008.

DPR Korea painters visited Europe again

The representatives of the Panorama painting department of Korea Paekho Trading Corporation have visited Europe for a second time within a few months. Headed by the corporation president Mr. Pak Chang Sop they travelled Italy (Rome) and Holland and they also contacted the London Olympics organisation, in order to attract assignments for the creation of large scale panoramas. The group of four, accompanied by the First Secretary of the North-Korean Embassy in Switzerland, also made a study tour of existing panorama sites, including a special visit to the Panorama Mesdag in The Hague, hosted by Mesdag and IPC president Ernst Storm, and the Panoramas 'Tulipland' and 'Big Sur', both on exhibit in Voorhout, Holland. There they were welcomed by their colleagues contemporary panorama painters Leo van den Ende (born in 1939) respectively André Balyon (born in 1951, now living near Monterey, California; both grew up in The Hague, were the coastal light, and Mesdag's panorama, inspired them to become a painter and, ultimately, a panorama painter).

The collective painters corporation from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea expects to have developed new possibilities for large scale panorama painting in Europe and also for exporting regular size paintings and prints.

Moving Garibaldi Panorama digitalized

The Brown University Library and the Department of Italian Studies are collaborating to bring the Garibaldi (moving) Panorama, one of the finest surviving examples of panoramic art, back to life in its entirety. After the late Dr. James Walter Smith donated this panorama to Brown University in 2005, library staff developed a plan to use the latest in digital technology to make this exquisite relic available to the world in a revolutionary way. Special funding enabled library staff to fashion a makeshift photo studio in the central gallery of the Ann Mary Brown Memorial, as they painstakingly unrolled the panorama (4½ feet high, 273 feet long, double-sided watercolor depicting the life story of Italian patriot Giuseppe Garibaldi) six feet at a time, in order to take digital photographs that would be later melded into a continuous image. Soon, Garibaldi, who played a major role in the unification of Italy, will be available to students, scholars, and virtual visitors via the fully digitized 'moving' panorama. Participants to the 2004 IPC conference in New York 'Panoramas in the Old World and the New' were the fortunate guests of Dr. Smith, who arranged a special showing of the moving panorama during a reception at his premises. Re: Newsletter 01, January 2005. Also see 'New publications on panoramas' at the end of this Newsletter.

http://blogs.brown.edu/project/cdi/2007/08/garibaldi_panorama_comes_to_li.html

IPC Pictures on www.flickr.com

Rob van den Braak has setup a website location for IPC members on picture database Flickr. He uploaded pictures of past IPC conferences and meetings.

The account is only accessible by invitation from the IPC Secretary. If you want access please contact Patrick Deicher info@panoramapainting.com. After being registered as a 'friend' you will be able to see the pictures, to add comments and descriptions, and to upload your own IPC pictures to the site if you wish to do so.

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CubicVR Panorama in Second Life

The Bauhaus-University at Weimar/Germany organized an exhibition about Henry van de Velde, the founder of the predecessor school of 'Bauhaus'. Van de Velde died 50 years ago. The exhibition is dedicated to projects never realized. Accompanying the exhibition, students of the Media Architecture department of the university created a possibility to visit the exhibition without travelling to Weimar. They created a version in SecondLife (the 3D online digital world imagined and created by its residents) including a cubicVR panorama installation in a concrete cube. It is situated on European University Island. All projects are also to be visited in QVTR. Go to www.uni-weimar.de/mediarchitecture

Microsoft Photosynth demo in Mesdag

A live demo of Photosynth, new software developed by Microsoft, is part of the 'Personal Panorama' exhibition in The Hague, Holland. Photosynth creates a complete 3D view of a surrounding or an object, after analyzing similarities in common elements and eliminating deviating elements in a group of photos from different angles. As a result of connecting similar points, one can fly through a scene or view from any possible angle, and a virtual surrounding is created. The virtual surroundings may include 360° impressions of panorama-inspired topics, and also self-made personal panoramas. The Photosynth program is not yet being marketed and has its first exposure to the Dutch public in Panorama Mesdag, starting with an explanation of how the illusion of Panorama Mesdag is reconfigured with Photosynth technique. It is a Mesdag co-production with Crosspring, IPEXCompany and Microsoft Research. The exhibition continues until 31 May 2008. Information on www.panorama-mesdag.com, www.innovationart.com and www.labs.live.com/photosynth.

New CEO National WWI Museum Kansas City

With more than 30 years experience in museum management, Brian Alexander began on 12 November 2007 as the new CEO for The National World War I Museum in Kansas City, Missouri, USA. He will be responsible for the remnants of the 'Panthéon de la Guerre' panorama that are in the museum's Exhibit Hall. In our Newsletter 10 we mentioned the elaborate study on 'Reconfiguring a Panorama of the Great War' by Mark Levitch, who also presented his surprising findings at the 15th IPC conference at Yale University in 2006. Go to www.nww1.org.

New publications on panoramas etc.

Fabio Ricci. *Ritter, Tod & Eros: Die Kunst Elisar von Kupffers (1872-1942)*, Köln 2007.
(Includes Elisar von Kupffer's main work – the circular painting 'Klarwelt der Seligen', now in Ascona/Switzerland)

Eyes, Lies and Illusions. Essays by Marina Warner, novelist and cultural historian, and by Laurent Mannoni, leading writer on the pre-history of cinema, with glossary entries on key terms by Werner Nekes. The Nekes collection was at the basis of this publication, revealing the continuing fascination with perceptual ambiguity in Western art, science and popular culture. Australian Centre for the Moving Image, 2006.

Eric Kluitenberg (ed.). *Book of Imaginary Media: Excavating the Dream of the Ultimate Communication Medium*. Rotterdam 2007, English and Dutch edition. The book investigates the myth of Western society

'Where people fail our machines will succeed' through early examples of fascinating inventions such as the camera obscura, peepshows, magic lanterns, phantasmagoria, photography, cinematography, etc. Authors are specialists in the field of 'old & new media', such as Siegfried Zielinski, author of the book 'Media Archeology' and various others publications, Erkki Huhtamo, media researcher & historian at the UCLA, Bruce Sterling, Science fiction writer and founder of the online 'Dead Media Project', Edwin Carels, director of MuHKA_media, freelance curator & writer, and others. This book, published by NAI Publishers, is accompanied by a DVD featuring various artists who express their perception on 'imaginary media'.

Russell A. Potter. *Arctic Spectacles: The Frozen North in Visual Culture, 1818-1875*. University of Washington Press, 2007, hardcover and paperback edition.

The book illuminates the nineteenth-century fascination with visual representations of the Arctic, weaving together a narrative of the major Arctic expeditions with an account of their public reception through art and mass media. The Arctic's impact could be seen in a range of visual media from fine art to panoramas, engravings, magic lantern slides, and photographs, as well as hybrid forms of entertainment.

Lost Panorama: A Project in Stages and Routes by Susanne Weck and Ulrike Mohr / *Das verschwundene Panorama: Ein Projekt in Strecken und Etappen* von Susanne Weck und Ulrike Mohr. Berlin 2007 (Text in German, English, Russian).

The book documents the project of two German artists in search for a Russian panorama, "The Battle of Berlin", once located in a Russian army building in the former GDR. The project is not only about the discovery of a lost panorama but also implies a dialogue about German and Russian history since World War II.

Stephan Kaluza (photographer), Juergen Raap (author): *Der Rhein / Rhine / Rhin / Rijn*. Cologne 2007 (Text in German, English, French, Dutch).

Photographer Stephan Kaluza walked, within eight months, 1620 kilometers along the border of the Rhine from its source in Switzerland down to its delta in Holland. Every minute he took a photo of the other side of the river, thus compiling 21,449 single photos which, put together in the book, have a complete length of four kilometers.

'Free Time, Free Spirit: Popular Entertainment in Gainsborough's Era', by Frances Terpak, *Huntington Library Quarterly*, vol. 20, no. 2, 2007, pp.209-228.

Lawrence Biemiller. *Art on an Epic Scale*. In 'Chronicle of Higher Education', 10/5/2007, Vol. 54 Issue 6, p44-44, 1p; (AN 27180498). This is a comprehensive article on the *Garibaldi* (moving) *Panorama*, donated by Dr. James W. Smith to Brown University in 2006.

2008: 17th Conference in Germany

The IPC Board is happy to announce the 17th International Panorama Conference will be organized together with the Asisi Factory of Berlin, in Leipzig and Dresden (Germany) on 12-14 September 2008. The theme will include thorough discussions on Panorama Marketing and the future of the International Panorama Council, now bridging and bringing together some 240 panoramaniacs, working in 150 different institutions in circa 20 countries. Of course the conference program will include extensive visits to the panoramas Rom CCCXII, Auf nach Rom! and 1756, The Myth of Baroque Dresden, both developed by Prof. Yadegar Asisi. From 15 through 19 September a Post Conference Tour will pay visits to

the Panorama of the Peasants War (Bad Frankenhausen, Germany) and Panorama Racławicka (Wrocław, Poland). A visit to the rapidly developing city of Berlin will be the last part of the tour.

Past IPC President Gebhard Streicher is planning to organize a Pre Conference Tour visiting the Sattler-Panorama (Salzburg, Austria), the Jeruzalem Panorama of the Crucifixion of Christ (Altoetting, Germany) and the Maroldova Panorama (Prague, Czech Republic).

More news on this conference and both the Pre and the Post Conference Tour can be expected in the next Newsletter and will be posted on

www.panoramapainting.com. Make reservations in your agenda in weeks 36/37/38 of 2008.

2009: 18th Conference in Australia

Week 13 of the year 2009 will see the heart of the 18th IPC International Panorama Conference in South Australia. It will be organized together with Jeffrey M. Morgan, painter of the Wilpena Panorama in his home town Hawker in South Australia. He is working on a new panorama that is expected to be opened during our conference, on 25 March 2009. Newsletter 12 will bring more news on this 18th Conference and the post conference tour, that also may include the Fletcher's Mutiny Cyclorama on Norfolk Island, and New Zealand.

2010: Call for hosting the 19th Conference

Ideas and proposals for our 19th International panorama Conference to be held in 2010 are most welcome at our Secretariat:

info@panoramapainting.com.

Call for information on panoramas etc.

Please check our website www.panoramapainting.com and send any new information on panoramas and panorama activities and publications to the IPC Secretary: info@panoramapainting.com.