

REPORT  
OF THE  
STIRLING MAXWELL CENTRE  
FOR THE STUDY OF  
TEXT/IMAGE CULTURES  
2018-19



Stirling  
Maxwell Centre  
University  
of Glasgow

This eighth year of the Centre's new incarnation, 2018-19, saw continued high-profile success and optimism for the future, as well as new directions. Items of specific note included:

- Once again an eclectic series of seminars with speakers from varied backgrounds, and subjects ranging from stereotypes in comics to medieval falconry.
- The *Comics Night at the Museum* in December 2018 saw over a thousand participants.
- The Comics Reading Group is now in its 5<sup>th</sup> year and the associated podcast has had over 2.5k listeners.
- Reception to GUL of the Thierry Chessum bequest of *bandes dessinées*.
- Members of the Centre gave a number of invited lectures and keynotes (Cambridge, Cork, Dijon, Glasgow Alliance Française and Kelvinhall, Manchester, Paris École des Chartes, Soria, Wolfenbüttel), as well as the Annual Burns Scotland Lecture.
- Completion to submission and defence by 4 PhD PGRs.
- Numerous publications, including articles for Bloomsbury Press and *PMLA*.
- Stirling Maxwell Fellows from Czech Republic, France, Italy and Spain, attracting associated external funding and bearing witness to the Centre's established international reputation.
- The Stirling Maxwell Festival books Project, in association with the Universidad de Málaga, received its formal launch.
- Centre activities were featured in a number of increasingly high-profile appearances on national and international TV and radio, as well as in mainstream international press.

## FINANCES AND ADMINISTRATION

The Centre's finances remained sufficient to fund the regular activities of the Centre. This year external funding was secured for all of our invited speakers.

- We again saw successful securing of further external funding: £10 000 from EventScotland's Winter Festival Funding programme, supplemented by £1999 from the College of Arts KE Fund, for *Comics Night at the Museum*.
- A grant application for £220 000 to seed fund the initial stages of the National Comics Centre was developed and submitted to the Paul Hamlyn Foundation in partnership with Sha Nazir (Director, BHP Comics). The application was unsuccessful, but we reached the interview stage and were one of 9 final shortlisted projects for 5 awards. Linked funding was received from BHP Comics (£1950) and the GU KE Fund (£1990) for 'Initiating the National Comics Centre'.
- We submitted the €5 416 216 Grenoble-based *SQUARE IT (Symbolic cultural objects: data for QUALitative understanding of european inclusive culture, and for advanced curation IT tools development)* Construction de l'Espace Européen grant bid. The Glasgow section whereby key GUL illustrated scientific documents (largely from the Ferguson collection) will be digitised and contextualised, was for €660 760. The bid was unsuccessful, but a reformulated resubmission is under preparation.
- Further pending applications are for an AHRC ECF for Saeko Yazaki on Shinto iconography and to the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft on Recipe Books in collaboration with Stefan Laube (Wolfenbüttel).

## EVENTS:

### ***Comics Night at the Museum (1 December 2018)***

Under the auspices of EventScotland's Winter Festivals and St Andrews Fair Saturday programmes, *Scotland and the Culture of Comics Night at the Museum* (full title) showcased research and related objects from the university's collections, including the world's first comic. This fun evening, attracting an audience of over 1000 participants, encouraged interaction with a younger demographic, while boosting social inclusion through a highly targeted marketing plan. We created inspirational and fun programmes, including music, talks, performances, object handling, and treasure trails. The event attracted key target audiences to research including young people, families and local communities, with extensive opportunities for student engagement throughout.

### **Medieval Monsters**

Debra Higgs Strickland was consultant for the catalogue and major public exhibition of illuminated manuscripts at the Morgan Library and Museum, *Medieval Monsters, Terrors, Aliens, and Wonders* (New York, 8 June - 23 Sept. 2018), and consultant for major public exhibition, *The Book of Beasts: The Bestiary in the Medieval World* at the J.P. Getty Museum (Los Angeles, scheduled 14 May - 18 August 2019).

### ***Of Speculative Indications (CCA, 2 February 2019)***

Based on the artwork of Leontios Toumpouris which gives a contemporary updating of emblem books, this one day 'happening' featured Luis Gomes and Laurence Grove engaging with the associated CCA exhibition (January/February 2019).

### **International Graphic Novel and 11th International Bande Dessinée Society Conference: Manchester 2019**

This major international conference took place in June, attracting c. 150 international delegates. Laurence Grove's keynote, '20 Years of IBDS', looked backed on Glasgow conferences from 1999 and 2001!

### **Invited Lectures**

Members of the Centre gave invited lectures and keynotes on text/image subjects at the University of Cambridge (two separate events), Université de Bourgogne (Dijon), École des Chartes (Paris), Universidad de Valladolid (Soria), University of Glasgow (Kelvinhall), Alliance Française de Glasgow, Manchester Metropolitan University, Herzog August Bibliothek Wolfenbüttel and University College Cork.

In January 2019 Laurence Grove gave the Annual Burns Scotland Lecture in Alloway on 'Robert Burns: Iconics and Comics'.

### **Book Launch**

In December 2018 the celebration of publications by Stephen Rawles and Mike Bath (see below) was accompanied by a book display.

## COMICS READING GROUP AND PODCAST

The Comics Reading Group continues to attract a diverse range of participants from undergrads to tenured academics. The associated podcast reaches a global audience with up to 2.5k listeners: <https://glasgowunicomics.wordpress.com>.

## IMPACT CASE STUDY: SCOTLAND AND THE CULTURE OF COMICS

Recent exhibitions and related activities will form the basis for an Impact Case Study for REF 2021, *Advancing the Status of Comics as a Cultural and Educational Asset*.

### STIRLING MAXWELL FESTIVAL BOOKS PROJECT

A project to catalogue the Stirling Maxwell collection of Early Modern Festival Books in Special Collections was formally launched in September 2019, as a collaboration between SMC, Stirling Maxwell Research Project, Special Collections and Universidad de Málaga. The collection is estimated to number 300-400. Our webpage is now live at <https://www.gla.ac.uk/schools/mlc/resschol/clust-centr/smc/stmfbp/>. The project is led by Hilary Macartney and Carmen González-Román (Málaga) with Luís Gomes and Bob MacLean (Sp. Colls) as Co-Is. Initial work on the database which will form the catalogue has been assisted by student placements provided by UoG History of Art Masters programme and an Erasmus Agreement (SMLC/Málaga). A funding application for professional library cataloguing input is now planned.

### THIERRY CHESSUM BEQUEST

This year we secured the bequest of Thierry Chessum for GUL. Thierry's collections of *bandes dessinées* was one of the most important private collections in the field in the UK. His books arrived in Glasgow in October 2019.

### NATIONAL COMICS CENTRE

Following ongoing discussions with Glasgow Life an agreement has been made in principle that stage 2/3 of the Kelvinhall Project should include a National Comics Centre. Funding has been secured for 'Initiating the National Comics Centre' which will see the creation of a web presence and associated publicity materials.

### STIRLING MAXWELL CENTRE SEMINAR SERIES

The Centre welcomed papers from Sha Nazir (BHP Comics, on 'Making Comics v Fighting Stereotypes'), Ana Maria Mauad (Universidade Federal Fluminense on South American photography), Candida Rifkind (University of Winnipeg, on Comics and the Migrant Crisis), Richard Cooper (University of Oxford, on Renaissance Lyonnais Illustration), Leontios Toumpouris (Independent Visual Artist, on his *Of Speculative Indications*), Denis Fischbacher-Smith (University of Glasgow, on Using Comics for management and Cyber Security), and Leslie Jacoby (University of Glasgow, on Falconry Illuminations in GUL MS hunter 269).

### ECA

*European Comic Art*, co-edited from Glasgow, published issues 11.2 (on Spanish Comics, part II) and 11.2 (on Comics and transnational Exchanges).

### FREEDOM BOUND

Drawing upon Simon Newman's AHRC-funded slavery project, *Freedom Bound* is a graphic novel, with artwork by Warren Pleece, telling of the history of slavery in Scotland via the angle of 'Runaways'. The book is now being distributed to all schools nationally. The project has received national press and TV coverage, featured in the Edinburgh Book Festival (2018), and contributed prominently to *Comics Night at the Museum*.

### FURTHER PUBLICATIONS

The following is no more than a selection of publications by members of the Centre:

- Stephen Rawles, *Denis Janot* (Leiden: Brill, 2017 [book launch 2018]).
- Michael Bath, *Emblems in Scotland* (Leiden: Brill, 2018).
- Debra Higgs Strickland, 'The Bestiary on Medieval World Maps,' in *The Book of Beasts* (Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Museum, 2019).
- Debra Higgs Strickland, 'Monsters, Demons, and Jews in the Painting of Hieronymus Bosch', in *Monsters and Monstrosity in Jewish History* (London: Bloomsbury Press, 2019).
- Debra Higgs Strickland, 'The Bestiary and the Hereford World Map (c. 1300)', in *Maps and Travel in the Middle Ages and Early Modern Period* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2019).
- Laurence Grove, 'Scotland, the Cradle of Comics', *PMLA* 134.3 (2019), 601-613.
- Laurence Grove, 'La Caricature comme pilier du premier comic du monde: *The Glasgow Looking Glass* (1825)', in *L'Image railleuse* (Paris: Institut National d'Histoire de l'Art, 2019).
- Laurence Grove, 'Les Clichés de la Grande Guerre: 1914-1918 dans *L'Illustration*', in *14-18 en bande dessinée et en littérature de jeunesse* (Namur: Presses Universitaires de Namur, 2019).
- Zanne Domoney-Lyttle, 'Bloody Murder in the Bible: Graphic Representations of the "First Murder" in Biblical Comics', in *Representations of Violence in Comics* (London: Routledge 2019).
- Hilary Macartney, 'Lingering over Graphic Descriptions of Grand State Ceremonials and Festivities: Stirling Maxwell and the Role of the Artist in Golden Age Spain', *Bulletin of Spanish Visual Studies*, 3.2 (2019), 189-204.

## STIRLING MAXWELL FELLOWSHIPS

We have welcomed Tomasso Ranfagni (National Institute of Renaissance Studies (INSR), Florence, on the *tabula rasa*), Vendula Šrámková (Palacky University Olomouc, on the symbolism of tulips), Geoffrey Roger (ULIP, on digital publication of the *Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles*) and Felix Delgado Lopez (Universidad de La Laguna, on Photography and Lanzarote).

## TEACHING AND RESEARCH STUDENTS

Members of the Centre have continued to provide an Honours Option, open to students in French and Comparative Literature, and text-image focused courses in French and in History of Art.

Student evaluations indicate that the integration of Glasgow's unique resources into undergraduate teaching is much appreciated: 'My favourite course at university so far!', 'My only problem with this course is that I wish I could take it for two years instead of one!', 'Coming out of this course I have a strong new-found interest and passion for bande dessinée which has now become a big influence in my life' (student feedback).

Future plans are in the offing for an MLitt on *Comics Studies*.

We are pleased to congratulate David Boyd, Andrew Godfrey, Lucia Jackson and Guillaume Lecomte, all of whom have submitted their doctoral thesis, and Ciara Haverly who has submitted her MPhil thesis.

Further PGR students work in affiliated areas of text/image interaction:

- Claire Allison on North African comics
- Jean Paul Brandt on Chilean photography
- Sophie Conaghan-Sexon on queer approaches to medieval devotional texts and images (AHRC)
- Jordanna Conn on Jewish proto-comics
- Adam Flint on monstrosity in early modern wonder books (GU College Scholarship)
- Lauren Gatting (LKAS scholarship) on comics and cancer care
- Andrew Godfrey on comics and medicine (AHRC with Dundee)
- Ciara Haverly on Victorian emblems and femininity
- Amanda Nizic on caricature and sound
- Nat Peterson (MPhil) on illustrated childrens of the early-20<sup>th</sup> century
- Johanna Pollick on medieval texts and images related to Christ's wounds (AHRC)
- Jen Porath on Scottish folklore and comics
- Danielle Schwertner on female identity and the *Glasgow Looking Glass*
- Damien Swarbrick on film adaptations of Scottish comics
- Gareth Vile on comics and theatre theory (AHRC with Dundee)
- Chris Vezza on emblematic aspects of album covers.

## IN THE MEDIA

The Stirling Maxwell Centre has been called upon for high-profile production work and appearances on national and international TV and Radio (*Good Morning Scotland* and *The Nine* for BBC, *The People's History Show* for STV, *Les Mystères de Tintin* for Freemantle Media / TV 5). Hilary Macartney's work on the *Lady in a Fur Wrap* has in particular attracted international coverage.

## FUTURE PLANS

The SMC's future plans include:

- the creation of a T&R post in Text/Image Studies, that will support the Centre's activities and lead to the implementation of an MLitt in *Comics Studies*
- external lectures, with invitations received for 2 further keynotes (PAMLA, San Diego, November 2019; SES, Coimbra, June 2020)
- updating of the Centre's website at <https://www.gla.ac.uk/schools/mlc/resschol/clust-centr/smc/>
- broadening of the Centre's remit to include a broad range of visual cultures, with a seminar series drawing upon external speakers but also reflecting Glasgow expertise and collaboration in this area
- further volumes of *European Comic Art* and publication of *Emblems on the European Stage* (Glasgow Emblem Studies), edited by Rosa de Marco and Sandra Paterson-Reid.
- building on the momentum of the *Comic Invention* exhibition and events, further progress towards the initiation of a National Comics Centre
- further progress on the Early Modern Festival Books cataloguing project and associated digital platform in partnership with the Theatermuseum and Kunsthistorischesmuseum, Vienna.
- progress towards a Recipe Books project in association with Herzog August Bibliothek Wolfenbüttel
- an international *Picturing Sound* conference in Glasgow organised by Guillaume Lecomte and Chris Vezza
- *Shocking!:* initial work on a Hunterian-based exhibition on caricature and censorship