

**Day 1: Wednesday, 9<sup>th</sup> September 2015****Yadegar Asisi*****The purpose of battle and war panoramas – then and now***

Due to its big success as a new art form with mass appeal in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the panorama became a matter of State interest, because of its ability not only to entertain but also to influence the population. Often battle and war panoramas were used for ideological and propaganda purposes conveying an image of military supremacy and national heroism. Having created LEIPZIG 1813 and DRESDEN 1945 – the two world's largest 360°-panoramas showing battle and war with their disastrous results – I raise the following questions today: What is the purpose of restoring and conserving ancient battle and war panoramas? Why create and exhibit new panoramas showing military conflicts? And furthermore: Can such panoramas be used as statements against war itself?

**Biography**

The artist Yadegar Asisi was born in Vienna, grew up in Saxony and has been living in West Berlin since 1979. Since 2003 he has been creating the worldwide largest 360° panoramas, measuring up to 32 metres in height and with a circumference of up to 110 metres. As a graduate in painting from the Academy of Arts (today's University of the Arts) in Berlin Asisi cultivates an academic appreciation of art. He places great emphasis on perspective, and on the theory of shape, colour and pigment, among others. "Once you have drawn an object you have truly understood it", believes the admirer of the Renaissance painters Andrea Mantegna and Leonardo da Vinci. In dialogue between science and art Asisi composes his visually stunning panoramas from a project-specific research archive containing up to 50,000 photographs, drawings, sketches and paintings. To gather material, he often undertakes extensive research and photo expeditions on the different topics: for example to Brazil for AMAZONIEN, to the Himalayas for EVEREST, to Australia for GREAT BARRIER REEF, to Turkey and the entire Mediterranean region for PERGAMON; he also travelled through Germany and Central Europe for LEIPZIG 1813 and the baroque DRESDEN. Based on a storyboard he also does elaborate photo shoots with amateur actors, extras and other elements to obtain scenes that Asisi incorporates into the basic architectural and topographical structure of the panoramas. With plenty of attention to scenic, historic, architectural and topographic details Asisi creates his works on the computer, working with many different image levels, based on his own groundwork and the preparatory work of his core team of around 15 staff. They are then printed on 3 times 32 metre fabric panels, fitted, and mounted in the round buildings. At the pinnacle of the creative process, which is often accompanied by an introductory exhibition at the exhibition venue, the inspired panorama artist puts the finishing touches on the giant panoramas by hand using brush and paint. At the same time light and sound and the different day and night sequences are set up to produce the desired underlying atmosphere.

**Day 2: Thursday, 10<sup>th</sup> September 2015****CONFERENCE SESSION I****Dr. Róbert Károly Kiss*****Árpád Feszty's cyclorama, "The Arrival of the Hungarians"***

Árpád Feszty's cyclorama, "The Arrival of the Hungarians" is one of the most remarkable pieces of Hungarian history of art. The monumental painting depicts one of the most important momentum of Hungarian history, the arrival of the conquering Hungarian tribes to the Carpathian basin, where Árpád chieftain and his armies taking possession of their future homeland. According to our historical traditions this event happened between 895 A.D. and 896 A.D. The panorama picture was painted at the end of the 19th century, the Golden Age of Hungarian national romanticism. In that time, after the fallen 1848-1849 revolution national identity and national sovereignty were redefined. Therefore painters of that age highlighted glorious and honourable historical events. Árpád Feszty was impressed by the spirit of

the age, when he changed his original idea about the theme of his painting by the suggestion of Mór Jókai, the greatest writer of that time. Shortly after its initiation ceremony the painting became very popular. Unfortunately the panorama was heavily damaged in World War II. The pieces of the painting were lying around in storages for decades. Thanks for the later efforts the cyclorama was restored in its dignified new home, the unique Ópusztaszer National Historical Heritage Park of Hungary.

### **Biography**

Dr. Róbert Károly Kiss was born on 8th January 1977 in the city of Szeged, Hungary. After graduated from university as a jurist and historian I started to work in the Record Office of University of Szeged as a historian-researcher. Principally here I focused on the history of the university and the record maintenance of the institution. From October 2012, I am Deputy Manager at Ópusztaszer National Historical Heritage Park. Here I play important role in general management and I am also responsible for organisational, directional and legal issues. My responsibility also covers conference organisation, publication, communication with professional organisations and direction of professionals in- and outdoor the museum.

### **Dr. Seth Thompson**

#### ***Cultural Heritage through the lens of the panorama: painted and digital panoramic re-presentations of Versailles***

Since the advent of the painted panorama in the late 18th century, one of the goals for many panorama artists has been to faithfully depict the cultural landscape. The themes for the panorama have ranged from re-presenting locations such as Versailles, Salzburg and The Hague to events such as the Battle of Gettysburg. With the advent of computer technology and comprehensive data capture such as vr panoramic photography, video and scanning technologies, the notion of the panorama offers renewed opportunities in the re-presentation, preservation and dissemination of cultural heritage. For example, Google's World Wonders Project, which was launched in 2012, is a platform to showcase world heritage sites. Utilizing Google technologies such as Street View, which provides street level panoramic views along various paths to simulate the notion of exploring a place, the World Wonders Project offers an alternative experience of visiting world heritage sites from the ancient temples of Kyoto to Pompeii. By comparing and contrasting two panoramic projects of Versailles, one being a painted panorama by John Vanderlyn completed in 1819 and the other, which is part of Google's World Wonders Project, this paper will attempt to address such questions as: What is the purpose of heritage and how is it used? Is the re-presentation of heritage different in the digital versus the painted panorama? Has the notion of depicting cultural heritage changed since the 19th century? The paper will conclude with practical, useful recommendations to inform current and future initiatives in developing panoramic imaging projects for the preservation and dissemination of cultural heritage.

### **Biography**

Seth Thompson is Associate Professor in the Department of Art and Design at the American University of Sharjah, as well as a media artist and writer involved in documenting and interpreting art, design and culture through print and online presentations. His research interests and practice primarily focus on the interpretation and representation of visual culture and heritage using panoramic imaging and hypermedia systems. Media art history with special emphasis on the panorama plays an integral role in this theoretical and practice-based investigation. Thompson holds a BFA in Studio Arts from the University of Colorado, an MA in Visual Arts Administration from New York University and an MFA in Visual Art from Vermont College. He is a member of the International Art Critics Association and has lived and worked in the United Arab Emirates since 2006.

**Suzanne Wray, BFA*****European Capitalists/ American Panoramas***

European Capitalists/American Panoramas: the "panorama revival" of the late 1800s attracted many investors in search of a share of the profits. Edward Brandus, born in Paris, and Emile Glogan (or Glogau), born in Austria, came to the United States and added panoramas to their business interests. Brandus, an art dealer, became the business partner of panorama painter Paul Philippoteaux, and built a studio for painting panoramas in New York. Glogan worked with the Belgian Panorama Company in Manhattan and the Sea Beach Cyclorama Company in Coney Island, Brooklyn, later becoming the manager of 3 panorama companies displaying battle panoramas in American cities. This presentation will look at their careers and involvement in the "big business" of panoramas.

**Biography**

Suzanne Wray lives and works in New York City. Her research on panoramas and related "optical entertainments" has been presented at conferences of the International Panorama Council and the Magic Lantern Society, at the Coney Island Museum, and the "Panoramas in Motion" symposium in Saco, Maine. Her research has been published in the Magic Lantern Gazette, and the Society for Industrial Archeology newsletter.

**Dr. Martin Moar & Mr. James Charlton*****A desire for immersion, The panorama of the Oculus rift***

The paper argues that the experience of viewing 360° historical scenes, either within the "real" environment of the panorama or contemporary "virtual" environments, arises in part from the attraction of the immersive experience. Tracing a line from Greek tragic theatre through to contemporary technological innovations in virtual reality, we explore an idea that what links all of these experiences is not solely a response to social, political or historical streams but a manifestation of a pan-historical human desire for the Dionysian.

Using texts by theorists as diverse as Nietzsche, Baudrillard, Murray, Rheingold, Gibson and Shaviro, we suggest that the impetus for viewing historical scenes within 360° environments is at least partly involved in wanting to go beyond spectatorship and intellectual curiosity, towards immersion and presence. Attempts to tease out the ideological content of an immersive experience must be done in the context of the craving of audience members for the sensual, the sensational, the being present, the "wow" factor and other, less "legitimate" forms of impetus to view and experiences. These *always already* exist alongside and perhaps even before the more legitimate goals of gaining knowledge, historical perspective, education and information.

Charlton and Moar explore the idea that this desire for immersion impels us to submerge ourselves in historical scenes. Thus immersion is the link between panoramas and new panoramic experiences afforded by new technologies such as the Oculus Rift.

**Biography**

Mr. James Martin Charlton is a dramatist, director and academic. He is currently Associate Professor in Scriptwriting and Director of Programmes for Creative Media Practices at Middlesex University. He has also lectured at UEL and Birkbeck. His plays include *Fat Souls*, *Coming Up* (Warehouse Theatre, Croydon), *ecstasy + Grace* (Finborough), *Desires of Frankenstein* (Open Air, Regents Park), and *Coward* (Just Some Theatre Co.). He has written and directed two short films, *Apeth* and *Academic*. His recent site-specific, immersive production of Jim Kenworth's Orwell adaptation *Revolution Farm* played at Newham City Farm in August 2015.

Dr Magnus Moar is a Senior Lecturer at Middlesex University, where he is a Programme Leader for MA/MSc Creative Technology and BA 3D Animation and Games. He has been involved in teaching and developing interactive media since the late '80s and has worked on projects for the National

Maritime Museum, the BBC and the Open University, among others. His research is concerned with how emerging technologies may be used in a variety of contexts.

## CONFERENCE SESSION 2

### Dr. Gordon Jones

#### ***Yankees in Georgia?! How The Battle of Atlanta Became a Confederate Icon***

In 1886, the American Panorama Company of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, created The Battle of Atlanta as an exciting new attraction for Northern audiences and Union veterans eager to celebrate their victory in this critical battle of the American Civil War. In 1891, as the panorama's popularity waned in the North, promoters tried their luck in the South where they feared the painting's obviously partisan point of view might offend white audiences.

Instead, The Battle of Atlanta was hailed as "the only Confederate victory ever painted" and in 1921 was enshrined in a new steel and brick museum in Atlanta which soon became a showplace for Confederate identity. When the movie *Gone With the Wind* premiered in Atlanta in 1939, city leaders proudly escorted actors Vivien Leigh and Clark Gable to see what Southern audiences considered to be the "real" Battle of Atlanta – while a plaster figure of Gable was added to the faux terrain.

The story of what is now known simply as "The Atlanta Cyclorama" is a story of the transformative power of time, place, and political context in shaping popular conceptions of the past, turning an attraction into an artifact and an artifact into an icon. This session will also include a brief update on plans for moving and conserving The Battle of Atlanta.

#### **Biography**

Gordon L. Jones is the Senior Military Historian and Curator at the Atlanta History Center in Atlanta, Georgia, where he has worked since 1991. He is responsible for the care, research, and interpretation of the Center's collection of 12,000 objects relating to the American Civil War. Gordon holds a Ph.D. from Emory University, specializing in the Civil War in popular culture. Gordon is a member of the team responsible for moving the 1886 Battle of Atlanta panorama from its current 1921 building to a new specially-designed building presently under construction on the Atlanta History Center's campus. He is charged specifically with overseeing the conservation and historical interpretation of the painting, its faux terrain, and associated artifacts.

### Katarzyna Górecka, Dr. Marek Skłodowski, Dr. Piotr Pawłowski

#### ***From digital to classical shape. Stretching of curvilinear canvas paintings***

Conservation of curvilinear canvas paintings like panoramas, dioramas and baroque paintings closely connected to the architecture requires a precise analysis of the curvature of the object. For this reason it is essential to measure the shape of the canvas. We must answer the question what was the original form of the painting and distinguish this form from the later deformations of the canvas support. The aim of the conservation treatments (consolidation, reinforcement of the support, lining and stretching) is to restore and maintain the original curved shape of the painting, which is necessary to proper visual reception of the painting. The presentation will focus on experimental research and theoretical analysis of fundamentals of stretching of large curvilinear canvases. We would like to propose some remote digital methods of measurement of the canvas shape: photogrammetry and 3D laser scanning, which could be used to design new stretching systems for the non-planar paintings. Digital research and conservation methodology was developed and applied during conservation of the large size curvilinear canvas painting "Adoration of the Magi" by M.H. Loder from the Saint Aubain's Cathedral Church in Namur. The conservation project was supported by Polish National Science Centre under Grant "*Innovative measurement of deformations in large-size canvas paintings by remote optical methods and its application in documenting, designing and evaluation of technical conservation solutions*". The conservation principle of the project was to preserve all the original layers of the object, also the XVIII<sup>th</sup> century stretcher frame as an example of historical construction.

**Biography of the speakers**

Katarzyna Górecka, restorer of fine arts. Born in 1978. Graduated in conservation from the Faculty of Conservation and Restoration of Art in the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw (2006) also holds a degree in history from the Warsaw University (2004). From 2006, an assistant to professor Joanna Szpor in the Lab of Conservation and Restoration of Canvas Paintings (Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw). From 2007 leads student training on conservation of the XVIth century fresco painting in the Sucevița Monastery in Bucovina, Romania (monument on the UNESCO list). She participated in the International Polish - Ukrainian conservation project of large-size canvas paintings from the Zovkva Church in Ukraine (2008 -2011) "Battle of Vienna", "Battle of Parkany", XVII c., painted by: Martino Altomonte, project led by Paweł Sadlej and Marcin Kozarzewski, financed by the Polish Ministry of Culture and National Heritage. Now, coordinator of the scientific project: "Innovative measurement of deformations in large - size canvas paintings by remote optical methods" in collaboration with specialists from the Polish Academy of Sciences. Leader of the conservation team working on the 18th century big - size curvilinear canvas painting "Adoration of the Magi" from Saint – Aubain Cathedral Church in Namur (Belgium).

Dr. Marek Skłodowski received his Master of Engineering in 1974 in precision engineering at Warsaw University of Technology. In 1980 he completed his doctoral thesis in the field of holographic photoelasticity in Institute of Fundamental Technological Research, Polish Academy of Sciences in Warsaw, Poland. Currently he is Main Specialist in Smart Technology Centre there. Main research activities are experimental stress analysis, testing of historical structural materials, development of sensors and measurement methods for in situ measurements, monitoring and assessment of historical constructions. He is a Member of scientific societies including International Scientific Committee on the Analysis and Restoration of Structures of Architectural Heritage (ISCARSAH), International Committee for Documentation of Cultural Heritage (CIPA) and ICOMOS.

**Dr. Patrizia Kern*****Panoramas of the Battle of Gallipoli/ Çanakkale***

With the celebration of its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary approaching in 2015, the First World War's Battle of Çanakkale, or, as it is better known outside Turkey, the Battle of Gallipoli, and its panoramic representations deserve a closer look.

Three times, the historic events have been realized – or been planned to be realized – in panorama (or diorama) format: When the battle was still ongoing, the first panorama depicting the battle was apparently planned (but eventually not realized) in 1915 to be exhibited in Constantinople. In 2002, a diorama depicting this battle, which long since has been perceived as a turning point in Turkish history, was exhibited far from its original location in the Mausoleum of Atatürk in Ankara. A third panorama, this time adapting the 180°x360°-format, was scheduled for opening in 2015 at Gelibolu/Gallipoli, the location where the historic events actually took place.

Based on recent publications on the plans for the earliest Turkish panorama, a dissertation on Turkish panoramas in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century, as well as media coverage on the opening of the new panorama at Gelibolu/Gallipoli, this paper will investigate the different circumstances under which the panoramas were planned and/or realized and the political agendas and purposes behind the projects.

**Biography**

Dr. Patrizia Kern studied History and Classical Studies in Innsbruck and Perugia. She completed her doctoral work on contemporary representations of history in battle panoramas and dioramas in the Turkish Republic. Affiliated with the research cluster "Asia and Europe in a Global Context: The dynamics of Transculturality" at Heidelberg University, she is currently working on a history of the panorama in the Ottoman Empire and the Turkish Republic.

**Prof. Thiago Leitão*****“Donde durmieron nuestros abuelos?” Inside a Panorama!***

This article intends to investigate the presence of Panoramas in Argentina, specifically, in its capital Buenos Aires. The history of Panoramas in Argentina can be understood in two different moments: first, by a personal initiative, in the end of 19th century with the Panorama Del Retiro; and the second, with the most representative examples in a historicist pedagogical project of the Panoramas by Augusto Cesar Ferrari. This paper intends to analyze the first moment of the Panorama phenomenon in Argentina. Don Mauricio Le Tellier, the enterprising of the Panorama, imported the iron structure of the rotunda from Europe, and at the end of the 1885 the Panorama was opened. It was a very successful opening. Possibly, it was the first Panorama of the South America continent. For this opportunity, we are going to investigate this first manifestation and its history in the city of Buenos Aires. We will demonstrate how the historical research can be associated with digital interpretations. Layer by layer of the Panorama Del Retiro, its architectural and urban implications, and its very original end will be analyzed. All these experiences will be developed through the old remaining documents associating freehand sketches and computer graphics techniques.

**Biography**

Thiago Leitão is Full Professor of sketching and computer graphics techniques of Faculdade de Arquitetura e Urbanismo in the Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Has graduation in Architecture and Urbanism (FAU-UFRJ, 2006), Master of Science in Arts (PROURB-FAU-UFRJ, co-realized at Sint-Lucas Architectuur, Hogeschool voor Wetenschap & Kunst, Brussels, 2009), and PhD (PROURB-FAU-UFRJ Rio de Janeiro, 2014). Since from his graduation, researches the history of Panoramas, the Panoramas of Rio de Janeiro, the 360° paintings and its conversion to digital media, and how the panorama experience can offer new contributions for the representation area of Architecture and Urbanism.

**MUSÉE D’HISTOIRE DE LA VILLE DE LUXEMBOURG****Dr. Guy Thewes, curator*****The panorama, what use for a museum?*****Biography**

Guy Thewes was born in Luxembourg in 1967. He completed a master degree in history at the Université catholique de Louvain, Belgium (1991) and a PhD at the Université du Luxembourg (2011). Since 1993 he works as a curator at the Luxembourg City History Museum where he is in charge of exhibitions and collection development. In 2006 he directed the making of an historical panorama depicting Luxembourg in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, painted by the French artist Antoine Fontaine and on show in the museum since then. He has published in the fields of 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century social and military history. His latest book “Stände, Staat und Militär” deals about the logistics and financing of the Austrian army in the Netherlands (Böhlau, Vienna, 2012). From 2002 to 2014, Guy Thewes was president of the Luxembourg Alpine Club. He is married and has two children.

**Antoine Fontaine, artist*****The making of the panorama at Luxembourg*****Biography**

Antoine Fontaine is a painter and designer. He was born on 17<sup>th</sup> of June 1961 in Paris. He studied at the Ecole des Beaux Arts de Paris and became a teacher at Ecole Nationale des Arts décoratifs de Paris and FEMIS (Fondation Européenne pour les Métiers de l'Image et du Son). He designs scenery for operas, theater, films and exhibition and is responsible for several restoration of painted decors.



**Day 3: Friday, 11<sup>th</sup> September 2015****CONFERENCE SESSION 3****Dr. Blagovesta Momchedjikova*****History Meets Heritage in Pan-Stereoramas***

In this presentation, I will look at pan-stereoramas, or 3D scale models, of New York City, in order to draw a distinction between the terms "history" and "heritage," and ponder whether popular forms of entertainment concern themselves mostly with the latter. Two of the pan-stereoramas of New York City are in the city proper: the permanent *Panorama of the City of New York* in the Queens Museum and the seasonal *Holiday Train Show* in the New York Botanical Garden; two other pan-stereoramas of New York City are outside of New York City but still in the United States, the large scale entertainment zone *New York New York* in Las Vegas, NV and the Lego bricks *Miniature New York* in Legoland, CA. Yet there is one pan-stereorama of New York City in Tokyo, Japan, at the Mori Center for an urban future. I will show images of all of these exhibits and attempt to link the content (history and heritage of New York City) of each to its particular form (scale, number and kind of buildings, positioning of buildings in relationship to one another). Ultimately, I hope to reach some understanding as to why cities present themselves as the ideal trope for the pan-stereorama as a medium, and to problematize the use of both "history" and "heritage" (not just as terms but as tools) in such exhibits.

**Biography**

Blagovesta Momchedjikova, PhD, specializes in pan-stereoramas of cities, most notably, The Panorama of the City of New York model in the Queens Museum, of which she gives specialized tours. She is the editor of *Captured by the City: Perspectives in Urban Culture Studies* (2013) and guest-editor of *Streetnotes: Urban Feel* (2010). Her essay and poetry contributions appear in *The Everyday of Memory: Between Communism and Post-Communism*, *Robert Moses and the Modern City: The Transformation of New York*, *Streetnotes*, *ISO Magazine*, *The Journal of American Culture*, *Tourist Studies*, *Genre: Imagined Cities*, *PIERS*. She is a Senior Language Lecturer at New York University, where she teaches writing, art, and the city. In addition, she chairs the Urban Culture Area of MAPACA and conducts urban writing workshops nationally and internationally.

**Dr. Alexy Druzhinin*****Artistic diorama as a form of art***

In his paper, the author presents a synopsis of his dissertation "Artistic Diorama as a Form of Art". This is the first study of this subject in the practice of Russian art history.

The author examines the art of diorama in the historical, artistic, aesthetic and technological contexts. In this work, artistic diorama is viewed as an independent form of fine art and special emphasis is given to the history of Russian and soviet diorama art.

**Biography**

In 2014 he defended his thesis "ARTISTIC DIORAMA AS A FORM OF ART" Development of Diorama Art in Russia. His research interests are: art panoramas and dioramas, monumental art, battle genre in art. Author of several publications on the art of panoramas and dioramas.

**Molly Briggs, Ph.D. candidate*****Scenes From the Life of Christ: Unrolling a "New" Old Moving Panorama***

This talk presents a heretofore unknown, fully-intact nineteenth-century moving panorama. This work, currently in storage at the Krannert Art Museum on the Urbana campus of the University of Illinois, was provisionally attributed by its donor to Indiana Quaker artist Marcus Mote, a painter of portraits and miniatures who is known to have produced and exhibited four moving panoramas during the early

1850s. Those panoramas have long been lost and there are no known images of them. During the talk, I will exhibit the entire work, 8 feet high and 600 feet in length, as a digital animation developed from seamlessly integrated high-resolution photographs. I will discuss what is currently known about the panorama and what I have been able to add to the mystery of its history, including questions about its attribution and provenance, its remarkable iconography, a literature review on Marcus Mote, details including the variable style in which the work is painted and its many embellishments in bead and foil, and its antique wooden crates and scrolling apparatus. Finally, I will discuss some of the complexities of representing historic round and moving panoramas in contemporary digital and time-based media for audiences who are not present with the original works.

### **Biography**

Molly Briggs is a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Landscape Architecture at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Her dissertation, *Seeing Through Chicago's West Parks: Landscape Performance and the Panoramic Uncanny* (currently in progress) interprets the period design and reception of Chicago's large inland parks and the boulevard system as iterations of the "panoramic uncanny," a painterly, spatialized, and embodied mode of perceiving place, motion, distance, and representation. She recently presented her research at two conferences, *Scapes: Landscape, Space, and Place*, the 9th annual conference hosted by the Landscape Studies and Geography Department, Indiana University, Bloomington, Illinois; and *New Terrains: The Landscape Reviewed*, an interdisciplinary research symposium hosted by the Department of Art History at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. She has been the recipient of numerous creative and research awards and is also an exhibiting painter. Her artistic work has been exhibited extensively in the United States and is held in public and private collections in the U.S., Europe, and Japan. She has taught art and design at the university level since 2000.

### **Prof. Yunhui Ji**

#### ***Overview of Chinese panoramas***

Panorama has its special meaning and value in China, therefore an overall analysis and penetration will be conducive to its development in China, from which we will summarize and improve the art.

### **Biography**

Professor Ji Yunhui, born in Shanghai, China, is an artist who worked in the Chibi Military Campaign – a panorama depicting the famous ancient battle in China, won the gold prize of China Mural Exhibition. His oil paintings "Spring Tide" and "Looking Back" won national prizes. He gained his Ph.D. in Fine Art in 2006. He was one of the organizers of 2004 IPC Conference, Shenyang, China. His recent publication "The Panorama Aesthetics" depicted most works in China. He is the deputy of Luxun Fine Art Academy.

## **CONFERENCE SESSION 4**

### **Claire Barbier, M.A. and Aurore de Bruyn, M.A.**

#### ***The diorama "Battle of the Meuse": restoration prospects in the 21st century***

The Diorama called "Battle of the Meuse", a painting by Alfred Bastien dating from 1937, was once exhibited in a building specially designed for it at the Citadel of Namur. The attraction's lifetime was brief, however. Rolled up and put into storage in 1940, the canvas has not been exhibited since. As for the building at the Citadel, it still exists but has been put to other uses in the intervening years.

In 2011 the Wallonia heritage Institute carried out a study to determine the feasibility and cost of restoring the canvas and exhibiting it anew in its original setting. From then on, the Institute entered the fabulous world of panoramas, the richness, diversity and complexity of which it had hitherto not known.



An art historian and an architect fortunately benefitted from the assistance and learned advice of many experts, but quickly realised how difficult this project would be, from both a financial and a practical point of view, because as the building has been modified its current height is no longer sufficient to accommodate the canvas.

In the light of these conclusions, a dilemma arises: the Diorama named "Battle of the Meuse" may be the only canvas of its kind that can be exhibited anew in Belgium, but the costs involved are considerable. At a time when new media are being introduced in art, along with the possibilities they can offer, should the canvas restoration project be abandoned? And if so, in favor of what alternative?

### **Biography**

Aurore de Bruyn is an Architect (ISA, Saint-Luc, Bruxelles, 2007) and an Art Historian (Université Libre, Bruxelles, 2009). She had worked in different architectural offices specialized in the restoration of monuments. She has been working since four years at the Property Unit of the Wallonia Heritage Institute (Public agency of the Wallonia Government in Belgium – based in Namur). In 2011, together with Claire Barbier she carried out a study to determine the feasibility and cost of restoring the diorama called "Battle of the Meuse" and exhibiting it anew in its original setting.

Claire Barbier holds an M.A. in History of Art and Archeology and an Advanced Master in Heritage Conservation and Restoration (Université Catholique de Louvain, Louvain-la-Neuve, 2009 and 2011). She has been working since four years at the Property Unit of the Wallonia Heritage Institute (Public agency of the Wallonia Government in Belgium – based in Namur). In 2011, together with Aurore de Bruyn she carried out a study to determine the feasibility and cost of restoring the diorama called "Battle of the Meuse" and exhibiting it anew in its original setting.

### **Dr. Natasja Peeters and drs. Sandrine Smets**

#### ***Facts and fictions dis-covering Alfred Bastien's panoramas***

This paper aims to unveil the history of Alfred Bastien's two panoramas layer by layer based on old and new sources.

For the first example studied here, the *Yser Panorama*, the artist's ideas matured in 1914 from the first days of fighting. Indeed, the decision to paint a *panorama* prompts Bastien to prepare himself early onwards, gathering material but also facing the constant dangers of the front and taking care to avoid spilling strategic and military secrets. In keeping with the tradition, the artist prepared his canvas in 1920-21, when the war zone is still being cleared and reconstructed.

However, the second panorama under concern, the *Meuse Diorama* showing the battle near the River Meuse in August 1914, was started in 1936. By then, more than twenty years had passed, and the face of the Meuse had changed. Less is known about Bastien's artistic documentation process during the conflict and the steps taken to ensure a historically reliable presentation of the facts.

But where do facts end and where does fiction begin? Bastien's two panoramas form an interesting case in point, where one can peel off the various layers that allow and enable the viewer to have a sense of place and time. This way, we can dis-cover the aims and endeavours of the artist and the commissioners in the context of education and propaganda.

### **Biography**

Natasja Peeters has a Ph.D. in Art History (*De bijdrage van Frans en Ambrosius Francken I, en de jonge generatie Francken, tot de historieschilderkunst te Antwerpen c. 1570-1620*) and a BA in History (Vrije Universiteit Brussels, 2000 and 1994). She was a recipient of a grant of the Fonds for Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek (Vlaanderen) from 1994 to 1998. She worked as a Post-doc at the Rijksuniversiteit Groningen on *Painting in Antwerp before iconoclasm (c. 1480-1566), A socio-Economic Approach* from 2000 to 2003. In 2004, she was curator of the exhibition *De uitvinding van het landschap. Het Vlaamse landschap van Patinir tot Rubens, 1520-1700*, in the Royal Museum of Fine Arts in Antwerp, in collaboration with the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Wien and Villa Hügel, Essen. From 2004 until 2006 she was a researcher in the project *Scientific study of the 'Rubens group' in the Royal*

*Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium, Brussels*, culminating in the Rubens exhibition (2008). Her book on journeymen was published in 2007, and her monograph on the painter Frans Francken, based on her PhD, was published in 2014 by the Royal Academy of Belgium with support of the Belgian University Foundation. Since 2006, she has been curator of the Arts Department at the Royal Military Museum, Brussels and since 2011, she is head of the Exhibitions dept. She co-curated exhibitions in the Royal Military Museum and is the editor of the Bulletin of the Royal Military Museum. She has taught the course History of European painting at Brussels' Vrije Universiteit in 2009-2011.

Sandrine Smets has a M.A. in the History of Art and Archeology (Université Libre, Brussels 1995). She has also obtained a Research Master at the Ecole doctorale Histoire, Cultures et Sociétés (Université Libre, Brussels 2006). She is writing her PhD-thesis on *Les artistes belges face à la Grande Guerre* (Université Libre, Brussels). She is the curator for art of the First World War in the Royal Museum of the Armed Forces and of Military History in Brussels since 2003. Since 2011 she is head of service of the collections of 1914 until the current period. She organised different exhibitions: *Le pinceau au fusil. La guerre 1914-1918 en peinture* (2004-08), *Wilchar, un artiste dans la résistance* (2006), *Doggone War. The animals in the Great War 1914-1918* (2009-10) and *War&Game(s). Confrontation between photographic work by Virginie Cornet and toys from the Great War* (2011), *Monumentum. Petrified memories, fragile creations* with Patrice Alexandre (2012-13) and *14-18, it's our history* (2014-15). She coordinates the study group responsible for the new scenography of the 1914-1918 gallery in the context of the centenary of 2014. She participates in many conferences and has published numerous articles on the First World War.

### **Prof. Axel Tixhon and dr. Bénédicte Rochet**

#### ***The Battle of the Meuse August 1914: The last Belgian panorama***

#### **Biography**

Axel Tixhon is professor of the Department of History at the University of Namur. He is specialized in the institutional history of Belgium, the first World War and contemporary history. He

Bénédicte Rochet has a Ph.D. in history on the audiovisual propaganda of the exiled Belgian government during the Second World War. Together with Axel Tixhon she has published several articles on historical topics concerning Belgium. She is specialized in the history of film and especially documentary/news items, the first and second World War and audiovisual archives.

#### **POSTER PRESENTATION**

During the coffee breaks of both conference days two artists will show their art.

#### **Patricia Lambertus**

Taking as her starting point a nineteenth-century scenic wallpaper, The Battle of Austerlitz, the artist Patricia Lambertus creates installations that deal with the subject of violence in its various aspects, combining the visual language of the past with elements from contemporary news reporting on political and social conflicts. Her motifs often originate from wallpaper – photographed, collaged and otherwise processed – as well as visual material from the media and her own photographs. She turns all these different components into richly detailed installations in which she poses questions about interior decoration and the autonomy of images. At the same time, the artist's layered wallpapers function as stratigraphy, the archaeological study of strata, through which discoveries can be analyzed and dated.

#### **Sue Truman**

At the moment she is working on moving panorama scrolls from Tyvek. She will be bringing a couple scrolls to the conference to show.