

PANORAMA

International Panorama Council

Newsletter 48 | June 2025



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The International Panorama Council (IPC) is an international non-governmental and not-for-profit association, subject to Swiss law, that supports the conservation and interpretation of heritage panoramas dating from the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It also promotes awareness of the broader panorama phenomenon, including its historic offshoots and current developments. IPC is active in the fields of panorama restoration, research, financing, exhibiting, marketing, and publishing. It promotes professional trusteeship and stimulates interdisciplinary discourse on historic and contemporary panoramas, moving panoramas, dioramas, and related ephemera, and related contemporary media including photography, film, video, and electronic VR interfaces. Throughout these efforts, IPC strives to connect the past, present and future of the panorama phenomenon worldwide.

The word “panorama” is common in modern languages. However, this term was originally coined in the eighteenth century to describe a new, spectacular, and extraordinarily influential invention. A Panorama—or Cyclorama, as it has been called in some places and times—is a purpose-built architectural structure containing a large 360-degree painting that affords the visual and somatic illusion of standing in the middle of an actual place and/or event. Natural lighting from a cleverly concealed source enlivens the virtual experience. The panorama built upon earlier immersive interfaces such as the Eidophusikon, and in turn inspired a fascinating array of immersive and interactive interfaces including the Diorama, Cosmorama, Mareorama, Moving Panorama, etc. Some heritage panoramas survive to the present day, and new panoramas are being created in the twenty-first century.

The *IPC Newsletter* has been published semi-regularly since 2005 and currently publishes annually.

Front Cover: *The Wilpena Panorama*, Hawker, Australia, by Jeff Morgan. See p. 25. Image, © Jeff Morgan.

Back Cover: *The Panoramic & Immersive Media Studies Yearbook*, seen in the window of the Velaslasay Panorama, Los Angeles. Image, Velaslasay Panorama.



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President's Welcome

Molly Briggs

In the era of the panorama's invention and popularity, negotiations over geography, identity, and culture were actively shaping worldviews and indeed the world itself. Today, similar processes unfold across media platforms ranging from television and cinema to social media and memes. Yet panoramas and related immersive forms remain vital. They draw us into physical and imaginative spaces that blur the line between representation and reality in a remarkably physical way that prompts embodied reflection on the social, intellectual and political histories that continue to shape our present. In this light, for all its apparent historicity, the panorama remains a "live" medium, absorbing and resonant not only because of its immersive form, but because it invites us to examine how past ways of sensing and structuring continue to inform the world today, and to do so in ways that make those histories felt as well as known.

At the International Panorama Council, we are committed to sustaining that liveness, not as nostalgia but as evolving practice. Our organization fosters dialogue about history, culture, and media through our annual conferences, our publications, our forthcoming new website, and conversations that continue throughout the year. These initiatives strengthen our global network and reflect our shared commitment to supporting and interpreting panoramas and related media as sites of inquiry, memory, and imagination.

Published in 2024 by De Gruyter in Berlin, the inaugural volume of the *Panoramic & Immersive*

Media Studies (PIMS) Yearbook marked a significant milestone for IPC. The *PIMS Yearbook* accommodates scholarly, creative, and professional projects in seven sections, variously subject to double-blind peer review, single-blind peer review, and/or in-house editing by our diverse editorial board and advisory board. *PIMS* is published Gold Open Access, available for digital download or as a full-color hardback, indexed in scholarly databases and available in libraries around the world. Volume 2 (2025) is currently in production, and the call for volume 3 is live. Download v. 1 (2024) or order your physical copy from [De Gruyter Oldenbourg](#), and consider [contributing to volume 3](#) (2026)—the deadline is 3 October, 2025. Back issues of the *IPC Journal*, published 2018–2023, remain available for order as a glossy paperback and as free open access digital downloads.

Panoramas as Memory of the World, IPC's 33rd annual conference, was hosted by the [Swiss Federal Institute of Technology](#) (EPFL) in Lausanne, Switzerland, 2–4 October, with a two-day post-conference tour on 5–6 October. We thank our conference partners, Dr. Sarah Kenderdine and Dr. Daniel Jaquet, for organizing extraordinary in-person experiences and fostering vital conversations about how panoramas function as documents within the framework of UNESCO's Memory of the World Program—a designation for which IPC is currently preparing a proposal. The innovative work emerging from EPFL's [Laboratory for Experimental Museology \(eM+\)](#) exemplifies the ongoing relevance of panoramic and immersive media.



Digital mockup of the layout for the IPC Newsletter #48. This layout uses the design developed by Elias Harris-Bommarito in 2024.

IPC's conference was a natural fit with eM+ objectives. A transdisciplinary initiative, eM+ combines immersive visualization, aesthetics, and data-driven research to promote post-cinematic, multisensory engagement through a suite of cutting-edge experimental platforms. The forthcoming second volume of the *Panoramic and Immersive Media Studies* (PIMS) Yearbook offers selected conference papers and a summary of the conference events, including a detailed account of the remarkably rich post conference tour. Meanwhile, the program and abstracts for this and all past conferences are available on IPC's [past conferences](#) page.

As we go to press, we are finalizing preparations for IPC's [34th annual conference](#), *The World at a Glance: Panoramic and Peep Technologies*.

This year's gathering is hosted by the Early Visual Media Lab—CICANT (Research Center in Applied Communication and New Technologies)—Lusófona University and the Art History Institute (IHA)—NOVA University of Lisbon's School of Social Sciences and Humanities (FCSH).

The Early Visual Media Lab focuses on the heritage of immersive historical media—from stereoscopic photography and optical boxes to cosmoramas and panoramas—using digital technologies to enhance accessibility, contextualization, and interpretation. Through collaborations with museums and archives, the lab develops innovative tools such as VR applications and online databases to support research, curation, and public engagement.

The Art History Institute (IHA) publishes *Art History Magazine* and its indexed *Series W*. IHA plays a key role in rethinking the history of art in both Portuguese and global contexts. Its work challenges traditional center-periphery frameworks and foregrounds the entangled histories of artistic production across Europe, Asia, Africa, and the Americas—an approach that resonates deeply with IPC’s commitment to examining panoramic media across diverse geographies and histories.

With all this in mind, we anticipate an extraordinary conference! Proceedings will be published in the *PIMS Yearbook* v. 3 (2026). Meanwhile, you can explore the full conference program on IPC’s [Upcoming Conference](#) page.

IPC is actively developing partnerships for future conferences and we will soon announce details about our programming for 2026 and 2027 respectively. If your organization might be interested in partnering to host a future conference, just write

to us at secretariat@panoramacouncil.org.

IPC is an energetic organization powered almost entirely by volunteers. We invite you to support our work by becoming a member or renewing your membership; donating to underwrite our activities; presenting at our conferences or joining the audience; writing for the *IPC Newsletter* and/or the *PIMS Yearbook*; or joining one or more of our active standing committees, listed below. In particular, we are seeking volunteers to help produce future issues of this newsletter and assist in building and maintaining our new website. We are also looking for volunteers to audit our 2025 financial records. No specialized knowledge is required—just comfort with basic math, attention to detail, and a few hours of time in spring 2026.

To learn more about these and other opportunities, reach out to us at secretariat@panoramacouncil.org.

IPC needs you! ●

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IPC's Executive and Advisory Boards are listed on page 4.



Portrait of Gebhard Streicher, 2014. Image, © Jerusalem Panorama Foundation, Altötting, Germany.

Gebhard Streicher

**IPC Co-Founder and Honorary Member
has passed away at the age of 95**

Gabriele Koller

Anyone who witnessed the activities of the International Panorama Council in its early years will still have vivid memories of Gebhard Streicher. He not only founded the association together with the Swiss architect Damian Widmer (d. 2023) and the Hungarian archaeologist Ottó Trogmayer (d. 2015), but was also the driving force in the early years of the association. The IPC first started in 1992 as a European group of panorama directors and curators, including Gebhard Streicher, who, at a time when European politics were changing dramatically, met to discuss problems of preserving surviving historic panoramas. New contacts were made and led to exchange visits that would have been difficult to make before 1989. It is also thanks to him that a network of panoramas was soon established, which has continued to develop ever since.

Gebhard Streicher dedicated a significant part of his life to the care and preservation of the Jerusalem Panorama located at the Marian pilgrimage site of Altötting, Germany. It was painted in 1903 by his grandfather, Gebhard Fugel (1863–1939), an academic painter from Munich. It is the only surviving historic panorama in Germany. The panorama depicting Jerusalem and the Crucifixion of Christ was initiated by the artist and operated by him and his descendants for many years. In 1966, Gebhard Streicher, the artist's grandson, took over as director. He was to manage the panorama for 30 years. Thanks to his efforts, two extensive restoration projects were carried out in the 1980s and 2000s to save the panorama and restore it to its original

beauty. In 1996, he finally set up a foundation that has been running the panorama ever since. He remained active as chairman of the foundation and curator of the panorama until 2010.

Family ties were only one aspect of his commitment to the panorama. As an academic with an impressive knowledge of cultural history – he studied history, literature, and fine arts – his interest in panoramas was motivated by a great curiosity to explore the history and cultural background of the art form at a time when panorama research was still in its early stages. From 1998 to 2003, he served as President of the IPC. During that time, he organized several international panorama conferences. The 1998 conference in Altötting, Germany, was the first in the history of the IPC to focus on the panorama as a global phenomenon and attracted participants from all over the world. In 2001, he succeeded in bringing an international panorama conference to Beijing, China. He has also been a speaker at many panorama conferences.

In addition to the panorama, through publications and exhibitions, he devoted himself to the artistic work of his grandfather, the panorama painter Gebhard Fugel who was a well-known painter of religious themes in his time. From 1972 to 1998, he was curator of a Christian art society, which had been co-founded by his grandfather in Munich in 1893 and is still active today. He also initiated an art prize named after Gebhard Fugel, which is awarded to contemporary artists every three years.



Gebhard Streicher with participants of the 23rd IPC conference hosted by the Jerusalem Panorama Foundation Altötting, Germany, 2014. Group photo taken in the panorama in front of painted portrait of panorama artist Gebhard Fugel. From left to right: Sara Velas, Gebhard Streicher, Mao Wenbiao, Gabriele Koller, Gordon Jones, Machiko Kusahara, Hubert Schlederer, Sylvia Alting van Geusau. Image © Jerusalem Panorama Foundation, Altötting, Germany.

He has received several awards for his work and has been an honorary member of several institutions and organizations such as the Academy of Fine Arts in Munich, the Jerusalem Panorama Foundation Altötting, and the International Panorama Council.

Gebhard Streicher was able to achieve a great deal in his long life. His sharp mind combined with a determination to put ideas into practice made him very successful in realizing projects. Discussions with colleagues and friends were always at a high intellectual level and were greatly enhanced by his enthusiasm and in-depth knowledge of the topics under discussion. Despite his many professional

activities, he still found the time to help his wife Erika, a professional photographer, to create a wonderful nature garden and to collaborate with her on several beautifully illustrated books.

Gebhard Streicher passed away in Munich on November 11, 2024, at the age of 95. He is survived by his wife Erika. ●

Gabriele Koller
Vice President, International Panorama Council
Lucerne, Switzerland
Executive Board, Jerusalem Panorama Foundation
Altötting, Germany

Update: Panorama de Vries, Turnhout (Belgium)

Lieve Flour

Recently the municipality of Turnhout accepted the gift of the *Panorama de Vries* (2012) and its documentation and archives.

The panorama is still exposed at the town hall as a provisory measure and marks the start of many guided excursions in the city. But there are plans to sell a part of the construction. Pending a permanent solution, it will be resting in the municipal archives.

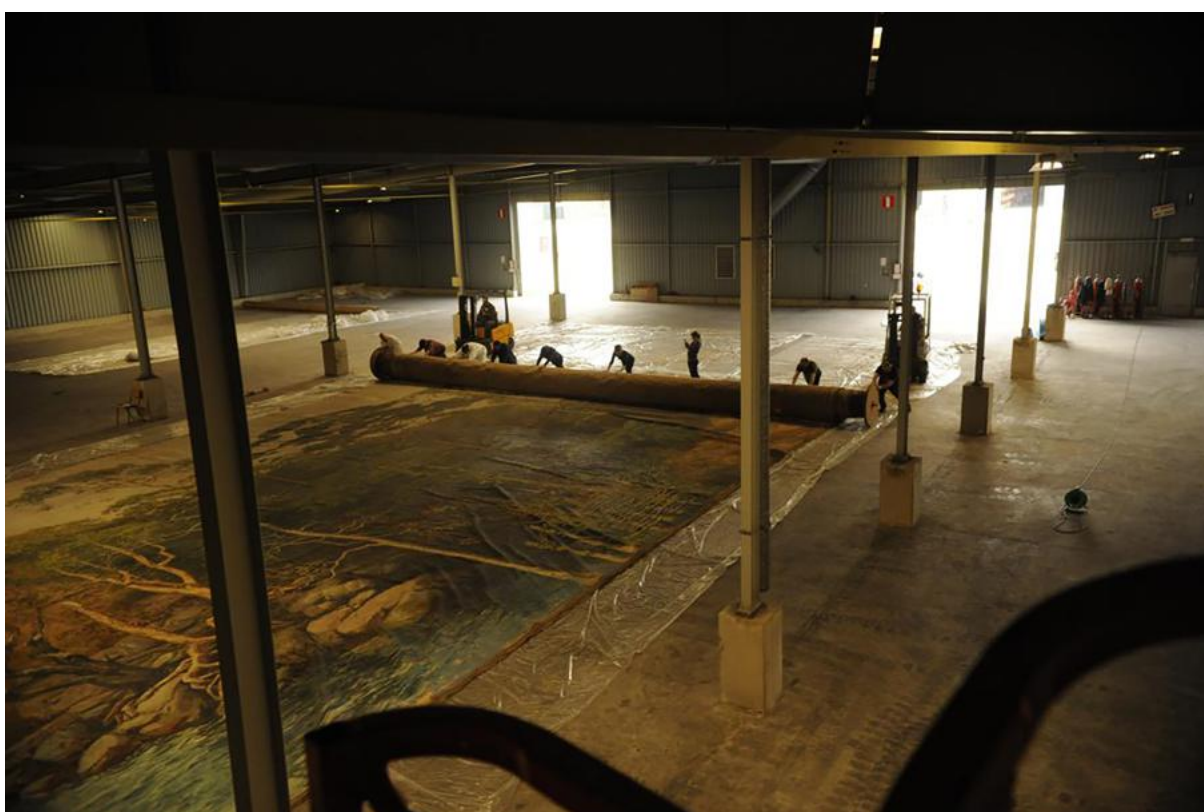
Sadly, Lau de Vries, who was the creator and supervisor during the painting of this 30 meters long and 2.10 meters high panorama of the city of Turnhout and its wide surroundings, passed away on March 14, 2023. Though he was still with us to conclude the agreement with the municipality, it was his widow who signed the papers. ●



Panorama de Vries, Turnhout, Belgium. Image, Lau de Vries.




A section of the *Panorama of Congo*. Image: The War Heritage Institute, Brussels, Belgium, 2009.



In February 2009 collection collaborators unroll and photograph the *Panorama of Congo*, in Zutendaal. Image, The War Heritage Institute, Brussels, Belgium.

Opposite, background: Natural surroundings—"Trees: wounded witnesses, symbols of the war." Scene from the *Diorama of the Battle of Meuse*.
Image, The War Heritage Institute, Brussels.



New Institutional Member

The War Heritage Institute, Brussels

Nicholas Lowe

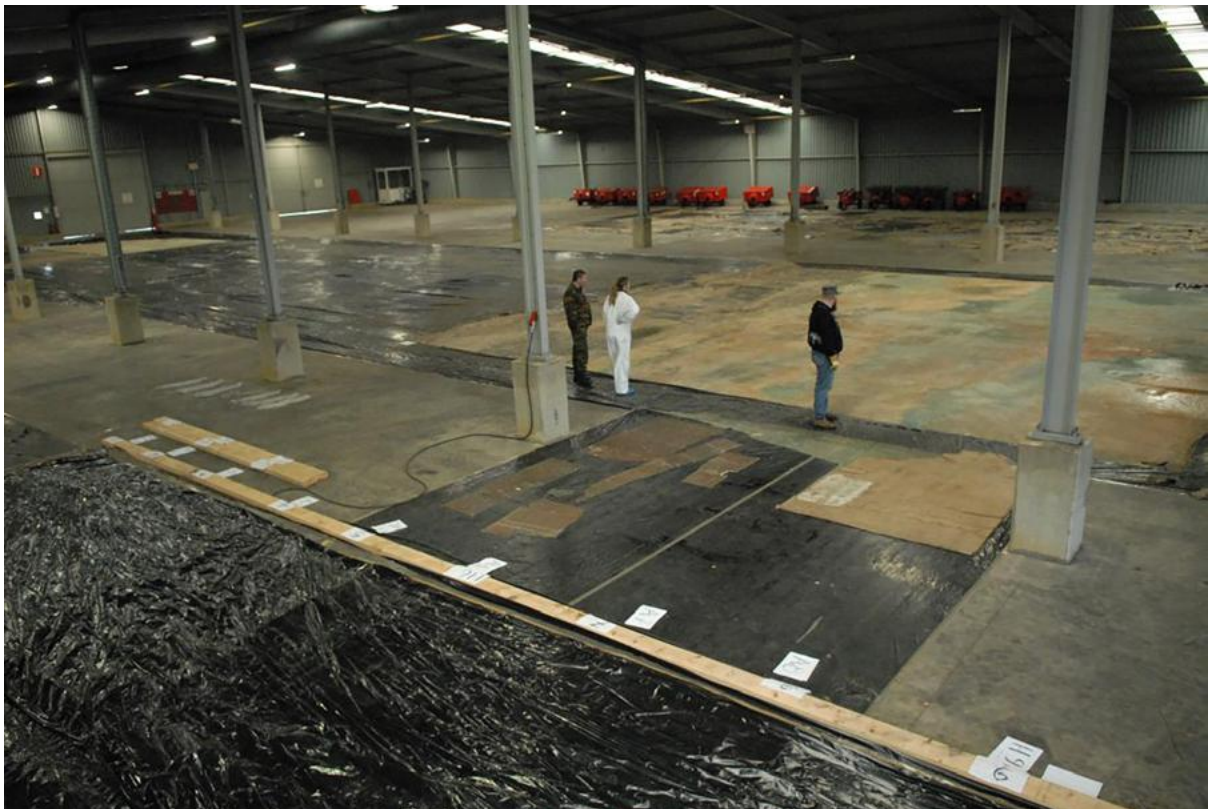
With great pleasure we recently welcomed The War Heritage Institute, in Brussels as a new institutional member to IPC. The membership will be represented by Curators Sandrine Smets and Vera Bras and Director of collections Dr. Natasja Peeters. The War Heritage Institute is the custodian of three significant panoramas, namely, the *Panorama of Congo*, the *Panorama of the Battle of Yser*, and the *Diorama of the Battles of the Meuse*. We look forward to their future participation in our annual conferences and to learning more about their research and these significant artifacts.

Belgian colonial authorities commissioned the *Panorama of Congo* for the 1913 World Fair in Ghent. The monumental canvas measured 115 × 14 m and was designed by Paul Mathieu (1872–1932) and Alfred Bastien (1873–1955). A circular arrangement, a faux-terrain and optical distortions provided visitors with the illusion of reality. The canvas was shown for the last time at the 1935 World Fair in Brussels. The War Heritage Institute has been safeguarding it in its entirety since the 1950s. In eight seamlessly juxtaposed scenes the work depicts life in and around the city of Matadi, with views of

the Congo River, the market, the M'Poza waterfalls and the tropical forest. The panorama highlights the Belgian civilisation offensive on the colony and thus serves propaganda purposes.

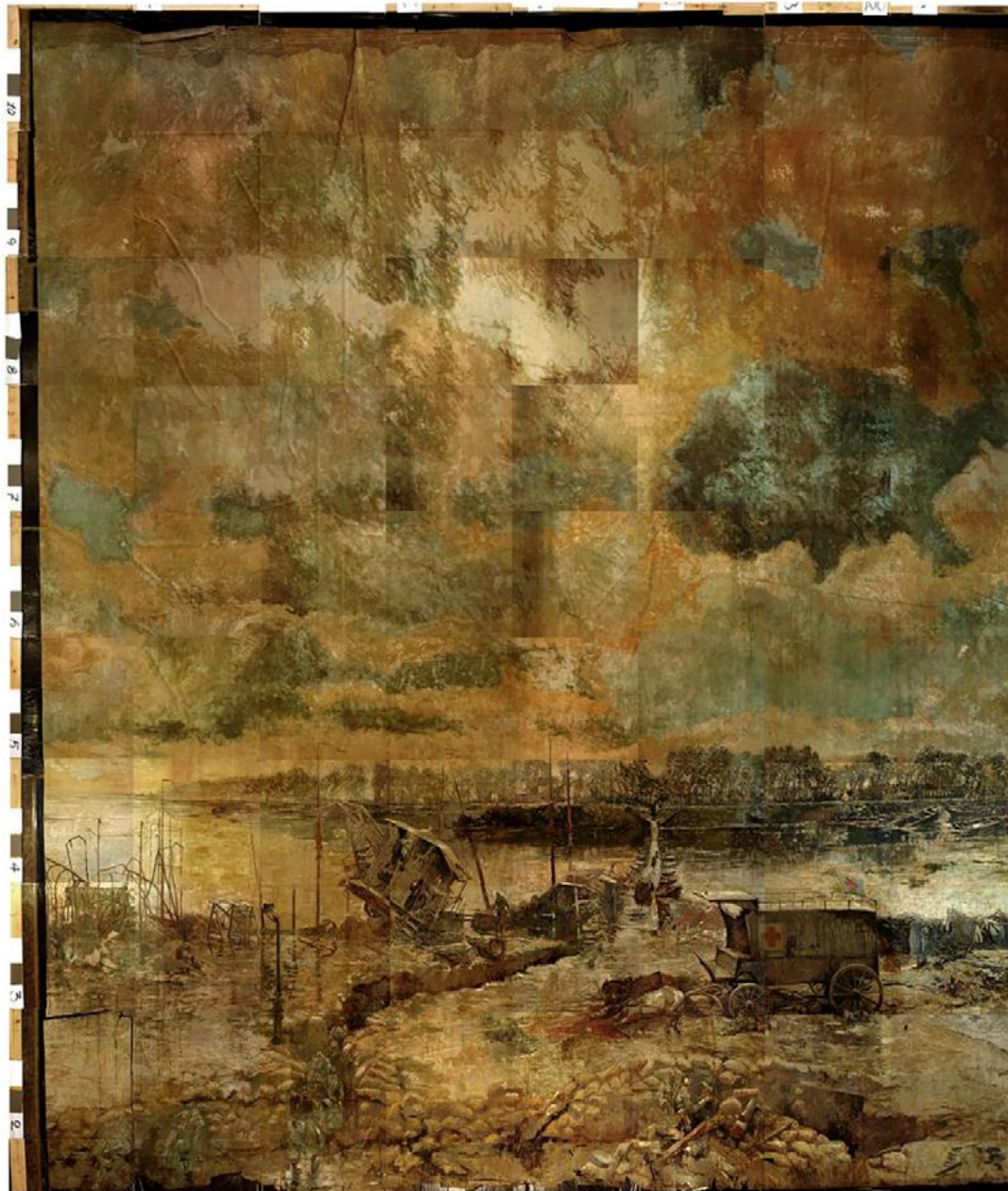
In 2022 the War Heritage Institute and three international partners from the FILM EU consortium (Lusófona University, Portugal; LUCA School of Arts, Belgium and the Institute for Art, Design + Technology, Ireland) launched a project focusing on the *Panorama of Congo*. The study, entitled *Decolonizing the Panorama of Congo*, a Virtual Heritage Artistic Research (CONGO VR) aims to contextualize and reinterpret the panorama through virtual reality from the perspective of decolonization. Learn more at <https://www.filmeu.eu/research/pilot-projects/congo-vr>.

The *Diorama of the Battles of the Meuse* was painted in 1937, and it depicts the German offensive upon the Valley of Meuse in summer of 1914, depicting key points in the invasion and occupation of Belgium between August and September 1914. The larger context of its creation in the late 1930s is understood as a warning in relation to the rise of German fascism and the threat of subsequent



Top: The occupation, "Namur suffers heavy damage." A scene from the *Battle of Meuse Diorama*, Image, The War Heritage Institute, Brussels, Belgium.

Bottom: In February 2009 collection collaborators unroll and photograph the *Battle of Meuse Diorama* in Zutendaal. Image, the War Heritage Institute, Brussels, Belgium.



Bottom: Panorama fragment, *Panorama of the Yser*. Image, The War Heritage Institute, Brussels, Belgium.

invasion at that time. Learn more at <https://www.bataillesdelameuse.be/>.

The *Panorama of the Battle of the Yser* was created under the direction of Belgian painter Alfred Bastien (1873–1955) and completed in 1921. It depicts a key moment in October 1914 when the Yser valley was flooded as a defensive measure against German advances. The panorama exists in nine fragments which have been thoroughly studied and documented. The painting remains in offsite storage. Learn more at <https://warheritage.be/en/panorama-yser>. ●



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Groundbreaking Ceremony for the New Salzburg Orangery

Jean-Claude Brunner



In November 2024, the city of Salzburg, Austria broke ground on its new location for Johann Michael Sattler's *Salzburg Panorama* in the Orangery in the Mirabell Palace gardens, which will host the panorama and the UNESCO World Heritage Center. The new location will feature an area for temporary exhibitions, a meeting and event area with a city model (called "11. Platz") to present Salzburg's charms as a UNESCO World Heritage Site—and for the first time, the accessible, barrier-free *Salzburg Panorama*.

The Salzburg Orangery World Heritage Center and panorama site are set to open in 2026. ●

Left to right:

- Head of Panorama Museum Werner Friepesz
- Director of Salzburg Museum Martin Hochleitner
- Architect and General Planner Matthias Molzbichler
- Managing Director of SIG Tobias Fusban
- Governor Wilfried Haslauer
- Mayor Bernhard Auinger
- Deputy Mayor Kay-Michael Dankl
- City Councillor Anna Schiester
- UNESCO Representative Florian Meixner
- World Heritage Commissioner Andreas Schmidbauer
- BDA Salzburg Eva Hody
- Project Supervisor Alexander Würfl
- Construction Manager Martina Quinto
- City Councillor Andrea Brandner

Image, © City of Salzburg / Wildbild Herbert Rohrer.



Exhibition banner. Image, Centre for Research Collections, the University of Edinburgh.



Laura Velas experiencing 1788 Edinburgh. Image, Joe Velas.

University of Edinburgh Panorama Exhibit

Joe Velas

I was looking forward to the 2024 IPC conference in Lausanne, Switzerland. A nice time to be away from hot and dry Los Angeles. A learning opportunity at the conference, meeting some friends, and visiting some new places made it an autumn treat. My plan was to stop in Edinburgh on the way home to visit family and the city. Prior to departing for Switzerland, I received a text message that the University of Edinburgh was having a panorama exhibit of Robert and Henry Barker's contribution to the artform. The exhibit was planned to end on August 31; however, the exhibit was extended until November. Good for me.

The entrance into the exhibit had a virtual view of Barker's *Panorama of Edinburgh from Calton Hill*. Using a VR headset, made with the Unity game engine, there was a space in the middle filled with 3D models to imitate what Barker might have seen on Calton Hill where the Edinburgh view was taken. With the appropriate safety guidelines, I could immerse myself into the 1788 panorama, a 360° experience. Accompanied by a recording of *Fantasia in C* by Joseph Haydn played on a 1805 grand pianoforte, I was time-warped back to the late eighteenth century.

There was an extensive collection of books/folios of panoramas and artistic considerations, ex: a 1685 edition of *The Rules of Perspective*, used to create optical illusions by Andrea Pozzo.

There was a small reproduction of the *Panorama of the City of Bath*, the second panorama to be shown in Leicester Square, in 1794. It was the first of several

British tourist resorts to appear before more exotic locations supplanted them. In the 1790s, when the panorama was a new idea and still establishing its reputation for accuracy, Bath, Brighton and Margate were distant, yet reassuringly familiar.

The main attraction was a near-circular display of the *Panorama of Edinburgh*, with 6 plates of explanation of the local landmarks. No full-size panoramas by Barker survived, but there are engravings of four of them showing details of what the paintings would have looked like.

There was also an aquatint engraving of Henry A. Barker's *Panorama of Constantinople from the North*. The only visual record of it which survives, the aquatint was issued in 1813, and shown at the exhibit. There are some existing copies of visitor guides.

It was a fine experience to see the various works at the birthplace of panoramas. A dozen or so visitors were in attendance, it being the fifth month of the exhibit opening. A few individuals were deeply interested in the information, spending a lengthy time reading and absorbing the information. I had a chance to talk to Elizabeth Quarmby Lawrence, rare books and literary collections curator, who developed and curated the exhibit. Elizabeth was aware of the International Panorama Council, and I gave her all of the brochures that I picked up at the IPC conference. She had just returned from seeing the Barker diaries that he kept while in Constantinople. She was very cordial, and passionate about the Barker exhibit. ●

Figura Nonagesimaprima.

Tholus figura nonagesima, cum haniadibus & orbibus.



HOLUS quem vides in hac paginâ, pollicetur sibi vitam diuturniorem illo, quem super telario plano insignis amplitudinis, depinxi anno 1685. in Templo S. Ignatii Collegii Romani. Proinde si casus aliquis illum absumat, non deerunt qui ex isto eundem in melius reficiant. Mirati fuerunt Architecti nonnulli, quod columnas anteriores mutulis imposuerim, id enim in solidis ædificiis ipsi non facerent. Verum eos metu omni liberavit amicus meus mibi Pictor, ac pro me spondit, damnum omne se statim reparaturum, si satisfactibus mutulis, columnas in præceptis ruere contingat.

The Ninety-first

The Cupola of the Ninety-first Figure, with its Light



THE Cupola in will in all Likelihood longer Duration which I painted on a large Table, the Ceiling of the S. Ignatius of the Roman College. For if that suffer by any Accident the help of this its place may be a better. Some Architects dissenting the advanced Columns upon as being a thing not practis'd in Figures; but a certain Painter, mine, remov'd all their Scruples, answering for me, That if at the Corbels should be so much fuller the Weight of the Columns, after their Fall, he was ready to repair the Damage at his own Cost.



The rules of perspective used to create optical illusions, by Andrea Pozzo

Entrance to the panorama, Leicester Square

The Panorama entrance on the north side of Leicester Square was just the doorway



The Rules of Perspective, 1685 edition.
Exhibition view. Image, Joe Velas.

Conference: Panoramic Perspectives on Digital Images

Jens Ruchatz and Dr. Kevin Pauliks

In the nineteenth century, the panorama became one of the first image-based mass media. Huge paintings of cities, landscapes, and battle scenes were mounted on cylindrical walls to be viewed from observation platforms. When visitors entered a panorama, they were immersed in a pictorial environment. However, the immense image could not be grasped at a glance, but had to be experienced sequentially, with the beholders moving around the physical space of the platform and directing their gaze to specific sections of the pictorial space.

While panoramas in the traditional sense fell out of fashion at the end of the nineteenth century, the dispositif was taken up in a modified form in more recent media, not the least in digital image culture (Streitberger 2013). The virtual or digital “panorama” made up of digital photographic images that are digitally stitched together presents itself as a contemporary successor. However, users do not move in physical space to experience an immense picture in its entirety, but instead move the digital image itself.

Google Street View might be considered the ultimate example of the digital panorama but differs from this dispositif by allowing users to wander through the photo-based environment, thereby constantly shifting their standpoint. Being able to roam around the panoramic space, zoom in on details, and look at people, their homes, and personal data concerns matters of privacy, and Google Street View is often criticized for being a surveil-

lance apparatus (Wolthers 2016). In fact, Google Street View is actively used by police authorities to convict criminals, as recently demonstrated in a murder case in Spain. While lacking an interactive dimension, it is no coincidence that the original panorama dispositif and its total view was a major inspiration for Bentham’s panopticon (Foucault 1975), further supporting theorizing it in the digital realm as a surveillance technology in the case of moving and even live images of 360° videos. In this context, surveillants may control the virtual camera as a means of observation. Such 360° videos are also used in documentary practice to establish an interactive view of events, including remotely, in situations too dangerous for physically present human observers, for example in case of an earthquake in Haiti (Rothöhler 2014).

In a similar vein, players of three-dimensional video games can move their avatars around and operate the virtual camera to explore vast virtual environments. The virtual camera established itself in the mid 1990 with the popularization of 3D video games and became synonymous with terms such as “mobility” and “maneuverability” (Krichane 2021). While not media-specific to video games, the virtual camera can be considered typical for this digital medium (Schröter 2003). As mentioned above, Google Street View affords a virtual camera that simulates three-dimensional perception and movement in a two-dimensional image space that is stitched together from billions of different digi-

tal photographs (Hoelzl/Marie 2015; Siegel 2018). Video games offer by contrast not an image space but a space image that simulates motion as players can look and move around 3D rendered image objects (Günzel 2008). Hence, 3D video games are not just still or moving images, e.g. single frames or cut scenes, but moveable images that are rendered in real-time to be maneuverable by the players. Virtual reality offers even more immersive image environments by bringing the screen closer to the eyes of users and matching their perspective with that of the virtual camera.

As immersive pictorial environments, digital panoramas can become sites of photographic practices. They invite users to let their gaze wonder like in “real life” environments and then frame and fix their perceptions by screenshotting, which is frequently likened to taking photographs (Frosh 2023). Taking such pictures either in video games or Google Street View is quite common as a form of reducing the complexity of the environments into something manageable and temporally stable. Such screenshots can subsequently be shared on social media and displayed as wallpapers on widescreen monitors, which are a new panoramic technology.

The “Panoramic Perspectives on Digital Images” conference wants to consider the panorama not so much as a (historical) phenomenon, but as a tool to understand the movable images of digital media cultures. We invite researchers to join us in exploring the panorama as a concept for theorizing and

analyzing digital images. Therefore, we welcome contributions that open panoramic perspectives on digital imagery as briefly outlined above. The panorama allows us to view digital media such as video games, VR, screenshots, and the like in a new light of continuous imagery that can be explored by navigating through virtual environments and interacting with movable images. Possible contributions are not limited to the panoramic aspects of the following digital media and their imagery:

The sequence image of digital panoramas and panoramic camera modes

The operative image of Google Street View

The moving image of 360° videos

The space image of 3D video games

The immersive image of panoramic views in virtual reality

The still image of scenic screenshots taken in virtual environments

The screen image of wide screen monitors and projectors

The conference is organized by Prof. Jens Ruchatz and Dr. Kevin Pauliks as part of the research project *Capturing Movable Images* and will take place at the University of Marburg on July 17–18, 2025. The conference will be held in English and German. ●



Portrait of artist Jeff Morgan in front of the *Wilpena Panorama*.
Image, © Jeff Morgan.

Paint in the Blood: The Jeff Morgan Journey

Gabriele Koller

Paint in the Blood: The Jeff Morgan Journey
Anne Winckel
Canterbury, Victoria, Australia: Delta Partner Press, 2024
244 pages, numerous colour illustrations
ISBN 978-1-7635124-05
Order directly from the author at annewinckel.com

What does the famous *Panorama Mesdag* from 1881, which shows the then-picturesque Dutch sea-coast near Scheveningen, have in common with the panoramas by Australian contemporary artist Jeff Morgan, which depict breathtaking landscapes from the South Australian outback? Much more than the reader might think.

The story of how Jeff Morgan became a panorama artist is told by Anne Winckel, an Australian researcher and writer, who has deeply immersed herself in the artist's life story. Based on numerous encounters, interviews and private documents, the book traces the stages of Jeff Morgan's life from childhood to building a career as an artist and running an art gallery with two panoramas in the South Australian outback town of Hawker.

Although his talent was already evident in his youth, Jeff Morgan did not establish himself as a self-taught artist until the 1990s, when he was already in his thirties. His realistic paintings of the flora and fauna of the Australian outback were soon successfully presented in South Australian exhibitions and at art fairs. In addition to his own art gallery, he even ran a mobile gallery for a while, travelling with his artworks in a refurbished van.

In 1992, Morgan visited *Panorama Guth* in Alice Springs, Central Australia, and was very impressed by it. The large 360° painting (6 × 60 meters) of native outback vegetation and landscape scenery was the work of Hendrik (Henk) Gerrit Guth (1921–2003), a Dutch landscape and portrait painter. The panorama was opened in 1975 in a building erected for the purpose. Tragically, it was destroyed by fire in 2005.

Hendrik Guth was from Arnhem in the Netherlands, where he graduated from the Academy of Art. He emigrated to Australia in 1960 and opened an art gallery in Alice Springs in 1966. He was inspired by Hendrik Willem Mesdag's 1881 *Panorama of Scheveningen* for his panorama, which shows the impressive landscape of central Australia. Like its historic model, Guth's panorama had a *faux terrain* and was viewed from a viewing platform.

Inspired by Guth's panorama, Jeff Morgan decided to paint a panorama himself. *Wilpena Panorama*, named after Wilpena Pound, a beautiful landscape formation located in the Flinders Ranges National Park, opened in 2003 in Hawker, South Australia, in a brick building next to the artist's gallery. It took the artist about ten years to complete



The completed *Arkaroola Panorama*, Hawker, Australia.
Image © Jeff Morgan.

the project, including the building and the 3.5×33 meter painting. The panorama became a big success. It was the Australian historian Mimi Colligan who brought the panorama and its artist to the attention of the International Panorama Council. The artist presented his work at the 12th conference of the International Panorama Council, hosted by Hunter College of the City University of New York



in 2004. Since then he has participated in several international panorama conferences, made valuable contacts and visited panoramas all over the world, including the *Panorama Mesdag* in The Hague in the Netherlands.

In 2013, he began work on another panorama depicting the breathtaking landscape of the Arkaroola Wilderness Sanctuary in the northern part

of the Flinders Ranges. Unlike the *Wilpena Panorama*, which was painted directly on the inside wall of the circular panorama building, the *Arkaroola Panorama* is painted on a specially woven piece of canvas (5.5 × 46 m). The artist applied all the techniques that have been used by panorama artists since the nineteenth century, such as stretching the canvas and fixing it by two ring beams at



The Arkaroola Panorama, with painter's scaffold. Image, © Jeff Morgan.



PAINT IN THE BLOOD

the top and at the bottom. A three-dimensional foreground (*faux terrain*) and a textile umbrella over the visitor's position were added, as well as a soundscape reminiscent of the sounds of nature. The painting was finished in 2017. The *Arkaroola Panorama* can be viewed in an adjacent building connected to the *Wilpena Panorama* building and the Jeff Morgan Art Gallery.

The *Arkaroola Panorama* will probably remain Jeff Morgan's last panorama, as the creation of panoramas was associated with great effort and hardship for the artist. However, his interest in large paintings continues. His more recent landscapes, *Cooper Creek Sunrise* and *Cooper Creek Sunset*, are both about nine meters wide.

Jeff Morgan can be seen as one of the very few contemporary artists who have revived the art form of the panorama in the twenty-first century. In 2020 he was awarded the Order of Australia Medal in recognition of his service to the visual arts and to the community.

The book is more than a study of Jeff Morgan artworks. It is a personal biography written with great empathy and understanding of all aspects of his life, his family, and his religiosity, which is the fundamental basis for his creativity. ●



Top: July 10, 2024—Opening ceremony of the “Inheritance and Breakthrough” session at Luxun Academy of Fine Art, Shenyang, China.

Bottom: Sara Velas lecturing at the “Inheritance and Breakthrough” training session, July 19, 2024.

Inheritance and Breakthrough

An Intensive Panorama Training Session in China

Sara Velas

In the summer of 2024, an intensive panorama training session took place in China. Based at the Luxun Academy of Fine Art in Shenyang and supported by the China National Arts Fund, the “Inheritance and Breakthrough: Cultivating the Next Generation of Contemporary Panorama Artists” workshop brought together a select group of students to learn about panorama history, creation, marketing, management and more.

Since the late twentieth century, China has been a major producer of 360-degree panoramas and semi-circle panoramas. These massive works integrate the classic elements of nineteenth century panoramas with new technologies and thematic frontiers. They are often created for new museums and memorial sites. In 2001, the International Panorama Council held a conference in Beijing in partnership with The Museum of the War of Chinese People’s Resistance Against Japanese Aggression. In 2005, the IPC returned to China for the 13th Annual IPC Conference, hosted by the Luxun Academy of Fine Art in Shenyang. Several of the major panorama artists and researchers at these conferences were also a part of the “Inheritance and Breakthrough” training session, including the project leader Professor Fu Weiwei. Students from across China could apply to participate in the two month “Inheritance and Breakthrough” training session, which was supported by the China National Art Fund 2024 Art Talent Training Project. Twenty candidates were selected by a panel of experts who reviewed the portfolio submissions and other eligibility criteria.

On July 10, 2024, the opening ceremony of “In-

heritance and Breakthrough: Cultivating the Next Generation of Contemporary Panorama Artists” was held at the national Experimental Teaching Demonstration Center of the School of Industrial Design of Luxun Academy of Fine Arts. Officiants and attendees included Professor Zhao Lu, Vice Dean of Luxun Academy; Mr. Chen Peng, Deputy Director of Liaoning Art Museum; Ms. Yu Chen, Director of Shenyang Art Museum; and Professor Ji Yunhui, Academic Committee Director of Luxun Academy and IPC Advisory Board Member.

The opening ceremony was hosted by Li Zhimin, Director of the Scientific Research and Creation Dept. of Luxun Academy. Project leader Professor Fu Weiwei outlined the three elements of the training course:

- (I) Classroom learning and intensive lectures, July 10–24
- (II) In the field exploration, July 25–August 10
- (III) Collaborative workshop creation phase, August 11–September 9

Professor Su Ping, Secretary of the Party Committee of Luxun Academy of Fine Arts, gave the first class in the session, emphasizing the special opportunity panoramas hold for telling national stories and her enthusiasm for a new era of panoramic creation in China. During the first two weeks of the training session, the students had day-long sessions with panorama scholars, painters, sculptors, researchers, historians, theorists, marketing and management experts. Presenters



2024 年度
国家艺术基金
CHINA NATIONAL ARTS FUND

傳承與突破
Inheritance and Breakthrough

當代全景畫創作人才培養
Contemporary Panorama Painting Creation Talent Training

魯迅美術學院
LUXUN ACADEMY OF FINE ARTS

培訓周期:
2024 7/10 — 2024 9/10

培訓地點:
魯迅美術學院沈陽校區
相關考察地

彩票公益金資助:

總平面 5F



Above: Sara Velas discusses panoramas with “Inheritance and Breakthrough” workshop students.

Left: Professor Fu Weiwei, “Inheritance and Breakthrough” project leader and Sara Velas, invited lecturer.

and workshop leaders included panorama artists Yan Yang, Li Xianwu and Zhou Fuxian.

As an invited guest lecturer, I attended the grand opening ceremony and presented a full-day lecture during the “Inheritance and Breakthrough” session. My presentation was on historical and contemporary panoramas, including the work of the International Panorama Council and the Velaslavasay Panorama, and was divided into eight parts:

- PART I Panorama as Technology
- PART II Panorama Heritage & Exploration
- PART III The IPC
- PART IV 21st Century Panoramas
- PART V Introducing Velaslavasay Panorama
- PART VI Welcome “Shengjing Panorama”
- PART VII Grand Views & Panoramas in Los Angeles
- PART VIII Velaslavasay Panorama Programs & Projects

In addition to providing historical context on the invention of the panoramic form, I gave information on technological patents issued for panoramas. To illustrate key subjects used for panoramas, I shared several examples of my own visits to heritage era panoramas, including *Salzburg Panorama* (Austria, 1829), *Panorama of Scheveningen* (Netherlands, 1881), *Raclawice Panorama* (Poland, 1893), and *Battle of Gettysburg Panorama* (USA, 1884). I discussed the creation of the Velaslavasay Panorama institution and its day-to-day activities, touching on management and marketing issues along with the development of creative projects, including three 360° panorama paintings. I gave information on other contemporary panoramas including the City of Luxembourg installation at the Lëtzebuerg City Museum.

The students had insightful questions and comments. There was curiosity about how subject matter was chosen for the panoramas I have worked on, including *Panorama of the Valley of the Smokes*, *Effulgence of the North*, and *Shengjing Panorama*. We discussed



Students of the "Inheritance and Breakthrough" Training Session, July 2024.

how other programs and exhibits at the Velaslavasay Panorama inform and contextualize the panoramic installations in different ways. Several students were excited to learn about the International Panorama Council and how they might become members of the IPC.

After two weeks of daily lecture sessions, the students spent fifteen days in the field, visiting major panoramas throughout China. Works visited included *Splendid Central Plains* (2010), *Battle of Huaihai* (2006), *Battle of Jinan* (2002), and China's first 360° painting, *Siege of Jinzhou* (1989). Several of the presenters in the workshop

were involved in the creation of the panoramas visited.

On September 10, 2024 a closing ceremony for the "Inheritance and Breakthrough" training session was held and each student received a certificate acknowledging their 60-day training. Luxun Academy Vice Presidents Zhaou Lu and Li Shuchun attended the event which was also an exhibition debut of a showcase of the students' creative achievements and collaborative projects created in the third phase of the workshop.

On its own, the "Inheritance and Breakthrough: Cultivating the Next Generation of Contemporary



Panorama Artists' Intensive workshop is a tremendous accomplishment. It shows the continued importance the panoramic medium holds in China. Going forward, it will be exciting to see what new developments and projects form as a result of this major cultural investment in new talent and skills in panorama making.

Sara Velas is the Founding Director of the Velaslavasay Panorama and past IPC President. She currently sits on the Heritage Committee and the Advisory Board of the ipc.



Inverted images of bare tree branches, house, stones, and snow shown on the classroom walls and ceiling, through the aperture on the tarp-sealed window. Image, Weiling Deng.

A Classroom Camera Obscura

Weiling Deng

On a bright January afternoon, a rare gift of warmth and color to Vermont, twenty students at Champlain College in Burlington took advantage of the winter light and transformed their classroom into a camera obscura. After sitting in the totally dark classroom for a few minutes, whispering to each other that it was too dark to see anything while suppressing the urge to wake up their cell phone screens, their eyes began to adjust to the dim light and welcome the inverted images of the bare trees, a red-brick building with green copper roof, and the white snow on black stones that crawled onto the walls and ceiling through the small aperture in the black tarp taped on the east-facing window. Occasionally, the wind brushed the branches, stirring faint movements on the classroom wall, next to which the students sat very still.

Creating a camera obscura in the classroom was part of an interdisciplinary course offered in Spring 2025 that focuses on the theories and practices of immersive media and mobilized vision that include panorama, diorama, panstereorama, 360-degree camera, arcade, phantasmagoria, cinema, biosphere, and the mall. The course taught by Professor Weiling Deng was inspired by her ongoing collaboration with the Velaslavasay Panorama (VP) in Los Angeles and contact with the works of other IPC members. Of particular provocation is the VP's utilization and exhibition of nineteenth- and twentieth-century theatrical and visual devices that goes beyond their instrumental purposes to pursue, experiment, and choreograph interactive historiographical narratives.

Introducing panoramic and immersive media as more-than-a-screen artifact to a college that is wading out to a new pedagogical and curricular territory between tech- and design-intensive professional education and traditional liberal arts grapples with the evolutionary logic of technological determinism, and in the meantime grounding critical inquiries from the humanities and social sciences in the capacious interfaces of media. On the other hand, pulled into a college course outside the disciplines of art history, fine arts, and communication, panoramic and immersive media fulfill a deliberate pedagogical goal of creating common practice and space beyond the discursive confines of any discipline and major. What they perform, as Jonathan Crary writes in *Techniques of the Observer*, the “‘mixed’ status as an epistemological figure within a discursive order and an object within an arrangement of cultural practices.”

As the twenty-one pairs of wide-opened eyes drank the faint images, it occurred to every participant that the terms “observer” and “spectator” were not interchangeable. Whereas the latter may be a passive onlooker, the former is more attentive and conscious, not only to the visual details, but also to the “discursive, social, technological, and institutional relations” in which observation takes place. And “place” is taken seriously, literally, materially, historically, and relationally in this course, which resists a too quick and too easy “evolution” from camera obscura to photographic camera, from panorama to present-day Virtual Reality technology.



CAMERA OBSCURA

Transforming a whole classroom into a camera obscura—a plan that had originally involved only using cardboards to make a desktop camera obscura—aimed to create a necessary traction in historicizing the techniques of perception by immersing the whole body in an optical machine before the age of the screen. Yet, it was not the past but the present that was the destination on the other side of the dark tunnel of the camera obscura, although the past was the necessary, non-teleological aperture through which to reach that destination. The destination, however, was reached not at the moment when artificial light from phone screens and the lightbulbs illuminated the classroom, but the gained consciousness of the multi-layered movement, stillness, vitality, and porousness of place that enlightened the dark chamber behind each pair of eyes. ●



Inverted images of pine trees and snow shown on the side wall near the aperture. Image, Weiling Deng.



Top and bottom: Garden party at the Velaslavasay Panorama.
Images, the Velaslavasay Panorama.

Velaslavasay Panorama Enthusiast Society

Piano Garden Party 2025

—Ahoy! Panorama

Daniela Chico

December, Friday the 13th, 2024: Grandiose classical music set the tone as a mysterious book was presented like a sacred relic, shining under a singular spotlight in the theater of the Velaslavasay Panorama. This here book was the International Panorama Council's very first volume of the *Panorama and Immersive Media Studies Yearbook*, giving us every reason to gather for an evening of celebration and holiday cheer at the Union Theater.

Outside, the magical garden carried the heart of the evening. Candles flickered while minestrone bean soup, mulled wine, and crackling campfires kept everyone warm. Ryuichi Sakamoto's "Merry Christmas Mr. Lawrence" played softly, alongside other beautiful tracks, as our friend and pianist, Casia Levine, crafted the perfect soundtrack for the night. Her piano performance inspired slow dances under the winter sky and capped off the night's festivities in the most elegant way.

The energy of the place was electric, buzzing with art talk, showbiz, and heartfelt congratulations. Wandering to the museum's lobby, those who stepped into The Nova Tuskhut, the only arctic trading post in the lower 48 states, might've been drawn into "The Last Servants," a live radio broadcast that tells a chilling story of isolation and morality set in the Antarctic. Waltzing further around the museum, you can find the Shengjing Panorama, a 360°-painting of Shenyang city 100 years ago with an utterly palpable sense of time and space of its own. What better place to celebrate the first PIMS Yearbook? The evening was a true reflection of what

the yearbook embodies—a gathering of art enthusiasts celebrating and discussing art, panoramas, and immersive media in a space that wonderfully represents the fascinating history and complicated art theory the yearbook explores.

Celebrating with us were friends and supporters of the Velaslavasay Panorama, and talent was everywhere in sight. The multifaceted auteur, musician, and sign painter—an artist of all trades—Pa, Sacio Davinci was in attendance. A frequent collaborator at the Velaslavasay Panorama, he currently has a "talking" painting on display in the museum titled *The Future is a Well-Traveled Track*, showing through March 2025. Other friends present were James Fishburne, director of the Forest Lawn Museum of Los Angeles and co-curator of the museum's "Grand Views" (2023) exhibition on panoramas, and past IPC conference presenter. Also in attendance was artist Bridget Marrin, creator of the Panorama's two train-station dioramas that guided visitors through Shengjing Panorama 100 years ago—from Los Angeles' La Grande Station to Shenyang Station.

We took time to honor some authors featured in the PIMS Yearbook: Sara Velas and Ruby Carlson of the Velaslavasay Panorama, Charles Hood (the endlessly talented photographer, professor, and explorer), myself, and others. As this marked my first-ever writing publication, the night felt extra special. Thirteen has always been my lucky number, but this Friday the 13th felt like one of my luckiest—a celebration filled with art, music, camaraderie, and joy.

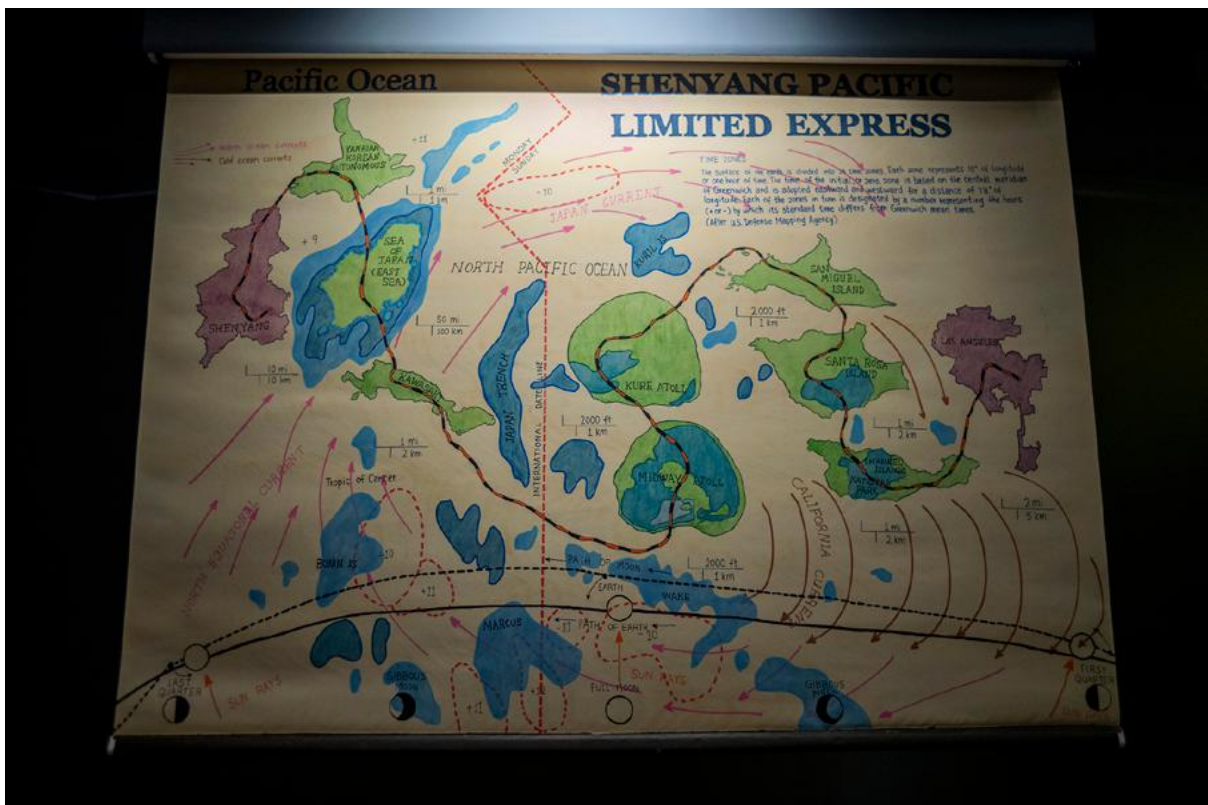
PIANO GARDEN PARTY

Upon moving to Los Angeles in 2022 to attend USC, I was merely an adult, navigating a new city. One of my favorite classes that year took us on a field trip to the Velaslavasay Panorama, and from the moment I stepped inside, I knew it would hold a special place in my future. Having grown up in San Francisco, the whimsical, art-filled world of the Panorama felt like an extension of home. Now, three years later, working here has been nothing short of fabulous. When I first entered USC as a communications student, it didn't take long for me to realize that film was what truly struck my fancy. I transferred to the USC School of Cinematic Arts in my second year, and I still vividly remember sitting at the front desk of the Panorama when I found out I had been accepted. Being part of the (inherently pretentious but undeniably remarkable) film school while working at the Panorama has expanded my artistic perspective in ways I never imagined. It's opened my eyes to new dimensions of art, storytelling, and immersive media, things invaluable to me as a writer and filmmaker. But this night, to me, wasn't about showing up as a student-worker—it was about celebrating me as a writer, symbolizing just how far I've come since arriving to Los Angeles, and culminating my many passions—art, music, media, and more—in a piano-orchestrated Friday the 13th I'll remember dearly. ●





Garden party at the Velaslavasay Panorama. Image, the Velaslavasay Panorama.



Top: Ursula Brookbank presents *The Wheary Peepers Trunk Show* at the Velaslavasy Panorama in March, 2024. Pa,Sacio Davinci's *Illuminated Picture* can be seen in the background. Both projects are part of the VP's ongoing series *The Future is a Well-Traveled Track*. Image, Forest Casey.

Bottom: One of Guan Rong's S.P.L.E. Diagrams, a series of five paintings created for *The Future is a Well-Traveled Track*, on view at the Velaslavasy Panorama March 2024–2025, supported in part by the Mike Kelley Foundation for the Arts. Image, Forest Casey.

Fall & Winter in the Greater Velaslavasay Panorama Regions: A Few Highlights

Ruby Carlson

Onboard the multidimensional vessel otherwise known as the Velaslavasay Panorama (VP), we sailed through fall and winter of 2024 shepherding amusements, programs and installations while “looking forward to the past.”

In September, before journeying to the IPC conference in Lausanne, Sara Velas (Founder & Curator) and Ruby Carlson (Curator) boarded the retired Cunard liner—Queen Mary—for the Magic Lantern Society of US and Canada’s 2024 Convention: Bringing the Magic to Movieland (September 19–21, 2024), where we presented two “talks.” The first “talk” was a rather straightforward introduction to the VP’s projects and premises, which covered some recent past illuminated projections such as The Wheary Peepers Trunk Show (March 15, 2024).

The Wheary Peepers Trunk Show was an experimental performance by artist Ursula Brookbank in collaboration with the Velaslavasay Panorama. Wheary Peepers combined overhead projection with the VP’s first-ever mechanized moving panorama machine (T.A.N.K.—*The Autonomous Novelty Kiosk*). T.A.N.K. is a sort of frankensteinian moving panorama fused with a deconstructed kaiserpanorama. A circular painted canvas is affixed to a polysided, almost cylindrical, wooden structure and advanced by way of a chain-driven motor. T.A.N.K. was our first experiment in mechanized moving panoramas and was created in collaboration with fabricator and engineer Jesse Christensen.

The monochrome landscape, painted by Sara Velas, advanced following a distant horizon line layered with a shadow of a simulated railcar window (or a bifurcated view reminiscent of stereoscopy) cast by the overhead projector. Brookbank paraded archival images, everyday objects, deteriorating foliage, crystal glassware and a gaggle of prisms across the passing landscape, creating an hypnotic multidimensional moving scenery.

The performance consisted of two-parts separated by an intermission in the garden where attendees imbibed drinks and pretzels. During the intermission guests were able to take a closer look at new installations created as part of the a wider series titled *The Future Is A Well Traveled Track*, including; five diagrammatic “maps” painted by Guan Rong (panorama artist of *The Grand Moving Mirror of California*, 2010) on the subject of exchange and distance between Los Angeles and Shenyang; an illuminated “talking picture” of a train scene by Pa,Sacio Davici; and The Wheary Peepers, a mixed media peep show installed in an archival steamer trunk.

Each drawer in The Wheary Peepers offers spectators a peephole view into scenes of life on the railway during the silent-film era of the Union Theatre (the Velaslavasay Panorama’s home, built in 1910). In an expandable trunk plays *The Sleeper Car* (2024), a 2-minute silent film invoking the shadowy work of illuminated moving pictures.

The cast imagery of the overhead projector recalled the synthesis of panoramas and early forms



of image projection from novelty devices like the magic lantern and camera obscura. William Molyneux of Dublin, in 1709 described a cylindrical “magick lantern,” shaped like a tin can fashioned with a convex glass lens, projecting an inverted image in transparent colors, “usually some Ludicrous or frightful Representation, the more to divert the spectators” (Molyneux, *Dioptrica Nova*, 1709).

During the weeks after the performance, we presented the Wheary Peepers Revue, a semi-automated retelling of the performance and accompanying workshop, for guests that visited the vp during regular open hours. This projection “practice” would further inform *Florence In Ruin*, a dual-projection live performance created for the Magic Lantern Conference aboard the Queen Mary ocean liner in Long Beach, California (September 19–21, 2024).

Presented by the Magic Lantern Society of us and Canada and arranged by magic lantern aficionados Matt Schnittker and Melissa Ferrari, the 20th International Convention, “Bringing the Magic to Movieland,” brought the magic for sure! The convention included enlightening presentations by scholars like Jorgelina Orfila and Francisco Ortega on the institutionalization of art history; Stephanie Delazeri oration on erotic and pornographic slides; Galen Wilkes on early “talkie” dual film & sound projectors; Judith Miller on early animator Bessie Mae Kelley for Bray and Fleischer studios; Janelle Blankenship on the Wollner-Beuk family-owned kaiserpanorama in Vienna; and Lauren Arcadias and Robin Corbet’s analysis of early optical instruments (in thematic costumes, no less!).

There were beautiful renditions of traditional magic lantern performances by legendary performers, scholars and collectors including Terry Borton, Matt Schnittker, and Mark and Beth Ayers. There were contemporary and experimental magic lantern shows by Melissa Ferrari (biunial projection

and hand-drawn slides), with live accompaniment by Hawaiian drone band Shrine Maiden; a spoken word performance on technical failures, which featured a magic lantern projecting a digital LCD screen by Matthew Kneebone and Susannah Wood; and a two-part moving panorama with shadow puppet plays by Solstice Theatre of the Inland Empire.

Sara Velas and Ruby Carlson performed *Florence in Ruin—or—The Great Escape*, during an evening show that was open to the general public as well as conference attendees. The dual-projection (magic lantern and 35mm slide projector) performance was a reverie of art history and its spurious connections to the port of Long Beach. *Florence In Ruin* utilized Carlson’s family 35mm slides and the Velaslavasay Panorama’s magic lantern slide collection, donated by various patrons, and a 1960s Besseler lantern that came from the Mount Wilson Observatory archive.

We will remember our days and nights aboard the Queen Mary fondly, with its decorous deco atmosphere, its carefully preserved Captain’s Quarters, its abundant flock of visitors and tour-goers and the uncanny presence of paranormal edutainment, as the convention coincided with the Halloween festival known as Dark Harbor. Relics acquired during the convention’s auction now store the memories of this unique, priceless experience.

The end of 2024 was in some ways a continuation of our days in Lausanne with the IPC, as we celebrated the publication of the Panoramic and Immersive Media Studies Yearbook on December 13th, with an evening garden celebration. LA-based authors who contributed to the first and second edition of the publication and people who presented or attended IPC conferences in the past were in attendance, such as Daniela Chico, Charles Hood, James Fishburne, Matilda Bathurst, and of course, Sara Velas and Ruby Carlson. Then, much

The Wheary Peepers Trunk Show utilized an overhead projector onto T.A.N.K. a.k.a *The Temporal Autonomous Novelty Kiosk, a Technological Automation for Narrative Kinetics and a Train Across the Northsouth Kingdom!* This deconstructed modern invention for an automated moving panorama performed a looping canvas of landscape, driven by an electrical motor. Image, Forest Casey.



Sara Velas and Ruby Carlson perform *Florence in Ruin—or—The Great Escape* in the Royal Salon Room during the public performance evening of the 20th International Convention of the Magic Lantern Society of the United States and Canada in September 2024. Image, Forest Casey.





Sara Velas and Ruby Carlson, Co-Curators and creators of the Velaslavasay Panorama, aboard the historic Queen Mary Ocean Liner in Long Beach, September 2024. Image, Forest Casey.

to our delight, we were visited by the IPC's Jessica Smith of the Laysan Cyclorama in Iowa and Chiara Masiero Sgrinzatto of Venice, Italy! It was Jessica and Chiara's first visit to the Velaslavasay Panorama and we were happy to welcome them to our home in the Union Theatre.

This year, 2025, marks the Velaslavasay Panorama's 25th anniversary as we started our panoramic endeavour on Hollywood Boulevard in the year 2000! Although our dear city of Los Angeles suffered everlastingly from a series of horrific fires in January, we journey on to brighter shores ahead. New immersive exhibits await! Stay tuned. ●

Border Exploration Panorama: “The Walls of the World” Documentary

Salih Doğan

For the first time in broadcasting history, South Korean broadcaster G1 has produced “23 Walls of the World,” filmed across 20 countries on 5 continents—Europe, South America, the Middle East, Africa, and Asia—and released as an 8-part series. This documentary, focusing on the world’s borders—its “walls”—was filmed in 4K.

In an age dominated by visual splendour and obstacles, this series explores the “history of the world’s borders” and the fundamental architectural element of the “wall,” offering insights into the past and guidance for the future.

The third episode of the documentary features the magnificent walls of the United Kingdom, China, Türkiye, and Peru.

Filming in Istanbul took place at Topkapı Palace, in front of the Theodosian Walls of Constantinople, and at the Panorama 1453 History Museum.

Initially, I provided information about the history, architecture, defensive strength, and features of the 5th-century Theodosian Walls of Constantinople. Afterwards, the approximately 30 sieges these walls witnessed throughout history, and who carried them out, were explained. Finally, the conquest of Constantinople by the Ottoman Empire’s seventh Sultan, Fatih Sultan Mehmed Han, overcoming the seemingly impenetrable Theodosian Walls, was explained.

The panoramic painting technique used to depict this great victory, which marked the end of the Middle Ages and the beginning of the modern era, was showcased through the panoramic museum’s depictions of all the battle scenes, weapons used, and warfare techniques. Following this, the documentary explored how Fatih Sultan Mehmed Han rebuilt Istanbul with a new understanding of civilisation. ●



The stainless steel globe called the Unisphere, in front of the Queens Museum, Corona Park, Flushing Meadows, Queens New York. Image, Nicholas Lowe.

The Panorama of the City of New York, Queens Museum

And related IPC meet-ups in New York and Chicago

Nicholas Lowe

In mid-May, IPC members Chiara Masiero Sgrinzatto and Nicholas Lowe met with Lynn Maliszewski, curator of the *Panorama of the City New York*. A visit to see the panorama at the Queens Museum was long overdue, not least as an opportunity to explore the panorama in its location in the designed landscape of the 1964 Worlds Fair. We were met at the museum by Lynn Maliszewski, who since 2020 as Assistant Director of Archives and Collections with specific care and management of materials and objects related to the 1939–40 and 1964–65 World’s Fairs, the Panorama of New York being one of those objects. In the sixtieth year since the opening of the Panorama, Lynn and the team at the museum recently published a beautifully illustrated book that presents a detailed history of its creation.

Lynn walked us through the panorama, bringing her insights and enthusiasm for the artifact detailing its construction and the various stages of its interpretation and long history. Having been on continuous view since it was made, its presence is held especially dear by New Yorkers. Aside from this Panorama being a singularly significant artifact on its own terms, it is unique amongst panoramas in the world. For its scope and scale, it represents all five boroughs of New York City, and for its aims as an immersive attraction and a city planning tool, its social and cultural roles are many. In panoramic terms as an artifact it presents many of the same, or at least related, conservation questions as any other heritage panorama. It is arguably ninety-five

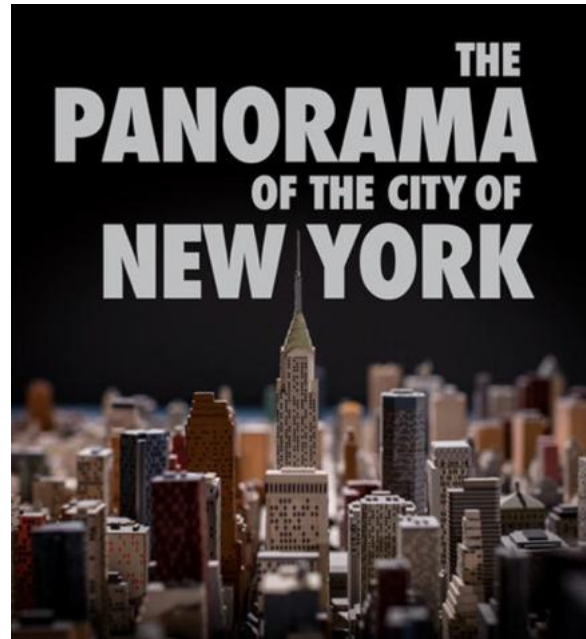
percent *faux terrain*, and maintaining its integrity and the viewing pleasure of thousands of visitors annually requires constant care and maintenance like any other panorama.

As an artifact it has undergone a number of additions. It was designed to be updated, and Lynn and her colleagues work hard to present all of its stories and iterations. It is currently on view with a changing ambient light program that mimics a cycle of day into night changes. The Queens Museum continues to care for this magnificent object, guiding the panorama into its future in productive and accessible ways.

Chiara’s visit to the United States was facilitated by a recent six-month fellowship at the New York Institute of Technology, School of Architecture and Design working on a project called “Eternal Cities,” funded by NGI Enrichers Transatlantic. Project information is available [here](#).

Chiara’s time in New York City gave me the opportunity in mid-April to extend an invitation for her to visit Chicago as a guest in the Department of Architecture, Interior Architecture and Historic Preservation at the School of The Art Institute of Chicago. Funded by the Mitchell Lecture we hosted Chiara for three days, which included working with our Graduate Students in Architecture and Preservation in their studios, offering a lecture about her work, and a spherical drawing workshop. In the recent years of IPC conferences Chiara has illustrated her working process on various projects, and I now realize I was mistaken to believe I understood her

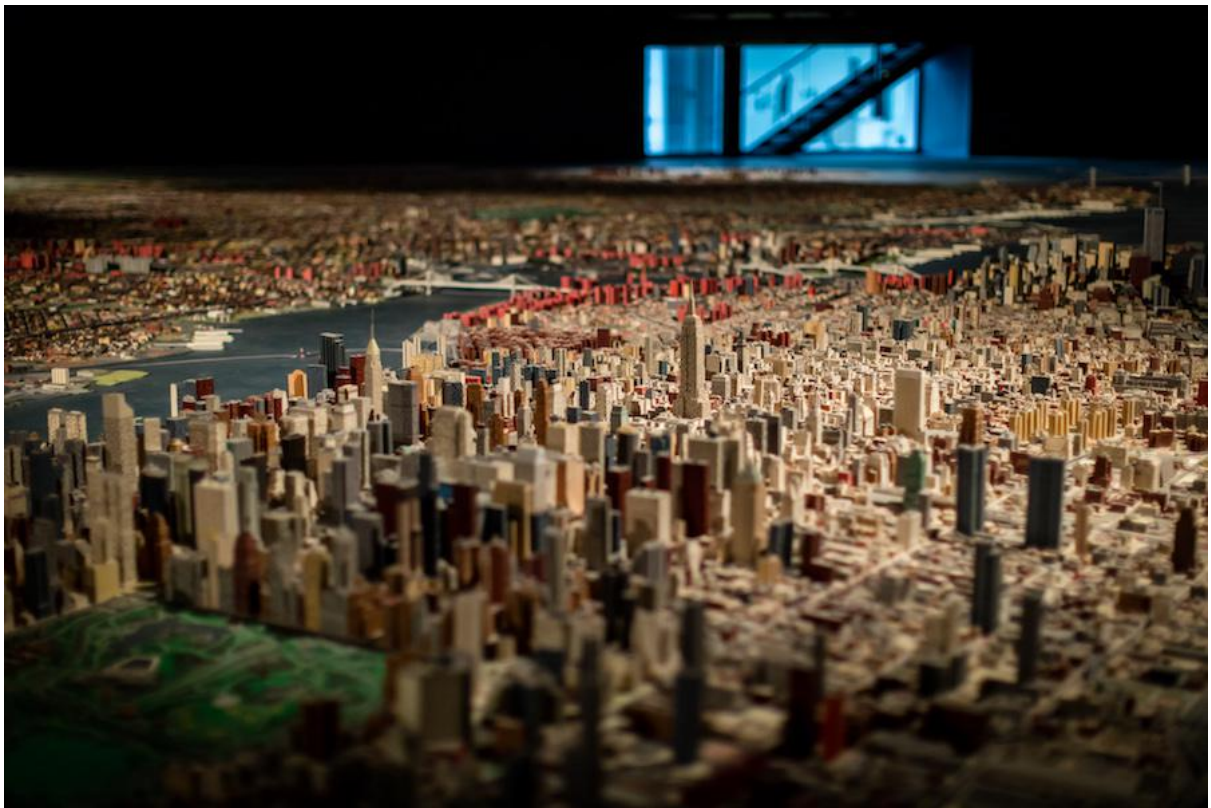




Book cover, *The Panorama of the City of New York*.
Lynn Maliszewski and Lauren Haynes, eds. New York:
Queens Museum, 2024. Available for purchase from the
[Queens Museum Gift Shop](#).

approaches. In the course of a six-hour studio day, Chiara worked with a group of students, faculty and alumni to walk us through the basics. The skill level and creative facility Chiara brings have never been a question, but the mechanics for constructing spherical drawings by hand are at least now somewhat clearer. The day's drawing allowed us to experience Chiara's initial eye to hand notation process, bringing the group to a place where we could each reconstruct our drawings as a digital scan for upload to a spherical object viewer. For everyone the process bought both challenges and rewards, and everyone saw their drawings come alive as virtually viewable artifacts. An unexpected aspect of this process was learning about the differences in panoramic and immersive image making. For example, the differences between spherical and cylindrical drawing and their related attributes were made more tangible in this work, and also how both of these relate to the production of a panoramic key as a third representational format type. It was a really humbling and enjoyable experience to say the least. ●

A spherical photograph shows Chiara Masiero Sgrinzatto and Nicholas Lowe with Curator Lynn Maliszewski viewing *The Panorama of the City of New York*, Queens Museum, New York. Image, Chiara Masiero Sgrinzatto.



Top: Manhattan on The Panorama of the City of New York, Queens Museum, New York. Image, Nicholas Lowe. Bottom: Manhattan on The Panorama of the City of New York. Image, Max Touhey.



SAIC students, alumni, faculty and visiting scholars with Chiara Masiero Sgrinzatto while learning spherical drawing techniques in Federal Plaza, Chicago, Illinois. Chiara Masiero Sgrinzatto in the foreground with (left to right) Sam Cusack, OJ Ohuaregbe, Charlie Pipal, Molly Briggs, Rich McKeever, Nicholas Lowe, and Uthman Olowa. Image Chiara Masiero Sgrinzatto.



Scarlett Hooft Graafland, *Lemonade Igloo, Canadian Polar Region, Igloolik*, 2007.
Image © Scarlett Hooft Graafland. Courtesy Museum Panorama Mesdag, The Hague.



Portrait of Scarlett Hooft Graafland working in Salar desert. Image © Gaston Ugalde. Courtesy Museum Panorama Mesdag, The Hague.

Scarlett Hooft Graafland: Mesmerizing

Gabriele Koller

Museum Panorama Mesdag, The Hague, Netherlands
March 29–August 31, 2025

The Museum Panorama Mesdag in The Hague is home to one of the few surviving nineteenth-century panoramas. Painted by Hendrik Willem Mesdag in 1881, the panorama depicts the then-small seaside village of Scheveningen, located near The Hague. The museum holds a unique place in the Netherlands as the country's first art museum, and it considers Mesdag's work to be both a legacy and a challenge for its exhibitions. In recent years, the museum has presented several remarkable exhibitions, including "Longing for the Distance" (2024), which featured the work of German artist Ulrike Heydenreich. All of these exhibitions are linked to Mesdag's art, both historically and artistically.

"Mesmerizing," curated by Adrienne Quarles van Ufford, is the museum's most recent exhibition. It features large-scale landscape photographs by Dutch artist Scarlett Hooft Graafland (b. 1973). Hooft Graafland studied at the Royal Academy in The Hague and at the Parsons School of Design in New York. Originally trained as a sculptor, she used photography to document her artwork. However, she soon discovered that photography opened up new possibilities for contextualizing her sculptures and performances. The artist works with an analog camera, which, for her, captures not only the natural moment, but also the irrational and the sublime. Most important to her are the authenticity and enchanting effect of nature.

Scarlett Hooft Graafland considers the entire world as her workplace. She travels like a nomad, often to faraway places, where she creates and photographs spatial performances and installations. For her projects, the artist collaborates closely with the local residents, bringing together nature and local culture. Whether in the polar region of Canada, a salt desert of Bolivia, or the Himalayan Mountains, Scarlett Hooft Graafland stays in these places for a long time, choosing her subjects while she is there. The installation titled *Lemonade Igloo*, for example, resulted from the artist's collaboration with a Canadian Inuit who built a traditional igloo from blocks of frozen lemonade. In *Pink Lady*, a woman dressed in pink is seen in the vast salt desert of Salar in Bolivia. Her traditional bowler hat is echoed by two bowler hats that seem to float in the sky. The hats cast dark shadows on the salt plain, creating a mysterious atmosphere that evokes Surrealist paintings.

Scarlett Hooft Graafland's new series, *Across the Horizon*, (2021–24) was created specifically for the exhibition at the Museum Panorama Mesdag. The series is about traveling beyond the horizon. In *Airplane*, a woman in a fluttering dress with her arms outstretched floats above a plane through Turkish airspace.

What seems light and effortless is the result of hard work. For many of her installations, Hooft



MESMERIZED





Above: Scarlett Hooft Graafland, *Farewell My Freeman Friend*, Madagascar, Morondava, 2013–25. Image © Scarlett Hooft Graafland. Courtesy Museum Panorama Mesdag, The Hague.

Preceding pages: Scarlett Hooft Graafland, *Pink Lady*, Bolivia, Salar Salt Desert, 2015. Image © Scarlett Hooft Graafland. Courtesy Museum Panorama Mesdag, The Hague.

Graafland collaborates with acrobats to create surreal and magical atmospheres, as seen in *Airplane*. In another series, *Photo Embroidery Works* (from 2021), the artist adds accents by embroidering her photos with colored silk threads, which intensify and transcend the images. *Farewell My Freeman Friend*, which is dedicated to the artist's late best friend, is an extraordinary and moving piece in this series.

Visiting the exhibition provides a great opportunity to compare Mesdag's *Panorama of Scheve-*

ningen directly with Hooft Graafland's landscape photographs. The common thread that binds the historic and contemporary artworks is the shared understanding of the horizon's overwhelming power and its ability to create spatial infinity. Like Mesdag, Hooft Graafland invites viewers to reflect on the importance of capturing the beauty of nature before it is too late.

The exhibition is accompanied by a lavishly illustrated publication containing a foreword by museum director Minke Schat; a text by the artist;



Scarlett Hooft Graafland, *Airplane*, Turkey, Ankara Airport, 2024.
Image © Scarlett Hooft Graafland. Courtesy Museum Panorama Mesdag, The Hague.

an interview with the artist by curator Adrienne Quarles van Ufford; and an essay by Cathelijne Blok. Also included are the artist's cv and diary entries that accompany some of her artworks.

Scarlett Hooft Graafland
Mesmerizing
Den Haag: Museum Panorama Mesdag and Zwolle:
Waanders Uitgevers, 2025
96 pages, color, ISBN 97894626261640
Texts in Dutch and English
25 €, available from the [museum's website](#)

IPC Institutional Members

Our Institutional Members are central to our mission because they carry an important cultural legacy of immersive media. These institutions go to extraordinary lengths to maintain and preserve the material and infrastructural integrity of their collections while continuing to operate their panoramas as contemporary visitor attractions. Each member organization brings a wealth of professional expertise and historical knowledge to our community, and their respective missions represent

an enduring force of entrepreneurial and creative skills. As panorama stewards around the world, and most especially as participants in our organization, IPC's Institutional Members offer support to members and non-members alike. Panorama enthusiasts of all kinds are welcomed to connect to the IPC network.

The panorama organizations described on the following pages are active Institutional IPC Members.



Full view of the Bourbaki Panorama with circular painting, faux terrain and optical apparatus.
Image: Gabriel Ammon/AURA.

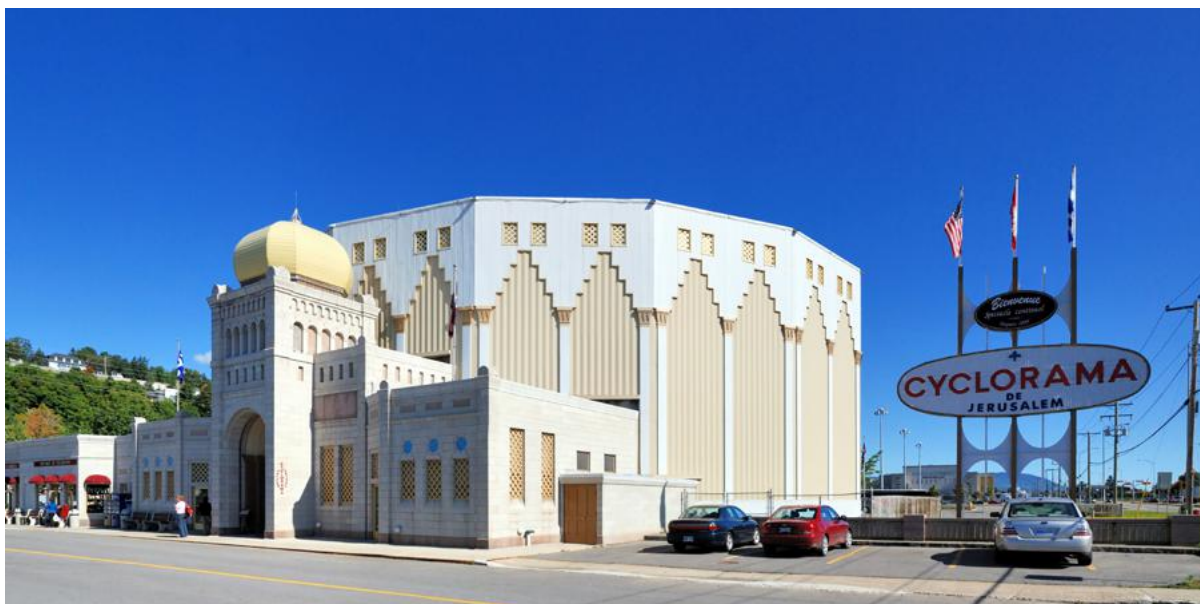
Bourbaki Panorama, Lucerne, Switzerland. The *Bourbaki Panorama*, a European cultural monument, portrays the internment of 87,000 French soldiers who fled to Switzerland during the winter of 1871. Visiting the Bourbaki Panorama is like immersing into the Val-de-Travers valley at the end of the nineteenth century, when Switzerland laid the foundations of the humanitarian and neutral tradition. This inspiring story was depicted on the 10 × 112 m (originally 14 × 112 m) circular painting by the painter Edouard Castres in 1881.

Circular paintings as a form of mass media are not only considered the precursor of the cinema, they are also a source of inspiration for contemporary media trends and digital narratives. The classified building houses a multicultural and multimedial offering under one roof.

The *Bourbaki Panorama* is also a popular event location in Lucerne. +41 41 412 30 30 | info@bourbakipanorama.ch.

BOURBAKI PANORAMA

<https://www.bourbakipanorama.ch/>



Panorama of Jerusalem, exterior of the rotunda in Sainte-Anne-de-Beaupré, Quebec, Canada.
Image, Wikipedia, Taxiarchos 228, own work, Free Art License.

Cyclorama de Jérusalem, Sainte-Anne-de-Beaupré, Québec, Canada. The 128-year-old Cyclorama of Jérusalem is the only Canadian example of a painted circular panorama and especially unique as it is housed in its original rotunda on stilts. The canvas, measuring 110 m in length and 14 m in height, depicts Jerusalem on the day of Jesus Christ's crucifixion with striking realism: faux terrain and painted figures in the foreground enhance the immersive, 3D effect. Originally painted in New York around 1887–1888, it was shown in Montreal for six years before being permanently installed at Sainte-Anne-de-Beaupré in 1895. In that place it became a crucial component of one of Quebec's most important pilgrimage sites.

The *Cyclorama of Jerusalem* is one of only 17 surviving nineteenth-century panoramas in the

world, and the third oldest in its original rotunda, making it an artistic and architectural ensemble of international significance. The Cyclorama closed to public viewing in October 2018, after over 123 years of continuous display. The Quebec Ministry of Culture designated the site, the panorama and rotunda, as classified Cultural Heritage Property in August 2019. We are pleased to report that the panorama has now reopened, and can be visited by appointment from April to November.

As owners of the Cyclorama, the Blouin family needs support to preserve the rotunda and the huge artwork on canvas. Thank you for helping us find solutions for the continuity of this historical, cultural and religious monument. +1 418 827 3101 | cycloramadejerusalem@gmail.com

CYCLORAMA DE JÉRUSALEM

Musée privé de l'époque du pré-cinéma, depuis 1895

<https://www.cycloramadejerusalem.com/>



*Panorama 25 December, interior view, Gaziantep, Türkiye.
Image, Celal Sayin, via TripAdvisor.*

Panorama 25 December, Gaziantep, Turkey. Panorama 25 December Gaziantep Defense Heroism Panorama and Museum was built under the leadership of the Mayor of Gaziantep, Ms. Fatma ŞAHİN, to immortalize the epic “Antep” war, which is unprecedented in history. In Panorama 25 December Museum, Antep Defense is depicted in every aspect through 14 paintings made with oil painting technique, three dioramas and a unique panoramic area with a length of 120 m and a height of 13 m. Furthermore, Panorama 25 December Museum, which hosts dozens of works donated by the relatives of martyrs and veterans of the Antep War, also consists of the interactive areas required by

contemporary and modern museology.

The museum was first opened to visitors in 2020. From the first day of its establishment, various events such as award-winning competitions, conferences, workshops, exhibitions and symposiums have been organized in the museum. In addition, monthly newsletters on Gaziantep Defense are published and brochures promoting the museum are distributed to visitors. Panorama 25 December Museum hosted 125,275 visitors in 2021 and 256,302 visitors in 2022. +0342 211 12 00 (8906) / (8903) | info@panorama25aralik.com



<http://panorama25aralik.com/tr/>



Louis Braun (German, 1836–1916), Top, full view. Bottom, detail. *Panorama of the Battle of Murten*, 1893/1894. Oil painting on canvas, 10 × 100 meters.
Image, Foundation for the Panorama of the Battle of Murten, 2002.

The Panorama of the Battle of Murten is one of the four nineteenth- century 360° panoramas preserved in Switzerland, and the only one currently not accessible to the public. Created by the German painter Louis Braun in 1894, commissioned by a Swiss company in 1893, it depicts an episode in the Burgundian Wars, the Battle of Murten, fought on 22 June 1476. Presented in Zurich and in Geneva between 1894 and 1907, the original rotunda did not

survive and the panorama was gifted to the town of Murten when the owner business bankrupted. Presented to the public after being restored at the Swiss National Exhibition in 2002, this work was digitized in 2024 by the EPFL in ultra-high resolution. Contact details and information are to detailed on the Foundation for the *Panorama of the Battle of Murten*'s website: <https://murtenpanorama.ch>.



Panorama Mesdag in the Hague, Netherlands, painted by Hendrik Willem Mesdag in 1880–1881. Above, full view. Below, detail. Images, Public Domain.

Museum Panorama Mesdag is an icon in The Hague, with the Panorama of Scheveningen as its absolute highlight. The museum owes its name to the largest painting in the Netherlands, but also houses an impressive collection of other works by Hendrik Willem Mesdag and his wife Sientje Mesdag-van Houten. With many temporary exhibitions that connect the past to the present there is always something new to see in this museum, which remains endlessly fascinating for all visitors.

The Panorama of Scheveningen is over 140 years old. In 1880, Hendrik Willem Mesdag received a commission from a Belgian panorama firm for this 360-degree painting. He chose the village of Scheveningen, which he loved and could reach on foot from his home in The Hague, as his subject. The location from which he painted was the highest dune in the village: the Seinpost Dune.

Taking up all of 1680 square m, the Panorama of Scheveningen is the largest painting in the Netherlands. It is 14.6 m tall and 114.5 m in circumference. With the help of his wife, Sientje Mesdag-van Houten, George Hendrik Breitner, Théophile de Bock and Bernard Blommers—all of whom were renowned painters in their time—Mesdag was able to complete the Panorama of Scheveningen in only four months. This was a tremendous achievement.

The Panorama's grand opening was held on 1 August 1881. One of the guests was Vincent van Gogh. He was extremely impressed by it, exclaiming in mock complaint that the canvas contained only one flaw: namely that it was flawless.

Mesdag's panorama is one of the few to have been preserved and the oldest in the world to still be on display at its original location. With the emergence of cinema, the popularity of panoramas started to wane and Mesdag's Panorama of Scheveningen went bankrupt only a few years after its opening. This upset the painter so much that he purchased the panorama and so became the museum's first director in 1886. In the gallery leading to the panorama, he presented paintings by himself and his wife Sientje Mesdag-van Houten, as well as their contemporaries. Both artists are considered to be among the most significant painters of the Hague School. +07 03106665 | info@panorama-mesdag.nl



<https://panorama-mesdag.nl/en/>



Bursa Fetih Müzesi Panorama 1326, Bursa, Türkiye.
Image, Wikimedia Commons, Zhryldiz, own work, CC BY-SA 4.0.

Bursa Fetih Müzesi Panorama 1326, Bursa, Türkiye. Constructed by the Osmangazi Municipality and opened in 2018, the Panorama 1326 Bursa Conquest picture depicts the city on the day of April 6, 1326 at around 11 am. It is the day of surrender and handing over the symbolic key of the city by the Byzantine governor to Orhan Ghazi, the conqueror of Bursa. The picture's viewing point is the minaret of Hacı İvaz Pasha Mosque, located near the Grand Mosque of Bursa at the city center. Constructed in the form of a full panorama, it is the world's largest "full panoramic" museum with a 42-meter diameter dome. The Conquest Museum is also the structure with the largest dome in Türkiye. Even though the title mentions conquest, the Panorama picture does not depict a scene of war; instead it depicts

the lifestyle of semi-nomadic Turks, food culture, clothing culture, daily practices, traditional sports and games, and the natural scene of the city from the viewing point. All the details and figures in the digitally created panoramic picture were made as a result of meticulous research and based on historical sources, under the supervision of the "History and Art Board," which consists of expert academics. In addition to permanent galleries, the museum also houses a temporary exhibition hall, a library, two cafeterias, two multi-functional conference halls, a forum area and a gift shop. The Museum is located in an area that can be described as the eastern gate of the historic commercial neighborhood. +90 224 224 1326 | panorama1326@osmangazi.bel.tr | <https://www.panorama1326.com.tr/>



<https://www.gotobursa.com.tr/en/meke/panorama-1326-bursa-conquest-museum-253/>



Laysan Island Cyclorama, University of Iowa Museum of Natural History, Iowa City, Iowa, USA. Image, Nicholas Lowe.

Laysan Island Cyclorama—University of Iowa Museum of Natural History, Iowa City, Iowa, USA. The University of Iowa Museum of Natural History was founded by order of the Iowa Legislature in 1858 and is the oldest university museum west of the Mississippi River. The museum combines exhibits, education resources, programming, collections and research opportunities to support the University of Iowa and our community. The mission of the University of Iowa Museum of Natural History is to inspire in visitors of all ages understanding and a sense of wonder, discovery, respect, and responsibility for our natural and cultural worlds through exhibits, educational programs, and collections, as well as through linkages with UI research and activities.

Unique to the Museum of Natural History is the *Laysan Island Cyclorama*. This century-old treasure offers a 360° view of Laysan, an outpost of the Hawaiian atoll and a bird sanctuary. The Laysan Island Cyclorama is the only one left of its kind. Completed in 1914, it was one of the first and is now the last remaining example to feature a natural history group. It is the only one ever to represent a single ecosystem. The Laysan Island Cyclorama is in a purpose-built room in the northwest corner of the Hageboeck Hall of Birds, in Macbride Hall on the University of Iowa campus in downtown Iowa City. Considered an integral part of the Museum of Natural History, the building was constructed with space reserved for the yet-to-be-created cyclorama. +1 319 335 0480 | Pentacrest Museums Director, [Liz Crooks](#).



<https://mnh.uiowa.edu/visit/galleries/laysan-island-cyclorama>



"Panorama 'Le Marché-aux-Herbes' vers 1650" (detail). Painted by Antoine Fontaine, Lëtzebuerg City Museum, 2006. Image, T. Logge.

Musée d'Histoire de la Ville de Luxembourg, Luxembourg. The Historical Museum of the City of Luxembourg presents a panorama that shows the central square of the town in the seventeenth

century and was created in 2006 by the French artist Antoine Fontaine. +352 4796 4500 | Director, Danièle Wagener | musee@2musees.vdl.lu

**<LËTZEBUERG
CITY
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<https://citymuseum.lu/>



Feszty-Panorama, rotunda exterior. Ópusztaszer National Historical Heritage Park, Ópusztaszer, Hungary. Image, Wikipedia, Dr. János Korom, CC BY-SA 2.0.

Feszty Panorama. The Ópusztaszer National Historical Heritage Park invites visitors to explore the history of Hungary as well as the culture and lifestyle of people living on the Southern Great Plain. Beautifully nestled in the Pusztaszer Protected Landscape, the Heritage Park marks one of the most sacred and important historical sites in Hungary,

Ópusztaszer, where in the year 896 the modern nation of Hungary was born. The Heritage Park exhibits one of Europe's largest panorama paintings, the *Feszty Panorama*, "Arrival of the Conquering Hungarians into the Carpathian Basin." +36 62 275 257 | Director, Péter Kertész | info@opusztaszer.hu.



<https://opusztaszer.hu/>



Left: A section of the *Panorama of Congo*. The War Heritage Institute, Brussels, Belgium.

Right: In February 2009, collection collaborators unroll and photograph the *Panorama of Congo* in Zutendaal. Images, The War Heritage Institute, Brussels, Belgium.

War Heritage Institute, Brussels. The War Heritage Institute is the custodian of the *Panorama of Congo* and owner of two panoramas, the *Panorama of the Battle of the Yser* and the *Diorama of the Battles of the Meuse*.

Belgian colonial authorities commissioned the *Panorama of Congo* for the 1913 World's Fair in Ghent. The monumental canvas measured 115×14 m and was designed by Paul Mathieu (1872–1932) and Alfred Bastien (1873–1955). A circular arrangement, a faux-terrain and optical distortions provided visitors with the illusion of reality. The canvas was shown for the last time at the 1935 World Fair in Brussels. The War Heritage Institute has been safeguarding it in its entirety since the 1950s. In eight seamlessly juxtaposed scenes the work depicts life in and around the city of Matadi, with views of the Congo River, the market, the M'Pozo waterfalls and the tropical forest. The panorama highlights the Belgian civilisation offensive on the colony and thus serves propaganda purposes.

In 2022 the War Heritage Institute and three international partners from the FILM EU consortium (Lusófona University, Portugal; LUCA School of Arts, Belgium and the Institute for Art, Design + Technology, Ireland) launched a project focusing on the *Panorama of Congo*. The study, entitled *Decolonizing the Panorama of Congo*, a Virtual Heritage Artistic Research (CONGO VR) aims to contextualize and reinterpret the panorama through virtual reality from the perspec-

tive of decolonization. <https://www.filmeu.eu/research/pilot-projects/congo-vr>

The *Panorama of the Battle of the Yser* was created under the direction of the Belgian painter Alfred Bastien (1873–1955) and completed in 1921. It depicts a key moment in October 1914 when the Yser valley was flooded as a defensive measure to stop German advances. It was inaugurated on 6 April 1921 in a circular building along the Avenue Lemonnier in Brussels and till the 1940s in a rotunda in Ostend. The panorama exists in nine fragments which have been thoroughly studied and documented. The War Heritage painting remains in offsite storage at this time but a semicircle projection is shown at Westfront Nieuwpoort at the Belgian coast. <https://www.visit-nieuwpoort.be/en/westfront-nieuwpoort-0>

The *Diorama of the Battles of the Meuse* measuring 8.5×72 m, was painted in 1937, and it depicts the German offensive upon the Valley of the Meuse in the summer of 1914, depicting key points in the invasion and occupation of Belgium. The diorama shows the Liège area with its hills and forts, the city of Namur in flames in the background, as well as Leffe, the Bayard Rock and Dinant with the burning collegiate church. The larger context of its creation in the late 1930s is understood as a warning in relation to the rise of German fascism and the threat of WWII. The War Heritage Institute collaborated on a web documentary about this piece. <https://www.bataillesdelameuse.be/>



<https://warheritage.be/en>



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**PANORAMIC
AND IMMERSIVE
MEDIA STUDIES
YEARBOOK**

*Edited by Mady C. Briggs, Thorsten Lipp
and Nicholas L. Long*

1

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