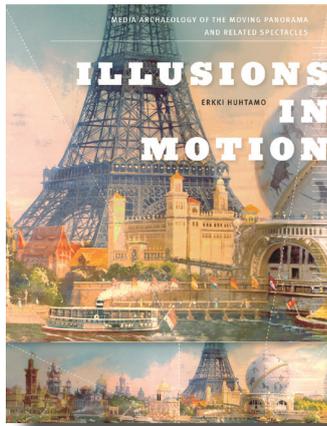


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Illusions in Motion

Media Archaeology of the Moving
Panorama and Related Spectacles

by **Erkki Huhtamo**

“A pioneer of the media archaeological methodology, Erkki Huhtamo reveals in this book his roots as a cultural historian. Illusions in Motion is painstakingly well researched and meticulously composed. Besides excavating the histories of this neglected medium, the moving panorama, it offers an empirically grounded example of how to research media cultures. Huhtamo shows us what fantastic results patient research can achieve.”

—**Jussi Parikka**, media theorist and Reader in Media & Design, Winchester School of Art, UK

“An intelligent and thorough introduction to this largely forgotten media has been sorely needed, and now we have it. Erkki Huhtamo has a commendably crisp style. He is not content to recite the huge number of facts he has so meticulously assembled. He consistently puts his facts into context, and as the fascinating story of moving panoramas unfolds he makes sure we are fully equipped to appreciate it.”

—**Ralph Hyde**, author of *Panoromania!*

“Erkki Huhtamo’s remarkable book is a massive archaeological dig revealing a long lost city that we still inhabit, carefully dusting off the foundation of the illusions that continue to move across our screens, walls and cities. With a quarter century of focused, original research in numerous languages it sets the scholarly standard for media archaeology, a historical enterprise that gauges itself on relevance to the present. On that count Illusions in Motion informs an extraordinary, rolling range where painting meets architecture meets theater meets cinema that scrolls into all the screens, immersions and augmentations of today.”

—**Douglas Kahn**, Research Professor, National Institute for Experimental Arts, University of New South Wales, Sydney

Beginning in the late eighteenth century, huge circular panoramas presented their audiences with resplendent representations that ranged from historic battles to exotic locations. Such panoramas were immersive but static. There were other panoramas that moved—hundreds, and probably thousands of them. Their history has been largely forgotten. In *Illusions in Motion*, Erkki Huhtamo excavates this neglected early manifestation of media culture in the making. The moving panorama was a long painting that unscrolled behind a “window” by means of a mechanical cranking system, accompanied by a lecture, music, and sometimes sound and light effects. Showmen exhibited such panoramas in venues that ranged from opera houses to church halls, creating a market for mediated realities in both city and country.

In the first history of this phenomenon, Huhtamo analyzes the moving panorama in all its complexity, investigating its relationship to other media and its role in the culture of its time. In his telling, the panorama becomes a window for observing media in operation. Huhtamo explores such topics as cultural forms that anticipated the moving panorama; theatrical panoramas; the diorama; the “panoromania” of the 1850s and the career of Albert Smith, the most successful showman of that era; competition with magic lantern shows; the final flowering of the panorama in the late nineteenth century; and the panorama’s afterlife as a topos, traced through its evocation in literature, journalism, science, philosophy, and propaganda.

Erkki Huhtamo, media historian and pioneering media archaeologist, is Professor in the Department of Design Media Arts at the University of California, Los Angeles. He is the coeditor of *Media Archaeology: Approaches, Applications, and Implications*.

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