



THE SUSSEX CENTRE FOR FOLKLORE, FAIRY TALES AND FANTASY

A MESSAGE FROM THE CENTRE

Welcome to our newsletter! In every issue we'll bring you updates on our upcoming events as well as the latest events, publications, and conferences relating to folklore, fairy tales and fantasy. A new administrator—Jane Carroll—has just joined the Centre team and is very much looking forward to meeting you all over the coming months. It's an exciting time for the centre—We're about to launch into our Spring Lecture Series and we're busy organizing our first international conference as part

of the Mervyn Peake Centenary events this coming summer (see pages 2-3 for more details). Inside this issue, you'll find John Patrick Pazdziora's report on the Anti-tales: The Uses of Disenchantment conference, details of where you'll be able to view a rare Percy Westerman book, and a list of the newest publications from the Centre's advisory board.



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Let us know if you have any upcoming events, talks or publications you would like us to mention in our April issue

Email Jane Carroll at

J.Carroll@chi.ac.uk

UPCOMING EVENTS!

On Tuesday March 1st, The Sussex Centre's Spring lecture series will kick off. Nicholas Tucker, Honorary Senior Lecturer in Cultural Studies, University of Sussex, will give a lecture, entitled "Fairy Tales in Print: A Troubled History".

Nickolas Tucker is a writer and an expert on children's literature and is the author of the *Rough Guides to Children's Literature* and *Darkness Visible: Inside the World of Philip Pullman*.

The lecture will be held in the Mitre Theatre, University of Chichester, Bishop Otter Campus. The lecture is open to the public as well as to staff and students of the University. Tickets for the lecture are priced at £5 or £3 for unwaged/student tickets.

To reserve a ticket, email Jane Carroll at J.Carroll@chi.ac.uk

Mervyn Peake: A Centenary Celebration

9 April – 17 July 2011

Most famous for his best-selling Gormenghast series of Gothic fantasies, Mervyn Peake was one of the most multi-talented artists of the twentieth century. Painter, novelist, author, war artist, poet and dramatist, he also illustrated classic works such as *Treasure Island* and *Grimm's Fairy Tales*. To mark the centenary of his birth, the Sussex Centre for Folklore Fairy Tales and Fantasy will hold an international conference July 15th-17th 2011. The Conference will be accompanied by art exhibitions, talks and other events in Chichester. Pallant House Gallery presents a display of Peake's most famous illustrations. A related exhibition runs at the Otter Gallery from 26 May to 17 July.

Pallant House Events

TALK: The Life & Work of Mervyn Peake Thursday 14 April, 6pm

An illustrated talk by Sebastian Peake, son of Mervyn Peake, charting the evolution of his father's life as an artist, from his birth in China, to his emergence as an illustrator and writer.

£8 (£7 students, £6.50 Friends) includes a glass of wine

Exhibition Tour: Mervyn Peake: A Centenary Celebration Thursday 30 June, 11am

Professor Bill Gray, Professor of Literary History at the University of Chichester, and Director of the Sussex Centre for Folklore, Fairy Tales and Fantasy, provides his perspective on Peake's iconic illustrations and prints.

£8 (students £4)

THEMED WORKSHOPS

A programme of children's story-making and young artists' illustration workshops accompanies the exhibition. For more details contact Pallant House Gallery on 01243 774557

Otter Gallery Events

Mervyn Peake Centenary Celebration Otter Gallery, 26 May–17 July

A complementary exhibition at the Otter Gallery, University of Chichester, focusing on Peake's nonsense and poetry illustrations including 'The Hunting of the Snark' and 'Rhymes without Reason'. *Free*

Mervyn Peake Tour Thursday 30 June, 2pm

Bill Gray will lead a free public tour of the Otter Gallery exhibition. *Please book on 01243 816098.*

Creative Writing Workshop, 26th May 2011, 12:00-13:30

Stephanie Norgate will host a creative writing workshop based on responses to Mervyn Peake's illustrative work in the Otter Gallery. Participants will work with Peake's absurd figures to create inner narratives and voices. Produce poems, microfictions, monologues and surreal stories...whatever takes your fancy. Total beginners and experienced writers welcome. For further details or to book your place, email Laura Kidner, the curator of the Otter Gallery at L.Kidner@chi.ac.uk. £3





Call for Papers

An international conference on the life, work and influences of Mervyn Peake hosted by the University of Chichester in collaboration with the Sussex Centre for Folklore, Fairy Tales and Fantasy

Keynote speakers include: Joanne Harris, Michael Moorcock, Peter Winnington, Colin Manlove, Farah Mendlesohn & Sebastian Peake

Mervyn Peake and the Fantasy Tradition

A Centenary Conference

July 15th-17th 2011 - University of Chichester

Proposals are invited for papers, presentations and panels on any aspect of Peake's work or its links to the wider fantasy tradition.

Abstracts of 250 words should be sent to J.Carroll@chi.ac.uk before March 31st 2011

www.mervynpeakeconference2011.blogspot.com

Mervyn Peake and the Fantasy Tradition

The conference will celebrate, explore and discuss the many facets of Peake's rich creativity, including his work as fantasy novelist, children's writer, playwright, poet, writer of nonsense verse, artist and illustrator (both of his own books and classics such as *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, *The Hunting of the Snark*, the Alice books, *Treasure Island* and the Grimms' *Household Tales*).

Events include Keynote lectures, exhibitions of Peake's illustrative work, creative responses to Peake's work, performances of award-winning plays and a walking tour of Burpham where Peake lived.

Keynote Speakers include Joanne Harris, Michael Moorcock, Peter Winnington, Colin Manlove, Farah Mendlesohn and Sebastian Peake.

Day tickets and weekend tickets will be available from March 1st. To reserve your ticket, email J.Carroll@chi.ac.uk

The conference blog can be found at
www.mervynpeakeconference2011.blogspot.com



CONFERENCE REPORT

Anti-tales: The Uses of Disenchantment, August 12-13 2010 at the University of Glasgow

John Patrick Pazdziora, University of St Andrews

The anti-tale may have begun life as the fairy tale's evil twin, but it is rapidly maturing into a powerful critical platform. *Anti-tales: The Uses of Disenchantment*, , met to draw the anti-tale out of its shadow status, and to revive and refine the concept.

According to the conference handbook, the anti-tale is "rarely an outward opposition to the traditional form itself," but instead "takes aspects of the fairy tale genre and re-imagines, subverts, inverts, deconstructs, or satirizes [fairy tales] to present an alternate narrative interpretation, outcome, or morality....We invite others to consider their research material through the critical lens of the anti-tale."

Special commendation goes to conference organisers David Calvin (University of Ulster) and Catriona McAra (University of Glasgow) for their expert running of the symposium. Their arrangement of the conference brought a remarkable continuity to a broad subject and a scattered array of disciplines. Calvin and McAra encouraged a collegial conviviality and enjoyment, which did not abate the academic rigor of the symposium.

Anti-tales featured presentations from fields as diverse as literature, theology, art history, film studies, classics, psychology, and geography. Anti-tale is largely unexplored, so nearly every presenter brought a level of original research. The resulting innovations brought energy to the conference. Conversations and discussions throughout the conference took up many aspects of the anti-tale that the presentations didn't discuss. There is a forthcoming monograph based on the conference proceedings (Cambridge Scholars, 2011). Plans for a journal of anti-tale studies are currently under consideration.

The symposium began with a brief but remarkable costume performance displaying the designs of Harriet Mary Kirkwood. This set the ambience for what followed. After an introduction from David Calvin and Catriona McAra, five subsequent panels explored thematic developments of the anti-tale in relation to fairy tale scholarship.

Dr Laura Martin (University of Glasgow) traced the development of the *antimärchen* from its origins in the German Enlightenment and Romanticism. Natalie Robinson (University of Calgary) highlighted the subversive power of the anti-tale by examining Nalo Hopkinson's, "The Glass Bottle Trick," in which she deconstructs the Bluebeard tale to shatter racism and sexism in a post-colonial society. Other panels included explorations of anti-"Snow White" retellings, dark humour as subversive discourse, and readings of the anti-tale by feminist writers.

Professor Aidan Day (University of Dundee) presented a plenary session on Angela Carter's anti-Shakespearian tales. He addressed Carter's reading of *A Midsummer's Night Dream* as a patriarchal, imperialistic text, and explored how her retelling of it demolishes the tale to criticize these attitudes in British society and the fairy tale literature it produces.

The evening concluded with a further display from Harriet Mary Kirkwood and a series of dramatic readings of anti-tales. Caroline Moir (University of Glasgow) read her short story "The

Frog's Princess," which inverts the traditional tale and sets it in contemporary England. Mary Crocker Cook, a writer and professional counsellor, read the story of Cinderella from the step-mother's perspective, and gave an insightful psychological discussion of the story afterwards. Claire Massey, editor of the journal *New Fairy Tales*, read two of her own anti-tales, "Raven" and the haunting "Feather Girls."

The second day pursued other directions, stepping away from written anti-tales into other disciplines. Artist-in-residence Robert Powell opened the proceedings with a discussion of his paintings and his use of fairy tale archetypes. The day's panels addressed surrealism, film studies, intertextuality, modernity, and art criticism.

Catriona McAra assessed the importance of anti-tale narrative in the works of Dorothea Tanning, suggesting that disenchantment serves as an artistic strategy to splice the core of realism. Professor Suzanne Buchan (University for the Creative Arts, Farham) examined the filmic legacy of the Quay Brothers' *Street of Crocodiles* and re-examined it as an anti-tale. She later hosted a screening of this film. Dr Mayako Murai (Kanagawa University) explored Tomoko Konoike's visual inversion of "Little Red Riding Hood," drawing special attention to the moral ambiguity and gentleness in her recasting. Other papers discussed interfacing story and illustration, popular expressions of the anti-tale, and anti-tale as modernist self-ridicule.

Dr Anna Kérchy (University of Szeged) conducted the evening's plenary session. In keeping with the non-textual emphasis, she discussed photographic and filmic deconstructions of the *Alice* stories, giving special attention to the works of Terry Gilliam, Tim Burton, and Jan Švankmajer. The embedded nonsense of the anti-tale, she suggested, accentuates itself in the aimlessness of Alice's wandering; postmodern reinterpretations of *Alice*, while they often leave little to the imagination, too often retreat into the safer contours of a formal story. Alice remains piquant in the imaginative tradition, and the original tale still possesses the power to subvert subversions of itself.

Anti-tale could be identified as a distinct art form or used as the premise of a critical theory. As the symposium demonstrated, the concept is applicable across multiple disciplines; its limits may have been glimpsed, but they were not pushed. Much more research remains to be done in this area.

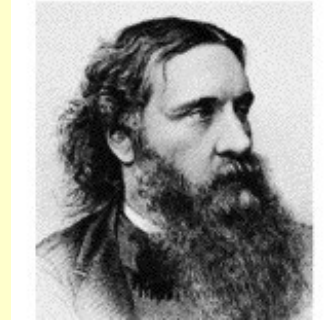
Possible areas of research include the anti-tale itself as a discreet phenomenon. There were as many disparate definitions of anti-tale as there were presenters, and the field would benefit from a standardized, comprehensive definition. Music—both theory and history—was not represented at the conference, but which could make outstanding contributions to the discussion of anti-tale. Also, the anti-tale needs evaluation in relation to satire. Are they necessary components of each other? Is one a subset of the other? Or are they distinct arts that occasionally overlap? Finally, both theoretically and critically, it would be useful to explore the interplay of the anti-tale with the grotesque. It is unclear whether they are necessary components of each other, or whether the anti-tale is merely another form of grotesquery.

Anti-tale is a potent critical construct, and this symposium will undoubtedly prove seminal in bringing it back into parlance. As Calvin and McAra wrote, "We believe the concept to be exciting and under-developed, and [hope] that this project will stimulate a rich new investigative field of study."

OTHER EVENTS

George MacDonald Among His Contemporaries

Registrations can now be made for this one-day conference at the University of St Andrews on Wednesday 30th March 2011. The cost is £20 for non-students and £15 for students. All bookings must be made online at the University of St Andrews Online Shop at <https://onlineshop.st-andrews.ac.uk/> Click on 'Conference or Event Bookings' in the Navigation menu and then on 'Conferences' for the link, under School of English, to *George MacDonald Among His Contemporaries*.



George MacDonald (1824-1905) is most often discussed in terms of what came after: his role in the development of fantasy literature and his influence on writers such as C. S. Lewis and J. R. R. Tolkien. Though providing valuable insights into MacDonald's legacy, this emphasis tends to obscure his involvement in his own time. MacDonald was a Victorian. His works attest to his wide knowledge of his time and culture, and his deep engagement with the issues of the day.

George MacDonald Among His Contemporaries looks to re-establish MacDonald's place within his own context. Papers and presentations from a variety of disciplines will offer critical reinvestigation of MacDonald's work, looking beyond MacDonald's fantasies to consider other aspects of his works.

Keynote speakers: Stephen Prickett and David Robb.

The University website has useful information about travel to St Andrews and accommodation. Links to these resources are as follows:

Travel: <http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/visiting/GettingtoStAndrews/>

Accommodation: <http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/visiting/town/>

Nearly everything in St Andrews is central and close together, and so it is not difficult to get around. *You are responsible for arranging your own accommodation*; we regret that we cannot provide this service for you. Lunch will be provided during the conference as part of the registration fee. We are also planning a dinner after the conference and you can signal interest in this when making your online registration, but it is *not* included in the registration fee.

For further information, please contact Samantha Dixon on sd60@st-andrews.ac.uk or John Patrick Pazdziora on jpp6@st-andrews.ac.uk

OTHER EVENTS

Rare book discovered – The book that launched fifty years of ‘Ripping Yarns’

A unique, significant and important book has come to light after an appeal by the organisers of the first Percy Westerman seminar being held at the Portsmouth Grammar School on Saturday 19 February.

Percy was a writer of boys adventure books who was born in Portsmouth in 1876. The seminar organisers appealed late last year for



rare editions and memorabilia relating to the writing career of this prolific author who died in 1959. The display of books and material that have been gathered for this special event have been loaned from various private collections, including The Westerman Collection held at Worcester University has been growing, but a couple of weeks ago seminar organiser and Westerman specialist, Nigel Gossop was invited to view some books by an attendee of the seminar and was stunned by what he found.

The book being loaned to the seminar is a copy of that first book ‘A

Lad of Grit’, but what is so significant is the inscription that reads “To Jack from Papa Christmas 1908”. The book was given to the present owner by John Westerman shortly before he emigrated and was the very first of the one and a half million Westerman books that rolled off the presses in Britain alone, not to mention the books for Canada, America, Australia and the exotic translations into Norwegian, Swedish, Finnish, Polish and Hungarian.

Nigel said “We are very excited, this book is so significant in the Westerman story and the timing of its discovery couldn’t be better for the forthcoming seminar. It may well have been the prompt that started John on his own writing career”. He became a successful writer and wrote a further 30 books in the same ‘Ripping Yarns genre.

Sadly, because of the importance of this book, the attendees at the seminar will not be allowed to handle the book. It will be behind glass in a secure area and will only be available to view for a limited time during the day.

For further information please contact:-

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www.westermanyarns.blogspot.com

RECENT & FORTHCOMING PUBLICATIONS

D.L.Ashliman

- Updated and expanded Internet project FOLKTEXTS (<http://www.pitt.edu/~dash/folktexts.html>) with its associated sites.

Cristina Bacchilega

- *Folktales and Fairy Tales: Translation, Colonialism, and Cinema*. ho‘omanawanui, ku‘ualoha, with Noenoe Silva, Vilsoni Hereniko, and Cristina Bacchilega, eds. University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa Library, 2010. <http://scholarspace.manoa.hawaii.edu/handle/10125/15609>
- “Extrapolating from Nalo Hopkinson’s *Skin Folk*: Reflections on Transformation and Recent English-Language Fairy-Tale Fiction by Women.” In *Contemporary Fiction and the Fairy Tale*. Ed. Stephen Benson (Wayne State UP, 2008)

Stephen Benson

- Stephen Benson et al. *Contemporary Fiction and the Fairy Tale* (Wayne State University Press, 2008).

Ruth B. Bottigheimer

- *Fairy Tales: A New History* (Excelsior Editions: State University of New York, 2009)

Martine Hennard Dutheil de la Rochère

- *After Satan: Essays in Honour of Neil Forsyth* Edited by Kirsten Stirling and Martine Hennard Dutheil de la Rochère (Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2010)
- *Angela Carter’s The Fairy Tales of Charles Perrault: Translation and/as Rewriting* (forthcoming)

Donald Haase

- “Decolonizing Fairy-Tale Studies.” *Marvels & Tales: Journal of Fairy-Tale Studies* 24.1 (2010): 17-38.
- “Kiss and Tell: Orality, Narrative, and the Power of Words in ‘Sleeping Beauty.’” *Etudes de Lettres* 289.3-4 (Dec,2011): forthcoming.

William Gray

- *Fantasy, Myth and the Measure of Truth: Tales of Pullman, Lewis, Tolkien, MacDonald and Hoffmann* revised edition in paperback (Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).
- *Fantasy, Art and Life: Essays on George MacDonald, Robert Louis Stevenson and other fantasy writers* (Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2011): forthcoming.

Gillian Lathey

- *The Role of Translators in Children’s Literature: Invisible Storytellers* (Routledge, 2010)

Colin Manlove

- A revised edition of *C.S. Lewis: His Literary Achievement* (Cheshire, CT: Winged Lion Press, 2010).
- *The Order of Harry Potter; Literary Skill in the Hogwarts Books* (Cheshire, CT: Winged Lion Press, 2010).

Maria Nikolajeva

- “The bravest man I ever knew”. Adult heroism and role models in the Harry Potter novels, in *Heroism in J.K Rowling’s Harry Potter*, edited by Karen Berndt, (New York, Peter Lang, 2010).
- “The stuff from which dreams are made”. Om George MacDonalds esoteriska romanser [The stuff from which dreams are made”. On George MacDonald’s esoteric romances”], in *Esoterism i litteraturen*, edited by Mattias Fyhr, (Stockholm, Ellerstöm, 2010).
- “I Spy Rumpelstiltskin”. Playing games with the reader in *The Witch’s Boy. Marvels & Tales* 2011:2

Diane Purkiss

- *The Dissolution of the English Monasteries* (HarperCollins, 2010)
- “Fractious: girls tell tales of witchcraft” in *Shakespeare and Oral Culture*, ed. Mary Ellen Lamb (New York: Ashgate, 2008)

Jonathan Roper

- “The Strange, Eventful History of Sussex Spelling.” The Society for Folk Life Studies Annual Conference, West Dean, Sussex, September 2010.

Jacqueline Simpson

- The e-book version of Terry Pratchett’s *I Shall Wear Midnight* (2010) will include a short addendum by Jacqueline Simpson on its folklore elements.
- (With Jennifer Westwood) *Haunted England* (retitled reprint of *The Penguin Book of Ghosts*, itself a selection from *The Lore of the Land*). (London: Penguin Books, 2010).
- *Green Men and White Swans: The Folklore of British Pub Names* (Random House Books, 2010).

Marina Warner

- “The Metamorphoses of Narcissus”, in *The Body and the Arts*, ed. Corinne Saunders, Palgrave, 2009.
- “Out of an old toy chest”, in *Journal of Aesthetic Education*, special edition ed. Ellen Handler Spitz, 43.2 (Summer 2009).

Jack Zipes

- *The Cloak of Dreams: Chinese Fairy Tales* by Béla Balázs. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010).
- *The Enchanted Screen: The Unknown History of the Fairy-Tale Film*. (New York: Routledge, 2010).
- "Why Fantasy Matters Too Much." *Journal of Aesthetic Education* special edition ed. Ellen Handler Spitz, 43.2 (Summer 2009).