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# Lewis Carroll Review

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The Reviewing Journal of the Lewis Carroll Society

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## Editor's Welcome

I am honoured and excited to take over the editorship of the Lewis Carroll Review from Amanda Lastoria, in what is turning out to be exciting times for Carrollians. This issue appears in a politically eventful time that has already had an immense Carrollian echo, which this issue will honour in a themed section on 'Alice and Satire'. It will also give space to some of the authors who have chosen *Alice* as a medium to reflect on recent political, social and cultural developments in the section 'Five Questions'.

*Alice* has always been political right from its creation to more recent times, and sense and nonsense, reality and fiction freely intermingle in the guise of Carroll's creations. Since the Hansard, the archive of all parliamentary debates at the Westminster parliament, went online, it has recorded 148 spoken references to 'Alice in Wonderland', 35 to 'Lewis Carroll', 38 to the 'Queen of Hearts', 87 to the 'Red Queen' (most of them, in fact, referring the Queen of Hearts), 15 to the 'White Rabbit', 9 to the 'Mad Hatter' and 10 to the 'Mad Tea-Party' – more than 150 years after the publication of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*.

Popular (more or less accurate) direct quotations from the *Alice* books include 'verdict first, sentence afterwards' (Conservative MP Stephen Phillips's opinion of the Leveson enquiry in 2011), 'six impossible things before breakfast', or 'down the rabbit hole' (Labour Co-operative Chris Leslie on the European Union Withdrawal Bill in December 2017). Occasionally, there is mention of the author's local links, as in a speech of David Moat, MP for Warrington near Lewis Carroll's birthplace Daresbury: he experienced the first weeks of being an MP as 'curiouser and curiouser' (June 2010). Most frequently *Alice* is referenced – liberally – in the vein of 'Alice in Wonderland Economics' (of which the whole political spectrum from George Osborne to the Greek government have been accused at one stage) to label, more or less accurately, a political decision, actor, or event 'mad' or topsy-turvy, from HS2 to Brexit.

That *Alice* is engrained in the public consciousness of its author's homeland is hardly necessary to reiterate, but these references to it at the heart of British governance, an institutional embodiment of those rules Carroll's work famously lampoons, illustrate its legacy as a work of satire which has itself become the vehicle for satire. *Alice* has become a diagnostic device for madness.

While in the last two years the number of *Alice* parodies spiked in the wake of Brexit and the American presidential elections, this phenomenon is nearly as old as the *Alice* books themselves.

The Society's president Brian Sibley celebrated the sesquicentenary of the publication of *Alice* in 2015 with the exhibition 'Alice in Cartoonland', which showed, amongst others, that seemingly no British Prime Minister or high-ranking politician has been spared the fate of being turned into (at least) one of Carroll's characters. Well-known examples include Linley Sambourne's *Punch* caricature 'Alice in Thunderland' of Harcourt and Chamberlain as Red and White Queen, Harold Wilson as Alice, Tony Blair as the Cheshire Cat, or, more recently David Cameron as Mad Hatter and Theresa May as Queen of Hearts



(both illustrated by Steve Bell for the *Guardian*) or John Minnion's Brexit-themed Jabberwocky parody ('Calloo-Calais!'). As the exhibition showed, *Alice* is versatile and appears in nearly every caricaturist's portfolio – not always strictly politically. Tom Gauld presents her as sufferer of an array of food allergies thus justifying the adverse effects of Wonderland's food and drink.

*Alice*'s origins are of course entangled with the world of satire, one the one hand, through Carroll's early and academic parodies and satire, but, on the other hand, in its illustrations by *Punch* cartoonist John Tenniel. Critics such as Michael Hancher have illuminated the many staples of Victorian caricature persevered in the *Alice* illustrations, which have since almost exclusively been associated with the visual culture of *Alice*. Tenniel's illustrations have provided a visual language for modern satirists to express their diagnoses of madness and disorder in their own times and societies. As a questioning outsider, Alice herself acts as an ambassador exploring the new and unfamiliar, while the literary and visual imagery of *Alice* provides familiarity and orientation in a bewildering world, which is at the same time undercut with curiosity, critical sharpness, the tension resolved through the cathartic quality of humour. Thus, *Alice* has maintained a central role in the popular political discourse, which this issue of the Lewis Carroll Review will explore through both the renewed scholarly interest in, and the fruits of a new age of popularity for *Alice* as satire.

**Franziska Kohlt**

## *Alice and Satire*

*Alice's Adventures in Punch 1864-1950*

Andy Malcolm and George Walker

Cheshire Cat Press, 2017

Hardback, \$389.00 US (c. £289.00)

Andy Malcolm and George Walker of Cheshire Cat Press have designed a beautiful book for our shelves. George Walker created the lovely wood-cut illustrations for *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (1988) and *Through the Looking Glass* (1998), also for Cheshire Cat Press. That project, to produce the first hand-printed Canadian editions of the *Alice* books, was the brain child of Joe Brabant, a Canadian collector of all things Lewis Carroll. It is fitting that Cheshire Cat Press has now published another project conceived by Joe. In his introduction, Edward Wakeling, remembers Brabant and their common interest in *Alice in Wonderland*, *Punch* magazine, and the scope of Carroll's influence on society. Joe had the idea for a book titled *Alice's Adventures in Punch* and together they started working on the project. Joe compiled Carrollian references and wrote the text, and Edward collected the illustrations. The project was shelved after Brabant's death in 1997. Years passed, and Andy Malcolm started collecting Carroll related *Punch* cartoons and, after conversations with Edward, the book idea was revived.

*Alice's Adventures in Punch* is a limited edition of 42. The book is beautifully bound in hunter green cloth with the *Punch* jester figure embossed in gold, and the same figure is used in a repeating pattern to create the endpapers. There is a matching slipcase for the volume. The plates were created from high resolution scans made directly from the original *Punch* publications and then printed by hand on rag paper. It is a high-quality production, with attention paid to detail. This book gathers together all the major appearances of *Alice* characters in *Punch* cartoons. They are printed in chronological order and the book includes Tenniel's prototype illustration of Alice from 1864 on the title page. Fifty-seven cartoons in total are reproduced, most of them are full page. The book includes my favourite: "Tenniel's 'Alice' Reigns Supreme" by Edward Tennyson Reed. The copyright on *Alice's Adventures* ran out in 1907 and the market was suddenly flooded with new editions by different illustrators. It is a clever example of *Punch* magazine supporting one of their own against 'upstarts' like Arthur Rackham, Millicent Sowerby, Thomas Maybank, and Charles Robinson. Some of the cartoons have the bonus of Carroll poem parodies, something I am fond of. There are opportunities here for research to find the sources for some of the now obscure historical references in the cartoons.

While the book is beautiful, it is also informative thanks to Edward Wakeling's introduction. He covers the history of the magazine which John Tenniel, the original illustrator of the *Alice* books, joined in 1850 to later became its chief artist.

Would Tenniel be remembered today had he not illustrated the *Alice* books? Wakeling believes the artist's body of work in *Punch* would qualify him for lasting fame. However, he *did* illustrate the *Alice* books and his pictures then influenced other artists. It became something of a circular relationship: Carroll chose Tenniel because the artist was famous for his contributions to *Punch*, and then because Tenniel worked for the magazine, Alice and the other *Wonderland* and *Looking Glass* characters frequently appeared in the pages of the magazine with Tenniel, and the other staff artists, often parodying his *Alice* drawings. Also included in the book is another *Punch* artist with Carroll connections, Harry Furniss, who illustrated the *Sylvie and Bruno* books and later did his own drawings for *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (beautifully reprinted in portfolio format by Cheshire Cat Press in 2015).

It seems that the *Alice* books are the perfect source material for poking fun at just about anything. Part of that is the adaptability of the title: Alice in Fill-in-the-Blankland. In the pages of *Punch* Alice visited Blunderland, Thunderland, Bumbleland and Rationland. *Alice* is an especially good choice when the situation being satirized is surreal or crazy, as so often happens in politics. There always seems to be a Lewis Carroll quote, poem, or character that is perfect to capture the humour of the situation. It helps that the *Alice* books are known to almost everyone because they are an enduring part of popular culture. This was certainly true in the golden age of *Punch* magazine where Alice really did reign supreme as the Queen of Satire.

**Dayna Nuhn** founded the Lewis Carroll Society of Canada. She is a Carroll collector specializing in ephemera, which is known in some Carrollian circles as "Flat *Alice*".



Leavis Carroll [Lucien Young]

*Alice in Brexitland*

Illustrated by Ollie Mann

Ebury Press, 2017

Hardback, £7.99

ISBN 9781785036965

The *Alice* books have provided material for generations of political commentators; indeed they are something of a satirist's dream. Alice's long and venerable political career stretches right back to John Tenniel's cartoons for *Punch*. As with these early examples, much of the usage is primarily visual, immediately apprehensible and quick to take in. It is not – ironically – drawn out. But do the books lend themselves to more sustained satirical probing, to longer exposition in narrative form?

The recently published *Alice in Brexitland* suggests that they do indeed. The basic, and much-used, conceit here is that Alice enters and traverses an insane, topsy-turvy world. Combining familiar scenes and figures from both Alice books, Young and illustrator Mann also inject much new material, including a trip to the United States and another to the House of Parliament, a paean to Britain by Nigel Farage in the guise of the Cheshire Cat, and a horde of the Corbyn-pillar's protectors, the Momentums, stumbling blindly over a cliff's edge. Alice shrinks and grows not as a result of eating cake but of reading newspapers: the *Daily Murdoch* inflates and aggrandises while the reassuring if smug *Gordian* brings Alice back down to size. Similarly, Young blends familiar phrasing with new, if decidedly Carrollian, wordplay. For instance, Alice falls 'down, down, down' as usual but then 'realised that she had been falling for a good ten minutes (though, personally, she would have deemed them a rather bad ten minutes)'.

The closing verse presents comedy as a comforting balm, but the book also prompts a range of other emotions and impressions. There are points which feel decidedly uncanny: Humpty Dumpty, and notably his proprietorial attitude towards the meaning of words, is so *exactly* right and appropriate for Donald Trump that Carroll gains a sort of retrospective clairvoyance, as though he knew only too well what was coming (he was, indeed, never very keen on Americans). Within Young's text, this is matched by Alice's own clear-sightedness; her righteous indignation calling out the inanities of the political system and of Brexit in particular is just so *right*. The glimpse that Young provides of an alternative outcome on Alice's awakening – in which 99% vote to remain and the United States has its first woman president – is galling and frustrating but mostly just quite sad.

As Young himself acknowledges (see 'Five Questions'), this is a highly topical book whose detail will dissipate as surely as the various in-jokes between Carroll and the Liddell children that survived into the published work. Like Carroll's manuscript, *Alice in Brexitland* is a gift book. But unlike Carroll's work, and despite its printed form, it is ephemeral and already dated. Alice has a whole series of encounters with (so-called) leading politicians of the day, but as I write this review in France in April 2018, I cannot help but miss the absence of Emmanuel Macron (as fawn? Leaping into Melania's arms?). There are, then, inevitable omissions in what is a fundamentally transient and evanescent work. Yet *Alice in Brexitland* provides a historical record not only of specific events (including the legal challenge conducted in 2017), but more importantly perhaps, of a moment, a feeling, a widely shared sense of bewilderment and uncertainty.

**Kiera Vaclavik** is Professor of Children's Literature and Childhood Culture at Queen Mary, University of London. Her book on Alice's visual identity and dress ('Fashioning Alice: The Career of Lewis Carroll's Icon, 1860-1901') is due out with Bloomsbury Academic this year.

*Theresa Maybe in Brexitland*

Madeleine Kay (author and illustrator)

Alba White Wolf, 2017

Paperback, £5.00

ISBN 978-0995707412

Crowd-funded and multimedial, *Theresa Maybe in Brexitland* is a true twenty-first century Carrollian phenomenon. More than just a book, it is part of an ongoing performance. Madeleine Kay, who is also known as ‘EU Supergirl’, has appeared dressed as Alice/ Theresa Maybe at protest marches and other political events, and her book invites its readers to participate in the *Theresa Maybe in Brexitland* performance themselves. It is delivered with badges, postcards and posters; there is even a mini online video game. *Theresa Maybe* is a perfect example of *Alice*’s satirical versatility, and Kay is a master in drawing on her recognisability when acting on the public political stage – with proven effect. *Theresa Maybe in Brexitland* and its associate publications are highly decorated. The book’s cover appeared as a postcard and won the ‘Young Talent’ award of the Great British Postcard competition. A matching poster has become part of the display of the National Museum of Justice, at which Kay performed her accompanying own Brexit-themed protest songs. Kay herself has recently won the title of ‘Young European of the Year’ of the prestigious Schwarzkopf Foundation for her political outreach work.

With this background, *Theresa Maybe in Brexitland* may strike readers primarily as a piece of activism. However, despite its clear political line, it stands tall as a piece of literary satire in its own right. As the title indicates, *Theresa Maybe* stars the Prime Minister as Alice who follows Dave the Rabbit down the Brexit Hole, and, after chaos ensues, obtains ‘the Brexit’. Although no one quite knows what it is or what it does, it is much sought after and fought over, like a near-mythological relic reminiscent of the Holy Grail – Monty Python style.

Kay’s work competes against a flood of similar caricatures and satires, such as Lucien Young’s (Leavis Carroll’s) *Alice in Brexitland* and makes many of the same connections. David Cameron appears as the White Rabbit, well groomed and ever on the run from the Brexit. Then there’s Dumpty Trumpty, and the Corbynpillar, which gives very good advice but rarely follows it, and interestingly changes its colour: it appears blue but shows its real colour red when challenged. And Theresa Maybe also encounters Tweedle Boris and Tweedle Johnson, which she cannot help but think look exactly like ‘a pair of great public-school boys’. Original creations include Nick Clegg who appears as the ‘Hallamshire Cat’ (a pun, perhaps, on the famous Devonshire Cat pub in Kay’s home town and Clegg’s former ward Sheffield Hallam). He grins at everybody ‘optimistically’, perpetually

warning of the Brexit, but disappears immediately upon further enquiry. The Lion and the Unicorn survive on ‘hopes and dreams and wishful thinking.’ Although some come off better than others, no part of the political spectrum is spared.

Kay’s satire is the strongest when she plays directly on Carroll. She often parallels Carroll’s text, swapping a few words here and there, or placing familiar characters in unfamiliar scenes, for a striking effect. Farage the Mad Hatter, seated at the same perfectly enormous table as he does in Carroll’s work, likewise cries ‘no room’ as he is not in the habit of welcoming guests. But when he adds, ‘If you sat down... you would expect to be served tea, then you would want milk and sugar and after that you would probably ask for jam and scones and teacakes as well!’, he still sounds like Carroll’s Hatter, and yet uncannily like his real-life model. And that Dave the Rabbit suddenly ends up in the pig sty, naturally located in the Duchess’s back garden, is certainly no coincidence. Carroll’s characters integrate seamlessly into the quirkiest episodes of the Brexit-saga. In a melodramatic interlude the melancholic Bread-and-butterfly soliloquises on never having found its true fulfilment of being smothered in Marmite – as there was no Marmite anymore in Brexitland (when Theresa falls into the Brexithole, instead of a jam jar, she floats past a Marmite jar). Besides characters from the *Alice* books, the text also includes cameos from Oz and Narnia, for instance when Theresa Maybe in vain attempts to click her (‘very expensive’) red shoes to transport her home. The urge to escape is not the only thing that makes Theresa May stand out among the other characters. In the role of Alice she is perpetually frustrating because of the jarring dissonance with her Carrollian model. She initially appears to share Alice’s curiosity, but then immediately falters; different from Carroll’s Alice, she does not serve as an impartial observer, but often merely follows, mostly misguidedly, the commands of the Wonderland creatures.

Embedding phrases of the real-world Brexit discourse into the nonsense narrative is also a sobering mirror to the readers’ reality. When upon Dave’s enquiry what the Brexit might be or do, Theresa proudly announces that ‘Brexit means Brexit!’ our own reality *is* the nonsense. In another instance Theresa Maybe paints the Brexit red-white-and-blue (‘a red-white-and-blue Brexit’) to match her new dress: a superficial act intended only to impress (Theresa changes out of Alice’s trademark blue dress, which is in this version adorned with yellow stars, into a union jack patterned one, to allude to Theresa May’s support of the Remain side of the referendum prior to being put in charge of Brexit). Kay doubles down on the real-life absurdity in the conclusion of the book. May acquires the nickname Theresa Mayhem – which seems so allegorical one nearly forgets it stems from the reader’s world. When she is awoken by her husband, and recounts tales of red buses, Farage the Hatter and Marmite shortages, he pronounces: ‘Let’s be glad it was just a dream. Why, I should think if those ghastly things in Brexitland were

actually to happen, people would start calling you Theresa Mayhem!' Both, the relief to return to a less mad world, and cathartic recollection of the wondrous dream Alice's older sister in the epilogue of the original *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* fall flat completely in this version as the 'tales' remain part of the readers post-referendum reality in which they are far from concluded.

*Theresa Maybe*, unlike some of its contemporary more strictly literary satires, taps into a wider tradition of political protest art. When it mocks Brexit artefacts such as the infamous red bus through such Carrollian set pieces as the Mouse's Tale poem, one is reminded of the art and song of the Woodstock era. The hand-drawn and coloured characters, and the occasional quirks of Kay's self-published book strengthen this flair. *Theresa Maybe in Brexitland* is an artefact of the young British political debate that has been rekindled since the referendum, and will be found as such in dissertations and museums, capturing for posterity the turmoil and Alice-in-Wonderland absurdity (in the parliamentary use of the term) that has left many a public commentator wondering whether we are in fact all mad here.

**Franziska Kohlt** is currently completing her doctorate at the University of Oxford. She has published on Lewis Carroll and Victorian Psychiatry, on George MacDonald's science and fantasy, and many other subjects in Victorian literature and science. She is also co-curating the exhibition 'Insects through the Looking-Glass' which will open at the Oxford Story Museum in June 2018.



### Five Questions for Lucien Young

(1) *How would you describe yourself in three sentences?*

I'm a comedy writer with literary pretensions. I studied English at Cambridge (well, I say 'studied' – I mostly did sketch shows, then got drunk in the theatre bar). I was born in Newcastle but lack the macho bearing and fun accent that this implies.

(2) *How did you first come across Lewis Carroll and Alice? What's your first memory?*

I read *Alice* at an early age, but it's something I've often come back to over the years, each time discovering further intricacies and delights. Kind of like *The Simpsons*.

(3) *Why was Alice the vehicle you chose for what you wanted to do?*

If there's one word that sums up the current political situation here and abroad, it's 'absurd'. Lewis Carroll, with his logician's brain and playful demeanour, was



an exquisite chronicler of absurdity. Looking around a world where the dumbest man in America is its leader, and Boris Johnson tells Brexiteers they can have their cake and eat it too, I felt that the only adequate comparison was with topsy-turvy Wonderland.

*(4) What do you think your story will mean to people in 50 years? What would you like them to think?*

I hope it means anything to them! Topical comedy always comes with a sell-by date, and I imagine readers in 2068 would scratch their heads at references to Toblerones and Piers Morgan. Plus, the less they remember about Trump, the better... The *Alice* books have withstood the test of time because they satirise the human condition, rather than transitory figures and events. I don't expect my book to do the same – though I'd be happy if it sold as many copies...

*(5) And, finally - which is your favourite Alice character?*

As much as Humpty Dumpty embodies the spirit of our age, I'd have to go with the Caterpillar. When all's said and done, he's a chilled-out stoner, and I wouldn't mind trying what he's got in that hookah.



### **Five Questions for Madeleine Kay**

*(1) How would you describe yourself in three sentences?*

I'm a 24-year-old political activist, singer, writer and artist from Sheffield. I'm probably best known for being ejected from a Brussels press conference dressed as "EU Supergirl", but I have recently been awarded "Young European of the Year" for my work campaigning to stop Brexit and promote the EU. I'm basically a political influencer with alternative methods; I use fancy dress costumes, art, music and literature to communicate and inspire others in the hope that our collective efforts can achieve positive change.

*(2) How did you first come across Lewis Carroll and Alice? What is your first memory?*

I'm not sure I could pinpoint a first memory. It was a hallmark of my childhood. It could have been reading the books with my parents, watching the Disney animation with my siblings, or my younger brother's 'Alice in Wonderland' themed Naming Party (I was dressed as playing card, along with my 2 older brothers because the nanny insisted on being Alice). As a young teenager I used to read the books to my little sister, who is 10 years younger than me, and I watched the somewhat disappointing Tim Burton adaptation in both French and English. My seventeenth birthday party was also "Alice in Wonderland" themed, I wore this

amazing floral outfit and head piece inspired by Dali's depiction of Alice. All my friends and siblings dressed as characters (my friend Jess dressed as the caterpillar in a blue sleeping bag was hysterically funny), and I created an amazing spread of "drink me" jellies, mushroom and caterpillar cupcakes and playing card jammy dodgers. So the books have always been a source of cultural inspiration for me.

(3) *Why was Alice the vehicle you chose for what you wanted to do?*

There were so many parallels between Lewis Carroll's work and what was occurring in the British political landscape, I was constantly plagued by both the literary and visual metaphors. This idea of being a young woman lost in a fantasy wonderland, where the political figures are talking nonsensical gobbled goop, and life seemingly having taken a turn for the surreal. Initially my ideas took the form of cartoons, in which I depicted the politicians as the characters in the books and referenced relevant quotes in the speech bubbles. But eventually the niggle became an urge to go the whole hog and rewrite the text as a satirical parody. I had already crowdfunded a children's picture book, so I thought why not try crowdfunding a book for adults? After Ken Clarke came out with his "Brexit Wonderland" speech, it seemed the perfect opportunity to send the books to lobby MPs and emphasise the absurdity of what is currently taking place in the UK.

(4) *What do you think your story will mean to people in 50 years? What would you like them to think?*

I hope my version of Alice in Wonderland is a fairly accurate record of this bizarre period in British political history. I included all the key political figures influencing Brexit as the characters, and I followed the events around the EU referendum quite closely in the plot. Ultimately, I would hope that people still get some enjoyment out of the book and that perhaps it will serve as a warning to beware how quickly a country can descend into madness.

(5) *And, finally - which is your favourite Alice character?*

It has to be the Cheshire Cat. The voice of reason and guidance amidst the madness, precisely because he accepts the madness for what it is. That's why I made Nick Clegg the cat in my book, I have great admiration for both of them. I also have a little pendant with the Cheshire Cat's smile hanging above my bed, he gives me advice when I'm stumbling through this wonderland of life.



## Other Reviews

*Victorian Giants: The Birth of Art Photography*

Curated by Phillip Prodger with special selections by HRH the Duchess of Cambridge

The National Portrait Gallery, Saint Martin's Place, London

1 March - 20 May 2018

Tickets £10/£8.50 concession/ Free for gallery members

Exhibition Catalogue: National Portrait Gallery, 2018

Hardback, £29.95

ISBN 978-1855147065

This National Portrait Gallery exhibition is a must-see for anyone with an interest in the history of photography in general and art photography in particular; capturing the moment in the mid-1800s when the right compound of technological advancement, society and culture developed and fixed them into a form we still recognise today. As such it performs the magic trick of all photography in directly linking observer with a real present now past.

The exhibition gives a snapshot of this discipline-defining history through the lenses of the four eponymous 'Giants': Oscar Rejlander, Julia Margaret Cameron, Lady Clementia Hawarden and – of course – Lewis Carroll, not only through their art works but negatives, collection albums, studies and a short film of the wet-collodion process: the technical pivot on which the popularisation and increased cultural cachet of photography in the Victorian era depended.

The real strength of this exhibition – as the early Rejlander composite photographs – is its sensibility in juxtaposing images to establish a complex narrative. The four 'giants' knew and influenced one other, visited and displayed in the same exhibitions, depicted the same popular artistic themes, used the same models and explicitly produced works in dialogue with each other. In his introduction to the accompanying catalogue Philip Prodger describes this as a 'complex web of photographic "call and response"' and his curation brings it out skilfully. In addition to his introduction the catalogue includes three essays by Prodger which provide a great deal of extra backgrounding and detailed dissection and analysis of key works both in terms of composition and context. The unfortunate but perhaps inevitable trade-off for emphasising the complex and organic richness of the four giants' work is a lack of focus as striking that which is distinctive in Cameron's work – and was accordingly lampooned by Carroll. To a certain extent Prodger's essays are a victim of his own success, and their nominal topics ('One Giant Leap', 'State of the Art' and 'To Rome and Back') and argumentative thrusts are entirely lost in the rhizomatic story that they disclose.

The catalogue also features a preface by the Duchess of Cambridge who, with research support from the Edward Wakeling and the Lewis Carroll Society, wrote her Master's dissertation on Carroll's photographs of children. Despite her interest and knowledge her prologue is short and facile, dutiful royal patronship elbowing out scholarship, with just a simplistic but tantalising reference to role of childhood in the Victorian social and artistic imagination. The Duchess's contribution to the exhibition itself is more palpable and satisfying; she has selected a handful of more offbeat works for her personal analysis with a keen sense for how these more uncharacteristic works inform and strengthen the more general picture and deepen the intertextual effect which is the hallmark of the exhibition.

Perhaps the best example of this effect – to Carrollian sensibilities at least – are three portraits of Alice Liddell. One of Carroll's earliest photographs from 1858 shows Alice in profile, clutching the chair back for support and looking out of frame to the right, her gaze is caught – with a little Looking-glass and photographic magic – by Cameron's 1870s Alice, instantly grown larger and posed in deliberate reflection to her younger self. The proscenium created by this time-defying eye contact becomes the frame for Carroll's well-known final photograph of Alice from 1870, in which she lowers directly through the lens at the viewer; the pictures and their arrangement interconnecting to create a composition which is both rich in layers of historical insight and a powerful intertextual and aesthetic piece in itself.

That much said, fitting four prolific artists and their complex interactions into the Gallery's relatively small exhibition space has its limitations and there is little that will be unfamiliar to anyone with even a slight knowledge of Carroll's photography. In addition, the 'giants' represent only the most well beaten of paths through this field and some distinctively loom larger than others; Carroll and Hawarden are dwarfed while Cameron, and Rejlander especially, loom large. In terms of the catalogue the compositional elements of the exhibition just don't translate as well into book form; for the most part the essays and the pictures they discuss are segregated and the juxtaposition quite literally loses a dimension in the move from gallery space to the linear progression of book pages. Although the catalogue compiles many interesting works and contains much interesting information and analysis it's format is an underexposed image of the exhibition itself, losing much of the detail and complexity which distinguishes it.

Tumbled all together the effect is that anyone whose interests are focused tightly on Carroll and his photography may come away feeling short-changed. If, however, the focus is expanded to take in the history and context of his photography, his colleagues, models and the discipline they skilfully posed and still frame today, then every facet of the composition can be said to have succeeded completely!

**James Lythgoe** is an informal enthusiast and formerly a researcher on Carroll at the University of York. His research focused on the linguistic features shared by Carrollian nonsense and the languages of psychosis. He lives in Manchester with a modest collection of *Alice* books and a cat named Lola but called by crooning improvised nonsense.



*Mad About the Hatter*

Dakota Chase

Harmony Ink, 2015

Paperback, \$14.99 US (c. £11.00)

ISBN 9781634761482

This sequel casts Alice as the married mother of two-year-old twins, Carol and Louis. But it is her 17-year-old brother Henry who lands without warning in the Wonderland he had always derided, accusing his sister of fabricating her childhood adventures. Alone and inept, he blunders from one danger to another. When the Red Queen learns that a Boy Alice is loose in her realm, she recalls the chaos wrought by his predecessor and frees an imprisoned Hatter – after 14½ years for murdering Time – to locate the interloper and bring him to her for execution. Failing that, Hatter’s head will be forfeit.

Under the pretext that only the Queen can send Henry home, Hatter strives to guide Henry through a series of hazardous zones, including the noisome Neverglades (watch out for tree sharks!). But Henry hates the weirdness of Wonderland and the two men irk one another. Another hazard to be negotiated is the Confection Mountains, where armies of giant bakers are at war with one another. Under a hail of lethal chocolate malt cannonballs covered in gingerbread crumbs, Henry and Hatter come to appreciate each another: ‘It wasn’t the first time Henry had kissed a boy ...’.

Hatter confesses he is meant to deliver Henry to the executioner’s axe. Having missed the Red Queen’s deadline, Red Guard soldiers come to arrest them. Taking refuge in the late White Queen’s derelict castle, they barely escape via the magic mirror in her bedroom. They emerge in Henry’s world, and it is Hatter’s turn to be either terrified or bemused by road traffic, skyscrapers, movies, fast food, etc. When he meets Alice and Henry’s ‘Uncle Leonard’, however, he instantly recognizes the Red King, whom he had believed was dead. It seems that Alice and the King fled from the Red Queen’s increasingly despotic rule through the same Looking Glass. Hearing how her vanity is only outdone by her wickedness, how she enjoys executions as much as croquet and that she had her own sister beheaded, he decides it is time to return and free Wonderland from her.

Re-entering the White Castle, they set out to complete the journey that was initially abandoned by Hatter and Henry. They break the arduous trek overnight as guests of Tweedledum and Tweedledee, but they are woken by the Red Guards who have come to arrest Hatter and Henry. The King convinces the soldiers that their loyalty is now to him. The trio enters the Red Castle to find that the deranged Red Queen's head has grown so big that the royal crown has to be suspended on wires above it. In the ensuing confrontation, she is overcome. Only then do we learn of the Cheshire Cat's Machiavellian role in bringing about the Red King's return. His Majesty appoints the White Rabbit as Royal Scribe and reinstates Hatter as Royal Hat-maker. Henry enjoys three idyllic months of sightseeing the best of Wonderland before deciding to return to his own time, place and family.

*Lewis Carroll Review* readers will question how Henry's romantic dalliance with Hatter will end, since – as long as Time continues to ignore him – Hatter does not age and Henry grows older? Then again, surely all of their hand-holding, hugging and kissing in Dakota Chase's story is problematic, given that Hatter must be middle-aged and Henry is still a teenager. Only on the final page do we learn the author's solution.

**Geoffrey Budworth** has been a Metropolitan Police inspector, a college lecturer, a swimming coach and latterly the freelance nonfiction author of numerous books, notably those on the art, craft and science of knots and rope-work. He lives in the cathedral city of Salisbury.



*It's Always Tea-Time: International Exhibition of Illustration*

With an introduction by Vappu Thurlow

Estonian Publishers Association, 2018

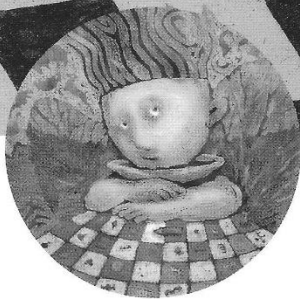
104pp, 77 colour illustrations and 72 monochrome photographs

Paperback, £8.50

ISBN 978-9949-9952-0-2

*The 'It's Always Tea-Time' catalogue is available for £9 (plus postage and packing) from: Lydia Dixon, The Story Museum, 42 Pembroke Street, Oxford OX1 1BP (01865-790050; [lydia.dixon@storymuseum.org.uk](mailto:lydia.dixon@storymuseum.org.uk); [www.storymuseum.org.uk](http://www.storymuseum.org.uk)). The exhibition is on show until 7 July 2018.)*

This lively and diverse exhibition of work by artists mainly from Eastern Europe and the Baltic States is a visual feast for all Carrollians – but, if you can't get to Oxford to see it, I urge you to buy the wonderfully illustrated catalogue.



## It's Always Tea-Time

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International Exhibition of Illustration

It opens with *It's Always Six O'clock*, an explanatory introduction (in English and Estonian) by the Tallinn-based art historian Vappu Thurlow who has some very illuminating things to say about each of the 72 works included in the original show (some further 20 paintings have since been added which do not appear in this catalogue). She also discusses Alician themes such as tea, time, madness, haste, size and dreams, as well as trotting out various known theories about the Hatter, Cheshire Cat, March Hare and White Rabbit.

A quotation she uses from Gaston Bachelard's *The Poetics of Space* seems particularly apt: 'What special depth there is in a child's daydream! And how happy the child who really possesses his moments of solitude! It is a good thing, it

*is even salutary, for a child to have periods of boredom, for him to learn how to know the dialectics of exaggerated play and causeless, pure boredom.'*

After the introduction, a whole page is given to each of the 72 works in the original exhibition, alongside brief information about the artist responsible, including their contact details should you want to talk to them about their work, or buy an artwork – which is tempting. At the back of the catalogue are monochrome shots of the artists themselves – interestingly, the women artists outnumber the men by about 5 to 1.

Working with the Estonian Publishers Association and the Estonian Children's Literature Centre, curator Viive Noor originally invited 72 (now expanded to over 90) artists from 19 different countries, including Finland, Germany, Georgia, Hungary, Iran, Israel, Italy, Spain, Poland, Portugal and Russia, to illustrate the Mad Tea-Party. The result is impressive: a wide diversity of styles, varied depiction of the characters and wide-ranging interpretation of the theme have produced a plethora of lasting and wildly individual impressions of taking tea with the Hatter, the March Hare, the Dormouse and Alice.

Inevitably, either consciously or unconsciously, echoes of the styles of other artists who have illustrated the *Alice* books have crept in – ranging from Arthur Rackham and Mervyn Peake to Max Ernst and Peter Blake – and can be discerned in illustrations that vary from the charming and sweetly innocent to the bizarre and downright disturbing.

The work of Estonian artists is heavily represented: that of Viive Noor herself is precise, neat, dainty and decorative, while her fellow Estonian artist Juss Piho presents a more rough, threatening image. In his dark glasses, the red and black harlequin March Hare by Anne Pikkov has the sinister air of a mafia boss about to play a hand of poker, or a magician's accomplice enjoying a cup of tea after the show; while Jüri Mildeberg's Alice appears in Duchampesque mode as a head emerging from a mobile kettle on wheels. In Anne Linnamägi's *Off with the Heads*, the Queen of Hearts is wielding a scythe and has sliced through some rose stems while, in the distance, the White Rabbit of March Hare wisely races away from her as fast as his legs can carry him. There is a touch of Maurice Sendak's Max in his wolf-suit from *Where the Wild Things Are* in Kadi Kurema's *A Mad Tea-Party*, while Kristi Kangilaski's *Alice and the Rabbit in a Dark Place* nods in the direction of Max Ernst.

Film has clearly had an influence too: you can almost hear the eerie chattering of the teeth in the Hare's skull in Italian artist Stefano Bessoni's *The March Hare* – just as in Jan Švankmajer's 1988 film, *Alice*. Mohammad Barrangi Fashtami from Iran draws on Islamic textile design and the printed word in his lithograph *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, while another Iranian artist, Mostafa Akbari,



has shrunk the characters from Wonderland and seated them around a round table that is an open pocket-watch – but as its hands are set at five o'clock it isn't tea-time yet! But really words cannot do justice to these amazing works of art. You must either go and see the show and/or buy the catalogue.

**Lindsay Fulcher**, Chairman of Lewis Carroll Society, has been a member of the Society since 1971. When not engaged with things Carrollian, she edits *Minerva: The International Review of Ancient Art and Archaeology* ([www.minervamagazine.com](http://www.minervamagazine.com)).



*The Curious Case of Mary Ann*

Jenn Thorson

Waterhouse Press, 2017

Paperback, \$15.99 US (c. £11.00)

ISBN 9780983804581

It was Mary Ann Carpenter, not Alice, who was born in Turvey not far from where the river Wabe wound and unwound through the Tulgey Barrens. Alice was an interloper with no business in Turvey or in Neath, for that matter. Being mistaken for Alice caused serious problems for Mary Ann who was only trying to solve the murder of her estranged father. Mary Ann so wished that she could have begun at the end and gone on until she came to the beginning and prevented his murder. Alas, some things could not be done backwards. And even Mary Ann's employer, Mr. Warren Rabbit, of Neath, mistook Alice for Mary Ann and blamed his own usually invisible housekeeper for growing too big for his house and half-destroying it. If it weren't for the tove, Douglas Divot, who introduced her to Lord Carmine and his son, Sir Rufus (prophesized to slay the Jabberwock!), Mary Ann might never have been able to attend the grand Unbirthday party of Queen Valentina and confront the Knave of Clubs who chopped off the head of her father in his workshop in front of her.

It is no mystery why many pastiches have been written based upon Lewis Carroll's two famed classic tales (those two tails belonging to the White Rabbit and the Jabberwock, respectively). What is a mystery is why Nobody has written a mystery in Wonderland like author Jenn Thorson. Upon my word, do the 221 pages of this novel novel hint that only a Sherlock Holmes could B the detective to solve this curious case? No, of course not – he has nothing to do with it, completely irrelevant, and what an irrelephant was doing in my pajamas I'll never know. The white rabbit's housekeeper becomes the prime suspect herself and must follow the clues to determine the motive for the murder (though no crows were harmed in the making of this miss story).

This whimsical tale reflects both the Wonder(land)ful approach of Carroll's writing as treacle well as the progressive gathering of logical clues in an illogical

land to discover the motive for murder. Was Rowan Carpenter's business partner and sailor, the walrus J. Sanford Banks a.k.a. Sandy, involved in the commission of the crime for his commission on the magic mirror commissioned by Warren Rabbit for the queen's Unbirthday? How did Mary Ann learn the swordsmanship she taught Sir Rufus which enabled him to de-feet and de-head the Jabberwock? Did the raths clam up for shellfish reasons or were the oysters just trying to shuck responsibility? How did Sir Rufus lose his sense of humour and how did Professor Goodnuff know that the creature with the body like a banana skin and wearing a false nose and moustache was a Running Joke?

Puns, portmanteaus and plenty of Carrollian references are properly proffered the purchaser of this pleasing pastiche. Thorson has fashioned some fascinating fanciful fiction for fans of frivolous fantasy and friends of frabjous foolishness. With all seriousness aside, I Heartily recommend *The Curious Case of Mary Ann* to any book Club member looking for a silly yet sophisticated successor to Sam Spade. This Diamond in the ruff ends with a promise that Mary Ann will return in another adventure as she escapes through the magic mirror pursued by Nothing but a lack of cards.

*The Curious Case of Mary Ann* is available on Amazon in both paperback and Kindle format [editor's comment: ...and, as of recently, also as an audiobook].

**Robert Stek** is a retired psychologist who worked in private practice as well as held managerial positions in mental health care delivery systems. He spontaneously memorized Jabberwocky as a young lad, discovered *The Annotated Alice* as a teenager, and is a relatively recent member of both the LCS and LCSNA. He is a member of the Baker Street Irregulars, a computer geek and an inveterate punster.



### *A History of Children's Books in 100 Books*

Roderick Cave and Sara Ayad

The British Library, 2017

Hardback (in dust jacket), £25.00

ISBN 978-0-7123-5698-5

This is an opulent finely illustrated large book. In an interesting preface the authors say that they wish to discuss books actually enjoyed by children themselves, rather than books recommended by scholars as good for children. So their aim is to concentrate on 'picture books and books read *to* and *by* children'. This admirable aim is achieved early on with their look at chap books, rag books – even 'tactile, noisy and smelly' book, and 'touch and feel' books. Nineteenth century nursery and moveable books are discussed extensively, even Baden Powell's *Scouting for Boys* is listed. We are subjected, more than we should be, to

the authors' personal views – to call the *Babar* books 'over-large' is harsh, and they dwell too much on the commercialization of, for example, the Winnie-the-Pooh books.

But they soon move on to more mainstream items. Many of the books are illustrated in full colour, some showing the book as a whole, some with pictures taken from the book in question. Their remit is '100 books', but the exact tally is difficult to ascertain, and they are not numbered. Each of the 11 chapters are subdivided into smaller categories.

It is only fair to add that they do include good discussions on some authors rather frowned on by certain scholars and children's librarians – Enid Blyton, Richmal Crompton, children's comics, early Ladybird books and the like, and they do appreciate Rupert and *Paddington Bear*.

Lewis Carroll merits his own subsection 'Curiouser and Curiouser' in Chapter 7 'Innocence, Experience and Old-Fashioned Nonsense'. Curiously (!) our authors have rather slipped up in their scholarship – regarding the Oxford University Press printing of *Alice*, Carroll did not insist 'on several printings being withdrawn because he was dissatisfied by their presswork'; nor is there much evidence that Carroll exerted 'close supervision [over] the Dalziels'; and to make three errors in the title of *Through the Looking-Glass* is simply clumsy (they call it *Through the Looking Glass, or, What Alice Found There*). On the merit side, they show us a picture from the *Under Ground* manuscript, a page of *The Nursery "Alice"* (which they date 1889, rather than 1890), and single out Mervyn Peake, Tove Jansson, Jan Švankmajer and Barry Moser for special commendation – a somewhat eclectic choice – and seems rather against their original claim to discuss books enjoyed particularly by children themselves – would children really enjoy the extraordinary visions of Peake and Barry Moser?

As regards the book as a whole, it is full of interest (I have dealt elsewhere with their assessment of Beatrix Potter and Edith Nesbit). Much of the book, in spite of the authors' protestations, has detailed discussion on books accepted by most scholars as recommendable books for children, though some of their exclusions may seem a little strange to some readers. Girls' and Boys' school stories, such stalwarts of the interwar year, gain scarcely a mention, and certain books surely enjoyed by children of today are totally ignored – Philippa Pearce (e.g. *Tom's Midnight Garden*), J.K. Rowling (children queued late at night for the later sequels), Michelle Magorian (with her hugely attractive *Goodnight Mr Tom*) or Anthony Horowitz (with his brilliant tales of the teenage spy Alex Rider) – but that may simply reveal my own prejudices!

**Selwyn Goodacre** is a past Chairman of the Lewis Carroll Society, and was for some years editor of the Society Journal. He contributes to a number of other Literary Societies journals – Edith Nesbit, Beatrix Potter, Kate Douglas Wiggin, Mervyn Peake, Arthur Rackham, and Enid Blyton. He has recently published *Elucidating Alice, A Textual Commentary on Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (Evertime, 2015).



Editor: Franziska Kohlt

Enquiries and Contributions to:  
Franziska Kohlt

Brasenose College, Radcliffe Square, OX1 4AJ, Oxford, UK

E-mail: [lewiscarrollreview@gmail.com](mailto:lewiscarrollreview@gmail.com)

The Lewis Carroll Society  
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