



Culture, Sustainability, and Place:
Innovative Approaches for Tourism Development

Pre-Conference Workshop 2: Walking through the Camera Obscura

October 10, 2017

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This full-day workshop explores and shares with participants our mutual interests in anachronistic practices, specifically the camera obscura and walking, towards a deeper understanding of place.

Donald's interest in the camera obscura comes from a fascination with the creation of structures, both temporary and permanent, emerging from the origin of optical cultures in Europe that come to identify and explore particular places and vantage points. This was particularly the case with a burgeoning tourist culture in the Victorian period.

Ernie's inspiration for the walking portion of the workshop comes from the walking experiments of the Dadaists in the 1920s and the *dérives* of the Situationists in the 1950s as well as Rebecca Solnit's *Guide to Getting Lost* and Wrights & Sites' *Mis-guide*.

The workshop will take place in the western part of the Island of São Miguel. A bus will be available to transport participants.

The day will begin with the group leaders introducing their interests in walking and the camera obscura as modes of exploration and inquiry. We will then set out on an expedition in which the typical expectations of the guided tour and the role of the guide will be turned upside-down. On the tour, each participant will, in turn, be asked to play the role of guide. Participant-guides will be encouraged to identify something along the way, which they wish to speak to. Depending on their particular interests or specialization, they will be free to speak on whatever topic they choose. Along the way, the camera obscura will be assembled and disassembled a number of times. Participants will be asked to carry the various components of a portable camera obscura and to assist in set-up.

By late morning we will have made our way to the Western part of the island and will stop for lunch at Sete Cidades. The afternoon session will be a walk near the town and lake. The route will be spontaneous and improvisatory with the newly minted guides resuming their new vocation. Having practiced carrying and setting up the camera obscura in the morning the group will set it up again as the opportunity arises. The camera obscura will be used at vantage points that will focus the group's activity on a particular place. The intent will be to ponder the significance of the meeting place of land and ocean in light of island culture and geography.

Start time: 9h00

Meeting place: Full-size fibreglass cow outside Solmar Aveninda Center (Maviripa store) [TBC]

Duration: All day (9h00 – 17h00 with a lunch break)

Please bring comfortable walking shoes, water, etc.

Space at a local restaurant will be reserved for participants. Participants will pay for their own lunches.

Maximum number of participants: 20

References

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Dupré, Sven. "Playing with Images in a Dark Room: Kepler's Ludi Inside the Camera Obscura." *Inside the Camera Obscura – Optics and Art Under the Spell of the Projected Image*. Ed. Wolfgang Lefèvre. Berlin: Max Planck Institute for the History of Science, 2007: 59-73.

Edelstein, Susan. *Image and Apparatus*. London: Museum London, 2008.

Hammond, John H. *The Camera Obscura: A Chronicle*. Bristol: Adam Hilger Ltd., 1981.

Hodge, Stephen, Simon Persighetti, Phil Smith, Cathy Turner, Tony Weaver (aka 'Wrights & Sites'). *A mis-Guide to Anywhere*. 2006. Self-published. Available: <http://www.mis-guide.com>

Solnit, Rebecca. *A Field Guide to Getting Lost*. 2006. Penguin Books.

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Bios of coordinators

Born in Calgary, Alberta (1963) **Donald Lawrence** has a BFA from the University of Victoria (1986) and an MFA from York University (1988). He lives in Kamloops, British Columbia, Canada, where he is a Professor and teaches in the Visual Arts program at Thompson Rivers University. Through such bodies of artwork as *The Beach* (1985), *Romantic Commodities* (1993), *The Sled* (1995), *The Underwater Pinhole Photography Project* (ongoing, since 1997), and *Torhamvan/Ferryland* (2005), Lawrence uses combinations of photography, sculpture, drawing, and installation to relate stories of travel, exploration and mechanical invention to interests in the meeting place of urban and wilderness culture, increasingly around his particular interest in sea kayaking. In addition to paddling on the BC coast he has travelled with folding

kayaks to Alaska, Maine, Scotland's Outer Hebrides, and Tasmania. There, Lawrence converted one of his kayaks into a floating camera obscura. Together with his *Underwater Pinhole Photography Project* (since 1997) and the more recent *Quidi Vidi Camera Obscura* (2014) such works relate Lawrence's interests in sea kayaking and the ocean environment to a long-standing fascination with early and pre-photographic optical apparatuses. In addition to his studio and teaching practices Lawrence engages in a range of publication and conference activities and has been the recipient of research grants from the BC Arts Council, the Canada Council and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC). He is currently the Principal Investigator of *The Camera Obscura Project*, a SSHRC-funded program of research that involves artists and scholars from Canada, Germany and the Netherlands (see: <http://www.midnightsuncameraobscura.com>).

Ernie Kroeger holds a B.F.A. from the University of Manitoba and an M.F.A. from the University of Calgary. He is an interdisciplinary artist utilizing photography and writing. His artwork has been exhibited widely across Canada and in Europe, and is included in various public collections such as the National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, and Museo Nazionale della Montagna, Turin, Italy. Kroeger's monograph *The Great Divide*, a collaboration with Alberto Manguel, was published in 2001. *My Morning Walk* was published in 2009. He has taught at the University of Manitoba, University of Calgary, Alberta College of Art & Design, and the Banff Centre, and has lectured on his work across Canada as well as in Mexico. Recent exhibitions include *Midnight Sun Camera Obscura Project at the Helen Christou Gallery, University of Lethbridge* and *Landscapes Reconstructed at the Whyte Museum in Banff, Alberta*.

Over the last ten years Kroeger has been investigating the relationship between art and walking. These experiments have broadened his art practice to include teaching special topics courses, leading the 2007 Banff Centre Visual Arts Residency *Walking + Art*, co-founding an interdisciplinary research group called the Walking Lab in 2009, giving conference presentations, publishing, and leading guided walks. He has been an art educator for over twenty years and is currently Associate Professor in Visual Arts at Thompson Rivers University in Kamloops, British Columbia, Canada.

Edinburgh's Camera Obscura was established as part of "Short's Observatory and Museum of Science and Art" on its current site in the early 1850s by Maria Theresa Short. The instrument used for viewing today has three lenses instead of one, and projects onto a much larger viewing table. The amount of visible detail tends to depend on how bright a day it is outside, but the joy of seeing Edinburgh as it has been seen for over 160 years is remarkable. The nearby vortex, a tunnel which appears to rotate as would walk through it was also highly impressive, but remarkably disorienting at the same time. Everyone who visits Edinburgh's Camera Obscura and World of Illusions will form their own opinions of favourite elements. We've already mentioned the mirror maze, which is certainly one of ours. A camera obscura, also known as a pinhole camera, is the concept that made modern-day photography possible. Now use the same principle to turn a whole room into a walk-in camera! Instructions. Step 1: Find a room Find a room that has a window with a decent view. Since light rays travel in a straight line, they hit the objects outside, pass through the small opening of the lens, and transmit an upside-down image of the objects on the opposite wall. This is the same method cameras use to capture images. Step 7: Capture your creation Unless you want to cover your entire wall in photographic paper, you'll need a way to capture what you see. Grab a camera with an adjustable exposure setting and set the exposure to around 30 seconds, which is ideal for low-light photographs. Through the pinhole, an image of the scene outside would be projected on the opposite wall of the room, inverted and reversed, like looking in a mirror upside-down. In the Victorian era, the heyday of the camera obscura, these room-sized structures were built as tourist attractions along North American and European seacoasts and other scenic areas. But the natural optical law behind it has been known to humans since antiquity. As the technology advanced, the camera obscura's popularity flourished. A lens was added to the hole to enable brighter and sharper images, and a mirror was used to reflect the inverted image so it appeared right-side up on a viewing platform. By the late 1800s, public camera obscura were hot seaside attractions in Europe and the United States.