

Press Release

May 2017



Lumière!

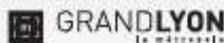
musée des
confluences

le cinéma inventé

13.06.2017

25.02.2018

Exposition, Lyon



museedesconfluences.fr   

P R E S S R E L E A S E

Lumière! Le cinéma inventé

[Lumière! The invention of the cinema]

From June 13, 2017 to February 25, 2018

The exhibition *Lumière ! Le cinéma inventé* is dedicated to Louis and Auguste Lumière, pioneers of the cinema in Lyon, and to their leading inventions in the field of images.

From the first reconstructed projection room to the screening of all of the 1,422 Lumière silent films on a masterful video wall, from the scale model of the original site of the Lumière factories to the 19th-century optical toys, among posters, Autochromes and panoramic or 3D views, the visitor is plunged into the heart of the creativity of the Lumière family.

The epic of Cinematography is the unifying theme of the exhibition. This technical prowess is both the culmination of preceding attempts and the founding act of a new artistic practice that even today revolutionises our vision of the world.

Curation: Thierry Frémaux and Jacques Gerber

Exhibition from June 13, 2017 to February 25, 2018 – musée des Confluences, Lyon. www.museedesconfluences.fr

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An exhibition designed by the Institut Lumière and produced by the Musée des Confluences.

This exhibition was initially produced in 2015 with the support of the CNC (Centre national du cinéma et de l'image animée / National Centre for Cinema and the Moving Image), the Greater Metropolitan Area of Lyon, the Region of Auvergne-Rhône-Alpes, the City of Lyon and the Region of Ile-de-France.

PRESS CONTACTS

Musée des Confluences
Claire-Cécile David - Tel. 04 28 38 12 14
claire-cecile.david@museedesconfluences.fr

Agence Bonne Réponse
Isabelle Charconnet – Tel. 04 72 40 54 10
i.charconnet@bonne-reponse.fr

1. Lumière, an industrial saga from Lyon

At the end of the 19th century, Antoine Lumière, a photographer, along with his two young sons began to take an interest in all the photographic innovations of the period. In 1881, the development by Louis, at the age of 17, of a “dry” photographic plate, opened the way for the development of this amateur practice, owing to the simplicity of its use, and it marked the point of departure of the industrial success of this family.



Photo : Auguste and Louis Lumière in their laboratory, circa 1925. Collection Institut Lumière

With the success of this invention, the father’s photographic studio was quickly replaced by an artisanal workshop, then by real factories. **“Antoine Lumière and sons” became the first European industry to manufacture photographic plates.** Thus, the Lumière brothers, when they invented the Cinematograph and filed for a patent in 1895, were already accomplished manufacturers, who worked all their lives to innovate in the field of photography and the cinema.



Advertisement for Lumière Lumichrome Film, circa 1935. Collection Institut Lumière

2. The Cinematograph, a technical outcome and a founding act

The interest in projecting and animating images goes back much further than the Cinematograph. Retracing the history of this invention means going back to the second half of the 17th century when the invention of the magic lantern enabled the projection of still images.

By the 19th century, optical toys and animation devices such as the Thaumatrope, the Phenakistiscope, the Zoetrope and the Praxinoscope illustrated a number of more or less successful attempts to put pictures into motion. The invention of chronophotography led to research on a tool to record successive photographic images and gave birth to the camera. **Thomas Edison's invention of the Kinetograph and the Kinetoscope** made it possible to record images and then to view them, marking a decisive step.

Wanting to make viewing moving images collective rather than individual, the Lumière brothers conducted research on chronophotography and created prototypes of devices that projected large, successive, animated images on a screen. **At the end of 1894, Louis finally found the solution in the mechanism of a sewing machine.**

By putting together all these previous inventions, the Lumière brothers developed the Cinematograph, literally "a record of movement", for which **they filed the patent on February 13, 1895.**



Magic Lantern by
Lapierre (circa 1850)
Photo by Jean Luc
Mege – Collection
Institut Lumière



The first film device to be mass-produced, starting from the end of December 1895, the Cinematograph could record images, project them and copy them. Photo: Cinematograph n°1 projecting a film (December 1895) photo by Pierre Aubert – Collection Institut Lumière

At that time, it used filmstrips that were 35 mm wide, a format that would become standard in the film industry up to the invention of digital cinematography at the beginning of the next millennium.

The Lumière brothers proved to be tireless inventors. After this revolutionary invention and its enormous success, they didn't stop there. In the years which followed, they invented and marketed:

- the **Autochrome**, the first colour photography process,
- the **Kinora**, a viewer that flipped through a series of frames taken from Lumière films
- the **Photorama**, a device for taking panoramic photos and projecting them at 360°,
- a camera using **75 mm** film,
- and even a process for **3D films!**



Autochrome: Andrée Lumière and his cousin Madeleine in 1910 – Lumière Autochrome Plate. Lumière Family / Collection Institut Lumière

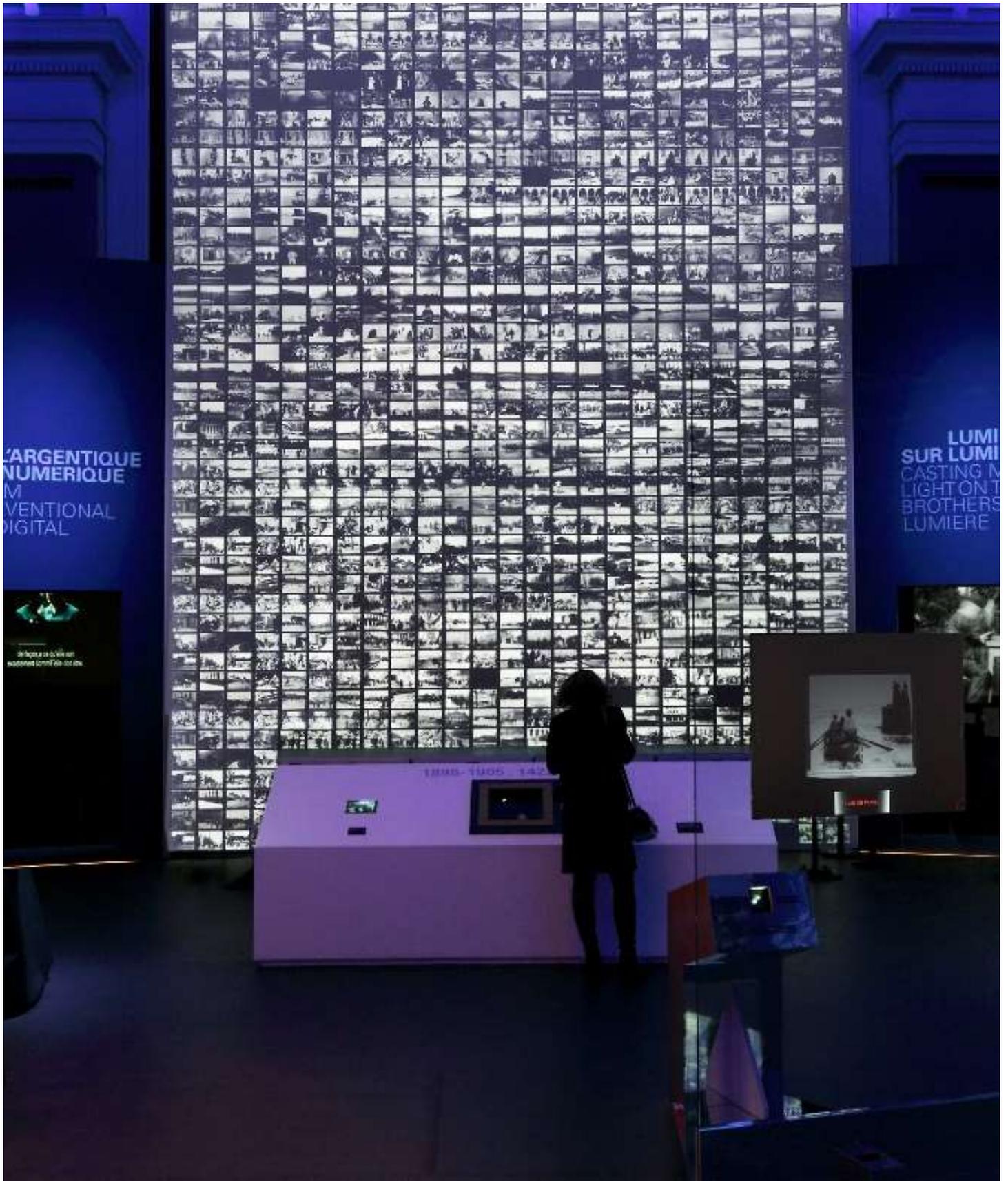


Photo: Wall of 1,422 films (Exhibition *Lumière ! Le cinéma inventé* at the Grand Palais) photo by Pascal Almayol – Collection Institut Lumière

3. A radical upheaval of our vision of the world and our practices

The Cinematograph was much more than technical progress. The Cinematograph was already the entire cinema.

Louis Lumière's invention was the product of creative inspiration, of an unlimited imagination and an invaluable vision of the world. The Cinematograph from the outset imposed its worlds on an active audience. **By raising questions on production, by imagining subjects that would inspire hundreds of producers, by sending operators to the four corners of the globe, Lumière was acting as a producer.**

Louis Lumière was not a sort of Mr. Jourdain who invented motion pictures without knowing it; he was the 1st filmmaker for whom the exhibition reveals the richness, creativity and modernity of his work.

Through their films, the Lumière brothers opened up a window on the world, recording the daily life of the period but also offering an original vision of distant countries and cultures. Moreover, these films formed the genesis of cinematography and of the development of a major new form of artistic expression.

The Cinematograph was also the **founding element of a new form of collective entertainment**, which made its debut with the first public screening of Lumière films at the **Salon Indien** in Paris, for 33 people. Very quickly, thousands of enthusiastic spectators hurried to attend screenings of the Cinematograph. Since this era and even today, at a time when films are shot digitally, the public continues to laugh, cry or shiver in darkened theatres.



Re construction of the *Salon Indien*, 14 boulevard des Capucines (December 28, 1895) (Exhibition *Lumière ! Le cinéma inventé* at the Grand Palais) photo by Pascal Almyel – Collection Institut Lumière

4. A look back on the history of the cinema, the contemporaries of the Lumière brothers

The story of the birth of the cinema would not be complete without referring to the major roles played by some of the contemporaries of the Lumière Brothers, such as **Charles Pathé** and **Léon Gaumont**, who produced many films during this era, and the producer **Georges Méliès**, who left a fundamental mark on the early stages of cinematography and particularly on special effects.



L'homme à la tête de caoutchouc [The man with a rubber head] by Georges Méliès (1901)

5. From silver emulsion to digital

Since the advent of the film that enabled light to be printed on its sensitive surface, cinematography has undergone many technical transformations. **The transition from silver emulsion, a physical support, to digital, a virtual support**, considerably changed filming and projection systems and also the patterns of consumption of images.

This change affected the very essence of the cinema. It redefined professional environments and gave rise to new aesthetic theories. It also gave rise to questions on the future of the collective experience in the classic cinema hall, in the light of the individual experience on the miniature screen of a portable telephone.

To go further

Lyon was the first setting for their earliest films: aside from the very first, world famous "*Sortie d'usine*" [workers leaving the factory], several of them, as well as the Autochromes and a photodrama view provide us with a precious record of the city at the turn of the 20th century.



Collection Institut Lumière

musée des confluences

Press area

Press releases, files and images:

http://www.museedesconfluences.fr/fr/espace_presse

Practical information



Adress

86 quai Perrache, 69002 Lyon –
France

Téléphone

(+33) 04 28 38 12 12

Opening hours

Tuesdays to Fridays from 11:00 am
to 7:00 pm

Saturdays and Sundays from 10:00
am to 7:00 pm

open late until 10:00 pm on
Thursdays

Closed

Mondays and public holidays
(January 1, May 1 and December 25)

Rates

Adults full rate: € 9.00

Children and students under 26:
Free