

canals and harbours recall Canaletto's work, the composition, which is frequently grandiose, is modelled on the style of Claude Gelée le Lorrain, and there are occasional traces of Ruisdael's feeling for landscape. Translucent windows, scenes of adventure and animated groups are particularly popular. They are real works of art, for they do not tell the whole story but stimulate the beholder; concentrated transmuted testimony that stirs the imagination.

In the peep-show a magically shimmering and fantastic world appears. In the little circle space extends unexpectedly and the effect of height is increased. A transformed world is presented to the gaze of anyone applying his eye to the small opening in the black box. Carmontelle, the fashionable author, theatrical manager and entertainer of French society before the Revolution, invented a peep-show and showed it in winter to the family of the Duc d'Orléans in Monceaux. The peep-show soon became popular, other people had similar ideas; such things suited the taste of the day and gave great pleasure. These old peep-shows trained and stimulated the artistic sense — why should they not be revived?

Transl. by W. L. Campbell



GUCKKASTEN-BILDER



PEEP-SHOW BOX PICTURES

