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Viewing Souvenirs: Peepshows and the International Expositions

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Abstract

This article considers how the international exposition was represented in peepshow souvenirs, folding paper devices that gave a three-dimensional view of the interior. Using Walter Benjamin's notion of the world's fair as a phantasmagoria, I argue that the optical souvenirs produced for

international expositions reconfirmed the enchanted visual experience in a way that other mass-produced souvenirs could not and, moreover, that this held implications for both popular consumption and collective memory.

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