

**REPORT
OF THE
STIRLING MAXWELL CENTRE
FOR THE STUDY OF
TEXT/IMAGE CULTURES
2015-16**



**Stirling
Maxwell Centre
University
of Glasgow**

This fifth year of the Centre's new incarnation, 2015-16, saw continued high-profile success and optimism for the future. Items of specific note included:

- **Once again an eclectic series of seminars, including speakers from Scotland but also Canada, USA, and Japan, with varied backgrounds (Art School to TV Director), and subjects from Medieval manuscripts to 20th-century cinema.**
- ***Comic Invention* was a resounding success, drawing worldwide attention.**
- **The Stirling Maxwell *Copied by the Sun* exhibition in the Prado drew over 67 000 visitors.**
- **Members of the Centre gave a number of invited lectures and keynotes (Royal Holloway London, Amsterdam, St. Andrews, Rio de Janeiro, Cork, Frankfurt)**
- **Numerous KE activities included the creation and launch of new Asterix material for the national school syllabus in French, which has since trended online, recording the highest number of hits in the National Hub.**
- **Completion, submission and successful defence by 2 PhD PGRs.**
- **£10 000 of external funding (John Watson Foundation and Friends of GUL).**
- **Numerous publications, including the book / box set of *Comic Invention***
- **Collaborative teaching ventures continue at both undergraduate and PG level, including the new MLitt in Renaissance Art History, and plans for a joint MLitt with the GSA on *Questioning Comics*.**
- **Stirling Maxwell Fellows and visiting scholars from Canada, USA, Japan, France, Spain and Portugal, attracting associated external funding and bearing witness to the Centre's established international reputation.**

- **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

The Centre's finances remained sufficient to fund the regular activities of the Centre. Recent funding awards (John Watson Foundation, Friends of GU Library) supported *Comic Invention*.

EVENTS:

Comic Invention

Curated in partnership with the Hunterian, Glasgow Life, the National Galleries of Scotland, the Kunzle Collection of Los Angeles, Glasgow ComicCon and the comics industry (artists and retailers), *Comic Invention* aimed to change public thinking regarding the place of comics in the culture around us, and to unveil and underline the role played by Glasgow and Scotland in this culture. Visitor numbers, on a par with the benchmark *Mackintosh and Architecture* exhibition, and media attention on a scale unprecedented for the Hunterian, suggest these objectives were achieved and surpassed. The exhibition received widescale international press coverage, and specific features on BBC television and radio news, STV news (including a live broadcast from the opening) and STV feature programmes. The live streaming of the exhibition's opening had viewing figures of 33 457 on Facebook, 34 584 via Twitter and 2 800 on Snapchat.

Reviews, of which the following are two examples, have been universally positive:

'Comic Invention' is evidently unique, daring and ultimately eccentric. It is the only place in the world you will see Lichtenstein next to artists like Rembrandt and Picasso. Unconventional exhibitions such as this are unlikely to be forgotten. [...] It is not one to miss'

Jade Haggarty in *TSA* (Scotland's main student newspaper)

'clever, clear and confident exhibition', 'I have rarely seen an introductory graphic panel as engaging – and, quite frankly, as cool – as the one that opens the *Comic Invention* exhibition', 'This is an exhibition that truly embraces browsing', 'the quality and variety on show mean that it punches above its weight', '*Comic Invention* succeeds in revealing this art form to a new audience, making a confident, clever, clearly articulated case for comics as a grown-up medium'.

<http://www.museumsassociation.org/museums-journal/reviews/01062016-comic-invention-hunterian-art-gallery-university-of-glasgow#.V1rQKbkwOQM.email>

Lucy Harland in *Museums Journal*

Comic Invention saw numerous related outreach events. It is expected that *Comic Invention* will be at the heart of our next REF Impact submission. The exhibition is to be nominated for a THE award. Above all forward-looking opportunities have arisen: work is ongoing on recreating the theme of *Comic Invention* in further displays, initially at Clydebank Museum and Art Gallery (May 2016) in partnership with the Kelvingrove *Frank Quitely* exhibition, with plans currently being explored for a showing at the Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven. It is hoped that *Comic Invention* will prove to be a catalyst for the future National Centre for Comics.

Copied by the Sun

Curated by Hilary Macartney (University of Glasgow) and José Manuel Matilla, Head of Prints, Drawings and Photographs, Museo Nacional del Prado, the Madrid exhibition *Copied by the Sun*, took place at the Prado from May-Sept 2016 and received over 67 000 visitors. The exhibition brought the importance of Sir William Stirling Maxwell, and the first use of photography in the reproduction of art, to the attention of a wide international audience for the first time. The project is the fruit of an international collaboration between the University of Glasgow, the National Media Museum, Bradford and, in Spain, the Prado Museum and the Centro de Estudios Europa Hispánica (CEEH), Madrid, with generous funding from Santander Universities, Santander Shareholders, Royal Society of Edinburgh and the Kress Foundation. Until now, few people, even specialist scholars, have ever seen a copy of Stirling's limited-edition, experimental volume of Talbotype photographs which accompanied his landmark history of Spanish art, *Annals of the Artists of Spain* (1848), due to its rarity and fragility. The exhibition accompanied the publication of a facsimile and critical edition which makes this historic volume widely available

for the first time (see Further Publications below). A launch to mark the publication was also hosted by SMC in association with the University of Glasgow Library Special Collections as part of the Institute for Photography in Scotland Season of Photography 2016, with talks from contributors Hilary Macartney, Jim Tate (NMS) and Brian Liddy (Bodleian), and displays from the Photographic and Stirling Maxwell Collections.

Society for Renaissance Studies Conference: Glasgow 2016

This major international conference took place in July, with key sessions on Word and Image, distinguished plenary speakers, and associated input from SMC.

Invited Lectures

Members of the Centre gave invited lectures and keynotes on text/image subjects at the University of St. Andrews, the Glasgow ComicCon, Royal Holloway University of London, Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro, Goethe University in Frankfurt, and University College Cork.

ASTÉRIX AND THE CURRICULUM FOR EXCELLENCE

In close collaboration with Education Scotland, a national second level learning journey focusing on the cultural aspect of comic books in France and the French speaking world has been completed. The resource went live in April 2016 and includes a pupil activity pack and associated prior learning material using *Astérix* and in particular *Astérix chez les Pictes*. Copyright has been obtained free of charge from Les Éditions Albert-René and the participation of *Astérix* author Jean-Yves Ferri has been agreed. The resource has since been trending on the new national improvement hub, providing support for the 1+2 approach to language learning. Although aimed at second level, opportunities to develop for pupils in S1 to S3 are also suggested. The resource is a key outreach element also to feature in the forthcoming REF case study, which will emphasise SMC research as raising public awareness of the important cultural role of comics, and the importance of Glasgow and Scotland in this area.

SCIENTIFIC AND VISUAL IMAGES IN EARLY MODERN EUROPE

Glasgow is a key partner for the successful €30 000 Toulouse-based *Scientific and Visual Images in Early Modern Europe* Construction de l'Espace Européen grant.

EMBLEMATICA ONLINE II: NEH GRANT

Work continues on the *Emblematica Online II* project, in partnership with Utrecht University, the Getty Research Library and the University of Illinois, which in April 2013 was awarded \$280 000 from the NEH. A major element of the project is digitisation work from Glasgow.

PRINCIPAL'S EARLY CAREER MOBILITY SCHEME AWARD

We were delighted to congratulate Sarah Lightman, one of our PhD candidates, on winning a prestigious Principal's Early Career Mobility Scheme Award. The award will allow Sarah to carry out research at Columbia University Library's extensive graphic novel and comics collections, thereby forging future links with New York.

STIRLING MAXWELL CENTRE SEMINAR SERIES

The Centre welcomed papers from Giovanna Guidicini (GSA, on Scottish triumphal entries), Marco Federici (STV director, on abstract animation), Dominic Hardy (Université du Québec à Montréal, on *Punch* in Canada), Alex Marraccini (Chicago, on alchemy and Ferguson MS 6) and Misako Matsuda (Seijo, 18th-c Japanese iconography). Once again the expanded range of topics reflected the Centre's broader text/image remit.

GLASGOW EMBLEM STUDIES AND ECA

- Volume 18 on Latin American emblems (ed. Pedro Leal) and volume 19 on contemporary emblems (ed. Elizabeth Black) are under preparation.

- *European Comic Art*, co-edited from Glasgow, published issues 8.2 ('The Great War in Comics') and 9.1 (varia).
Issue 9.2 ('Comics and Fine Art') is in press.

FURTHER PUBLICATIONS

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

- *Transforming Anthony Trollope: Dispossession, Victorianism and Nineteenth-Century Word and Image*, ed. Laurence Grove and Simon Grennan (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2015).
- "Illustrated Books in the Library: More Than Just Words Can Say....", by Laurence Grove, pp. 148-167, in *The University of Glasgow Library: Friendly Shelves*, eds. P.V. Davies, S. Ashworth, H. Durndell, P. Hoare, L. Richmond and G. Smith (Glasgow: The Friends of Glasgow University Library in association with the University Library, 2016).
- *Comic Invention*, by Laurence Grove and Peter Black (Glasgow: BHP Comics, 2016).
- *Talbotype Illustrations to the Annals of the Artists of Spain* by Sir William Stirling Maxwell (1848), facsimile and critical edition, ed. Hilary Macartney and José Manuel Matilla (Madrid: Centro de Estudios Europa Hispánica/Museo Nacional del Prado, 2016).
- 'Looking Back: The Westminster Psalter, the Added Drawings, and the Idea of "Retrospective Crusade"', by Debra Higgs Strickland, pp. 157-184, in *The Crusades in Visual Culture*, ed. E. Lapina, et al. (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2015).
- *The Epiphany of Hieronymus Bosch: Imagining Antichrist and Others from the Middle Ages to the Reformation*, by Debra Higgs Strickland (London: Harvey Miller, 2016).
- 'William Hogarth (1697-1764), Hudibras and House Decoration', by Peter Black, *British Art Journal* XVII.1 (Spring 2016), pp. 43-53.

STIRLING MAXWELL FELLOWSHIPS

We welcomed Catherine Emerson (Galway, on *Les Cent Nouvelles Nouvelles*), Alexandra Marraccini (Chicago, on alchemy and the Ferguson collection), Dominic Hardy (UQAM, on 19th-c satirical cartooning), Filipa Araújo (Coimbra, on Portuguese emblematics), Rosa de Marco (Bourgogne, on emblems in early-modern festivals) and Carme Lopez (Santiago de Compostela, on applied emblems in South-West Europe).

In all cases the applications generated funding from the scholar's home institution or national research bodies. The diversity of their topics and the international nature of their outlook and origins is a particular mark of the Centre's success.

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 History of Art, including the new Renaissance Art History MLitt. Future plans are in the offing for an MLitt on *Questioning Comics* in partnership with GSA.

We are particularly delighted to congratulate Emeline Morin and Lise Tannahill whose PhDs on adaptations of fairy tales and regional *bandes dessinées* respectively received the highest praise from their examining boards.

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

- Zanne Domoney-Lyttle on text/image Bible narratives
- Andrew Godfrey on comics and medicine (AHRC with Dundee)
- Lucia Jackson on female superheroes
- Guillaume Lecomte on adaptation and BD
- Sarah Lightman on autobiography in graphic novels
- Sandra Paterson-Reid on South American emblems
- Gareth Vile on comics and theatre theory (AHRC with Dundee)
- Nyla Ahmad is working for an MPhil on Islamic comics
- Johanna Pollick on medieval texts and images related to Christ's wounds (AHRC)
- Sophie Conaghan-Sexon on queer approaches to medieval devotional texts and images (AHRC)

IN THE MEDIA

The Stirling Maxwell Centre has been called upon fully by international media to comment on text/image matters, and *Comic Invention* received coverage worldwide. Outlets have included BBC and STV TV, *The National*, *The Herald*, *Daily Record*, *Scottish Daily Mail*, *The Courier*, *The Times*, *The Independent*, *Metro*, and *The Conversation*.

FUTURE PLANS

The SMC's future plans include:

- continued participation in the NEH-funded *Emblematica Online II* project
- further work to supplement the Alciato digitisation project
- continued teaching and supervision at undergraduate and postgraduate levels
- further visiting scholars
- updating of the Centre's website at <http://www.gla.ac.uk/schools/mlc/research/stirlingmaxwellcentre/>
- further volumes of *Glasgow Emblem Studies* and *European Comic Art*
- publication of the double volume 131/132 of *Yale French Studies* (2017), *Bande Dessinée: Thinking Outside the Box*, to be edited from Glasgow
- initial development towards an MLitt on *Questioning Comics* in partnership with GSA
- input to the Kelvingrove Frank Quitely exhibition (April 2017) and an associated outreach franchise of *Comic Invention* to show in tandem at the Clydebank Museum and Art Gallery
- Sponsorship of Frank Quitely for an honorary doctorate
- Co-organisation of and presentation at the Tenth International Bande Dessinée Society and Eighth International Graphic Novel Joint Conference, Dundee and Glasgow, June 2017
- Input as member of the organisation committee and presentation at the Society for Emblem Studies 11th International Conference, Nancy, July 2017
- Building on the momentum of the *Comic Invention* exhibition and events, further progress towards the creation of a National Comics Academy