Dissolving futures
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LE CHARLEMAGNE

Réhabilitation et extension
de 10 000 m²
Bureaux et commerces
Livraison : fin 2015

HOPLES
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In the age of image proliferation, the representation of architecture is taking the place in our collective imaginations once occupied by architecture itself. The visual impact of urban skylines and façades is being subsumed by the omnipresence of the city as image.
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This is evident in ever increasing tendencies to look at images on portable screens while negotiating the urban environment, but it is also marking the built space itself; as speculative practices accelerate urban transformation, the city adorns itself in images of what it is to become.
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The speculative transformation never fully attained, these images linger and fade dissolving into a ruptured matrix of urban decay and unfinished potential.
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Rather than reflecting on what architecture could be I reflect on what the future is becoming: faded imprints of spectacular promises.
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• An ongoing project started over 10 years ago.
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• Over a thousand pictures taken, 100 of these (so far) selected to be used.
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• Pictures taken in four different continents.
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• Many possibilities for the presentation of the images, in print, on-line and in exhibition.
• Proposing an installation with the images projected in a continuous dissolve sequence.
H.G. Wells - The Shape of Things to Come

First published 1933.
In the middle years of the nineteenth century there was a primitive form of entertainment in Western Europe and America called 'Dissolving Views'. Crudely coloured pictures were thrown on screen by a double-barrelled arrangement of lenses called a 'Magic Lantern'.

A picture would be projected first by the right-hand lens of the contraption and then the light would be shifted to the left-hand side, so that the picture cast by one half of the apparatus faded as the other became brighter. The real became a phantom and vanished and the faint intimations of its successor became at length the only reality visible.
Apparently this is where our ancestors found the 'magic' effect. At a certain phase it must have been hard to determine which details were advancing and which were receding realities, or of any part of the ensemble whether it was real. It was very much after the fashion of this artless Victorian wonder-toy that faith in established institutions and usages faded and the idea of the Modern State dawned upon the intelligence of mankind.
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AND
Dissolving View Apparatus,
SLIDES, AND EFFECTS,
OF the Highest Class.

GOLD & SILVER MEDALS AWARDED (1884-5)
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TRIPLE LANTERN,
The Luke Bi-unial Lanterns,
And the 3-Wick Paraffine
PHOTOGENIC LANTERNS.

TRIPLE LANTERNS,
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PHOTOGENIC LANTERNS.
Prices—£3:10:0 to £10:10:0.

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Jonathan Crary - Suspensions of Perception: Attention, Spectacle and Modern Culture


On the Piazza Colonna behind which I am staying, as you know, several thousand people congregate every night. The evening air is really delicious; in Rome wind is hardly known. Behind the column is a stand for a military band which plays there every night, and on the roof of a house at the other end of the piazza there is a screen on which a società Italiana projects lantern slides. They are actually advertisements, but to beguile the public these are interspersed with pictures of landscapes, Negroes of the Congo, glacier ascents and so on. But since these wouldn’t be enough, the boredom is interrupted by short cinematographic performances for the sake of which the old children (your father included) suffer quietly the advertisements and monotonous photographs.

Sigmund Freud in a letter to his family from Rome, September 22, 1907, as quoted by Crary. (p. 363)
The magic lantern slides, the cinematic projections, and the electrically lit advertisements are only the more obvious elements of a formless field of attraction [...] which undermines the older monumental organisation of the (city) square. Its defining architectural facades and its central imperial column (with its own images of remote Roman victories over German tribes) give way to the evanescent lantern scenes of modern-day colonies and foreign landscapes. (p. 366)
Paul Landon

- exhibited videos and installations in museums, in galleries and other venues in North America and Europe and in festivals around the world;
- graduated from The Nova Scotia College of Art and Design in Canada and from the Jan van Eyck Academie in The Netherlands;
- professor of Media Arts at the University of Québec in Montréal;
- resides sporadically in Helsinki, recently completed Doctorate at the Finnish Academy of Fine Arts;
Paul Landon

• engages in an artistic practice that explores architectural and urban space;

• an exploration that is translated into time based images installed within and responding to interior architectural exhibition spaces;

• the space of the city and its architectures are scrutinised through their seemingly insignificant details: abandoned or underused buildings, older model cars, deserted streets, details that resonate as markers of changing and forgetting;

• explores the future of architecture as it dissolves into the present.
Outside, 2003, 3 video projectors, 3 colour video programmes, wood, vellum, 340 x 720 x 10 cm. ESPACE 1004, Montréal, 2003.
Transcanadienne, 2014, installation for 5 HD video projections, stereo sound and vinyl lettering on wall, 2:00 minutes, looped.
Hof, 2015, single channel colour video projection, 9:00 minutes, looped. Nordic House, Reykjavik, 2015.
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Paul Landon 2017