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## Editorial by Pat Pinsent

**Most of this issue of IBBYlink is devoted to the conference held at Roehampton in November 2001**, entitled 'Traditional Tales and the Culture of Childhood'. Like all recent IBBY conferences, this was oversubscribed, so many of our members will have been unable to be there, while those who did attend could not be at more than one workshop at a time!

Today there is a welcome awareness that children's literature is not only for children. The recent award of the 'proper' Whitbread prize (not just the children's section!) to Philip Pullman, together with J.K.Rowling's domination of the best-seller lists, indicates that a good many adults, even those lacking the excuse that they have to need to know what children are reading, are now enjoying books written with a young audience in mind. Fairy tales are perhaps the leading example of literature designed for an audience that transcends all age gaps; it is not only in literature for the young that the dominance of fairy tale structure can be glimpsed. Many of the great novels in the English tradition have made use of fairy tale derived themes such as lost treasure, hidden identity, hostile step-parents, sibling rivalry, and monsters of one kind or another. Cinderella still reigns supreme, not only in the world of teen-age magazines.

It is scarcely surprising then that the conference attracted world renowned authorities on fairy tale such as Jack Zipes and Sandra Beckett, as well as a range of speakers on themes which ranged from Shakespeare

to Shrek. We were happy too to welcome the newly appointed Children's Laureate, Anne Fine, who spoke particularly about the significance to her (as one of five sisters) of the story of 'The twelve dancing princesses'.

I hope this collection will give a flavour of many of the talks given on the day, especially since we do not anticipate being able this time to produce a book containing the papers in full. Many thanks to those who have gone to the trouble of providing short versions or summaries of their papers. The summer issue of IBBYlink will be devoted to the theme of Translation and Children's Literature. We would welcome short contributions on this theme, and indeed on any other area that you would like our well-read and enthusiastic readers to know about!

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Copies of **The Big Issues** (NCRCL Papers 6, the November 2000 conference) are available to IBBY members for £10, inclusive of postage and packing. The proceedings of previous IBBY conferences are still available, at the reduced price of £6 inclusive of postage and packing: **Childhood Remembered** (NCRCL Papers 3); **Pop Fiction** (NCRCL Papers 5). Collections from other conferences, at the same price, are also available: **Enid Blyton: A Celebration and Reappraisal** (NCRCL Papers 2) and **School Stories from Bunter to Buckeridge** (NCRCL Papers 4). Send cheques made out to University of Surrey Roehampton to NCRCL, Digby Stuart College, University of Surrey Roehampton, Roehampton Lane, SW15 5PH, or contact [ncrcl@roehampton.ac.uk](mailto:ncrcl@roehampton.ac.uk) for further details.

## Great News! IBBY Congress 2008

**The UK Section of IBBY are delighted to announce that a proposal to hold the International Congress 2008 in Newcastle** is to be presented to the IBBY Executive at the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Congress in Basel. The proposed theme is 'Translations and Migrations'. Newcastle, the home of The Centre for the Children's Book, is an ideal venue for the Congress. It is also fortuitous that Newcastle and Gateshead are developing a bid to become European Capital of Culture for 2008 and are planning a full programme of arts activities for the city, which will take place regardless of the outcome of that bid. The new development on the Gateshead Quays provides conference facilities of the highest standard. For further information, take a look at the website: [www.gateshead-quays.com](http://www.gateshead-quays.com) The congress will attract around 1,000 participants from IBBY's 61 member countries. And, if our bid is successful, it will provide exciting opportunities for UK participants to meet authors, illustrators, teachers, librarians and publishers from all over the world. Regular updates will appear in IBBYlink. If you are interested in being part of the organising committee for this prestigious event please contact Nikki Gamble by e-mail [nhgamble@cs.com](mailto:nhgamble@cs.com) or telephone 01376 324099. **Let's make 2008 a year to remember!**

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# Nominations for the Andersen Awards 2002

by Ann Lazim, Chair of British IBBY

<u>National Section</u>	<u>Author</u>	<u>Illustrator</u>
Argentina	Ema Wolf	Istvan
Austria	Renate Welsh	Linda Wolfsgruber
Belgium	Bart Moeyaert	Marie Wabbes
Brazil	Ruth Rocha	Nelson Cruz
Canada	Dennis Lee	Michèle Lemieux
China	Qin Wenjun	Wu Daisheng
Croatia	Zvonimir Balog	Vjekoslav Vojo Radoicic
Denmark	Bjarne Reuter	Lilian Brøgger
Finland	Hannele Huovi	Mika Launis
France	Jean Paul Nozière	Grégoire Solotareff
Germany	Kirsten Boie	Rotraut Susanne Berner
Greece	Manos Kondoleon	Nicholas Andrikopoulos
Iceland	Gudrun Helgadóttir	-
Iran	-	Nasrin Khosravi
Ireland	Martin Waddell	-
Japan	Momoko Ishii	Daihachi Ohta
Netherlands	Joke van Leeuwen	Harrie Geelen
New Zealand	Margaret Mahy	-
Norway	Jostein Gaarder	Akin Düzakin
Philippines	Rene O. Villanueva	-
Portugal	Luísa Dacosta	António Modesto
Russia	-	Boris Diodorov
Slovak Republic	Milan Rúfus	Jana Kiselová-Siteková
Slovenia	Svetlana Makarovic	Marija Lucija Stupica
South Africa	-	Niki Daly
Spain	Juan Farias	Francisco Meléndez
Sweden	Ulf Stark	Fibben Hald
Switzerland	Werner J. Egli	Béatrice Poncelet
Turkey	Muzaffer Izgü	Ümit Ögmel
United Kingdom	Aidan Chambers	Quentin Blake
USA	Susan Cooper	David Macaulay

Andersen Awards  
2002

Ann Lazim

As promised in our last newsletter, when we announced our nomination of **Quentin Blake** and **Aidan Chambers** for the Hans Christian Andersen Awards, above is a full list of the candidates. For most UK readers, it will be a mixture of some well-known names, some perhaps vaguely heard of, and others completely unknown. I've been doing some investigating into some of these authors and illustrators, to try and establish how possible it is for readers in this country to get to know their work.

First, an update on our own candidates. Aidan Chambers' novel *The Present Takers* has been reissued (Red Fox £4.99 0099991608) and a collection of his articles, *Reading Talk*, published (Thimble Press £14.50 0903355507). Readers may also like to log on to his website [www.aidanchambers.co.uk](http://www.aidanchambers.co.uk). A picture book that was created by Quentin Blake with the help of children from around the world has so far only been available in French from the innovative publisher Rue du Monde. In March, an English language

edition, *The Sailing Boat in the Sky* (Jonathan Cape £10.99 0224064541), is due.

One of the most familiar names on the list must be that of **Margaret Mahy**. She has written a terrific range of fiction, including picture books and two novels which have won the Carnegie Medal. Her recent teenage novel *24 Hours* (Collins) was highly regarded. New Zealand has only just joined IBBY and therefore this is the first nomination they have made.

Both of the American candidates were born in the UK but have lived in the USA for many years. **Susan Cooper** is best known for her fantasy quintet *The Dark is Rising* (Puffin) and her timeslip novel *The King of Shadows* (Puffin) was shortlisted for the Carnegie. **David Macaulay** has a very innovative approach to non-fiction. He was responsible for the technology book *The Way Things Work* (Dorling Kindersley) also developed as a CD-ROM. His books about how different buildings were construct-

**(Continued on page 3)**

## Andersen Awards (continued)

ed—Castle, Cathedral etc—are now out of print here. He also produced what is perhaps the best known post modern picture book *Black and White* (Houghton Mifflin).

Ireland's nomination **Martin Waddell** needs no introduction. His picture books such as *Owl Babies* and *Can't You Sleep, Little Bear?* (Walker) are perennial bestsellers and most of his fiction for older children, previously published under the pseudonym Catherine Sefton, has now been reissued under his own name.

**Niki Daly** is also becoming increasingly known here through such work as his IBBY Honour book *Boy on the Beach* (Bloomsbury) and several titles published by Frances Lincoln such as *Jamela's Dress* and *Bravo Zan Angelo!*

**Rotraut Susanne Berner's** work can be seen illustrating a story by Sylvia Plath: *The It-Doesn't-Matter Suit* (Faber), and also *The Number Devil* (Granta) by **Hans Magnus Enzensberger**, writer of the book we've just nominated for the IBBY Honour List in the translation category, *Where Were You, Robert?* (Puffin).

It would be good to see the work of **Gregoire Solotareff** becoming known here as he has produced some striking picture books such as *Loulou* and *Mathieu (l'école des loisirs)*.

Swedish author **Ulf Stark** was one of the authors on the final shortlist in 2000. One of his books is part of the European Picture Book Collection which you can read about in Penni Cotton's book *Picture Books Sans Frontières* (Trentham). It is available in English translation as *Can You Whistle Johanna?* (RDR).

**Jostein Gaarder** is well known to British readers. In addition to *Sophie's World*, his books for younger children have met with acclaim. The translations of both *Hello, Is Anybody There?* and *The Frog Castle* (Orion) were shortlisted for the Marsh Award. He will be one of the speakers at the IBBY congress in Switzerland later this year.

It is interesting to see **Bart Moeyaert** and **Joke van Leeuwen** nominated in the same year as Aidan Chambers. Anyone who attended the interviews Aidan did with them at Roehampton during the London Festival of Literature two or three years ago will realize that they all have a great respect for each other's work. It's thanks to the publishing company Aidan co-founded, Turton & Chambers, that any of Joke's work has been available in English as they published *The Story of Bobble Who Wanted to be Rich*. No British publisher has made Bart's work available in English but luckily American publisher Front Street has. They have published *Bare Hands* and *Hornet's Nest*, and *It's Love We Don't Understand* will be published this Spring.

Finally, I enjoyed reading the poems by **Denis Lee** which appear in *Jelly Belly* (Blackie) with my children when they were younger. Sadly this book is out of print now.

Let's hope that their nominations for the Hans Christian Andersen Awards mean that the work of all these writers and illustrators will become better known to children all around the world.

The announcements of the winners will be made at the Bologna Book Fair in the Spring.

**The British nomination for the IBBY Honour List in the Illustration category *Falling Angels* by Colin Thompson is now available in paperback (Red Fox, £5.99, 0099432986)**

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### IBBYlink • The British IBBY Newsletter • Spring 2002

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**www.papertigers.org**

Please send any material for the next issue to:  
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## Finding, Telling, and Writing Folk Tales for Children

I Don't Know Why They Call It Field Work-I Never Collected Any Stories in a Field...

by Patrick Ryan

**As a storyteller, I find telling stories is the best way to teach or learn the craft, and to explore the process of storytelling.**

For many beginners, the primary challenges are finding stories to tell as well as the confidence to tell them. Having been lucky enough to become acquainted with various traditional tellers, I've collected for my repertoire many stories in the field (or, rather, in kitchens, by sitting room firesides, and, especially, in pubs). However, I've found far more material in archives. Collections of librarians who write and edit, and fairy tale anthologies of children's authors and folklorists are all rich sources. But the most enjoyable and rewarding method is delving into ancient works: manuscripts, early printed editions, diaries and journals from the 15th to 19th Centuries (or even earlier).

My informal story time was to demonstrate my methods of research. A series of related tales was shared to show how variants of one narrative can be recognised and traced by motifs. The narratives I chose were 'background' stories to the versions I developed for Shakespeare's Storybook, illustrated by James Mayhew and recently published by Barefoot Books. Ancient Indian, Persian and Turkish myths and legends, along with Mediaeval lays, were performed to demonstrate their commonality with each other and early modern works, including The Merchant of Venice and The Princess and the Pea (which, via their origins, I believe, are linked).

As a teller and writer, I find it fascinating and inspiring when 'classic' works of literature can be connected to traditional oral tales, chapbooks, ballads and songs of earlier ages. That these sources are not solely English, but from all over Europe, and even related to sources further afield in Africa and Asia, adds to the

excitement. Exploring variants and sources provides insight into the meaning, understanding and history of well-known literary fairy tales. Such studies also develop knowledge of the level of literacy through the ages, and the interplay and mutual influences of oral and literary media over time. The work of folklorists, historians and linguists, particularly such as Adam Fox (Oral and Literate Culture in England, 1500-1700) and Herman Pleij (Dreaming of Cockaigne, Mediaeval Fantasies of the Perfect Life) amply demonstrate this.

As a former teacher, aware of theories in cognition and whole language approaches to literacy, finding historical precedent is satisfying and also raises more areas to explore.

It is a pity contemporary publishers, and many writers, choose to retell the well trod canon of Perrault, Grimm and Andersen. Too many fail to seek out more obscure works which were sources to these greats. My research leaves the impression that editors had the courage to present

a wider range of fairy tale titles prior to World War II, but since then rely on the well-known favourites. But recent interest in oral storytelling as well as in tales of other cultures has provided wonderful collections and experimentations. Perhaps soon children and adults will again be entertained with new versions of the Gesta Romanorum, or Dolopathos et Septum Sapientibus, and even the works of Basile and others.

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**“As a teller, I find it fascinating when ‘classic’ works of literature can be connected to traditional oral tales, chapbooks, ballads and songs of earlier ages...”**

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**Congratulations to Philip Pullman on winning the Whitbread Award for The Amber Spyglass**

# The Hockliffe Project

by Matthew Grenby

**Most of the now standard fairy tales were neglected, and even vilified, during the second half of the eighteenth century.** With children's publishers and authors desperately trying to prove the respectability of their work, there was no place for irrational or supernatural tales which abided by no clear moral or religious code. But in the first years of the new century, there was a resurgence of interest in the form. Publishers like Benjamin Tabart and John Harris brought out new editions of old French classics, and printed—for the first time in some cases—some now very familiar tales from the indigenous British tradition. The fairy tale canon rapidly coalesced, even before it was augmented by the work of Hans Andersen and the Grimms.

Many of the very early British fairy tales are now available on the internet for everyone to consult in their original format. They have been digitised as part of the **Hockliffe Project**, run from De Montfort University after the award of a grant by the Arts and Humanities Research Board. The aim of the Project is to digitise De Montfort's holdings of early children's literature, and to make these digital images freely available on the internet. The page images are accompanied by contextualising essays and a full catalogue of the Hockliffe Collection of early children's books. There is also a search mechanism on the website, allowing searches by author, title, genre, date, publisher, place of publication, and so on, allowing the user to pin-point a particular text, or kind of text. A free-text search enables the user to find books relevant to a speical field of interest. Type in "fairy" and "alcohol" in a free-text search, for instance, and you'll be directed to one of George Cruikshank's vehemently pro-temperance fairy stories from the mid-nineteenth century.

Besides some of Cruikshank's adaptations, the Hockliffe Collection contains about fifty more eigh-

teenth and early nineteenth century fairy tales. Of particular interest are some heavily moralised fairy stories from the 1770s and '80s, a number of pithy chapbook fairy tales published in a variety of provincial locations or by the 'Running Stationers', and the first ever printed edition of the standard text of Jack and the Bean-Stalk (1807). Alongside the fairy tales, the Hockliffe Collection contains over a thousand pre-1850 children's books, spanning all the forms of children's books. As well as fairly familiar works by Maria Edgeworth or Mrs. Sherwood, say, there are obscure early books of nonsense verse, geography and science text books, toy-books which include dolls to



dress alongside the text, and a great deal else besides. About a quarter of the Hockliffe Collection has been digitised. More books are being added to the website all the time.

The great advantage of the digitised images over transcriptions of the texts is that the user really gets a sense of the physical state of the book. The digitised images include all original illustrations, of course, but also any marginalia—or graffiti—which the books' original users added. Do have a look at the website, and do let the project author know your thoughts. There is still time, before the funding runs out, to change the content and format of the website so as

to optimise its usefulness. Please send any comments, suggestions or criticisms to [mgrenby@dmu.ac.uk](mailto:mgrenby@dmu.ac.uk).

The internet address of the Hockliffe Project is <http://www.cta.dmu.ac.uk/projects/Hockliffe>  
Image from: Robin Goodfellow, A Fairy Tale, written by a fairy, for the amusement of all the pretty little Faies and Fairies in Great-Britain and Ireland (1815).

Hockliffe Project

Matthew Grenby

<http://www.cta.dmu.ac.uk/projects/Hockliffe>

# A 'Cinderella' Character?

## The Role of the Middle Child in Children Fiction

by Pam Robson

Cinderella Character  
Pam Robson

**Fairy tale motifs resonate in literature and nowhere is this more true than in children's novels dealing with family situations and sibling rivalry.** Bruno Bettelheim maintains that the child's need to surpass the parents is often camouflaged as sibling rivalry. He claims that, 'Within the most basic family constellation the child is third down, irrespective of whether he is the oldest, middle or youngest amongst his siblings.' Sibling rivalry, he says, is jealous competition for the love of the parents. Bettelheim cites Cinderella as an example of such a story: dwelling amongst the ashes is symbolic of sibling rivalry, while the sense of feeling mistreated is symptomatic of this rivalry. Using step-sisters serves to make acceptable to the child what are in fact universal feelings of animosity between siblings.

Louis Stewart describes in *Changemakers* how sibling position plays a key role in the election of suitable leaders at times of significant political zeitgeist. A war situation has in the past led to the election of characters like Churchill, who are first born sons. George Bush, a mediator on the world stage, was a middle child. Hitler and Gandhi were both younger sons engaged in revolution, but it was family atmosphere that created the psychological dynamics of their leadership roles, thus explaining the obvious differences between them.

When I began some research into the role of the middle child character in children's fiction I soon found that it was impossible to begin without reference to fairy tales. According to Stephens: 'Harmony and disharmony between brothers and sisters is an age-old story motif. It pervades folk and fairy story... and informs the figurative language commonly used to signify wider social, national and international relations. It is apt to be of interest to any child with one or more siblings, and the theme is also a site upon which authors can begin to build the themes of social integration of larger kinds...'

If you happen to be a middle child you will probably already be familiar with specific children's stories featuring middle child characters. Jenny Nimmo's title *Emlyn's Moon* is such a story. Nimmo has used the typical characteristics of the middle child to create a story with both strong characters and good plot. The personality traits of the typical middle child are many and varied and will obviously depend upon

each particular family situation, but in general they are: a potential for leadership; the potential to be an experienced mediator and negotiator; occasionally a rebel; feeling isolated; possibly attention-seeking; possibly a depressive; and of course, frequently pig-in-the-middle.

*Emlyn's Moon* is the second in a trilogy called *The Snow Spider*. Nimmo's central character is Nia, the middle child of seven siblings. The setting is rural Wales. Nia's father has been farming for 15 years and has finally made the decision to sell up and move his large family into the local town of Pendewi, where he has bought the local butcher's shop. The family will live above the shop. The opening chapter describes moving day. As the story progresses Nia, a depressed

middle child, discovers that she has magic powers inherited from her Welsh ancestors, which eventually she learns to use in order to help the rescue of the eponymous *Emlyn* from an enchantment spell cast by children from another world made of ice.

Nia is presented as a negative character, who describes herself as *Nia-can't-do-nothing*. As a middle child, she represents the universal search for identity, for being a middle child can be compared to an individual reaching adulthood, a

time when feelings of isolation can emerge whilst the slow process of establishing an identity takes place. In learning how to use her new-found magic powers she learns to deal with the inadequacies she experiences as a middle child in the real world.

*Emlyn's Moon* begins with an interdiction, a typical fairy tale motif, being delivered to Nia, significantly by both her parents and her siblings: 'Don't go into *Llewelyn's* chapel!' Her violation of this interdiction eventually leads to resolution within the family and so within the story. Nia becomes embroiled in a struggle for identity within her family; she seeks the power to be her true self, not just *Nia-in-the middle*. This opening has the effect of placing Nia, like *Cinderella*, at the centre of the story. When Nia violates the interdiction she meets the apparent 'villain' who is *Emlyn's* father, a talented artist.

The plot of the novel is complex. *Emlyn* and his father live alone in the disused chapel. His mother and baby brother have disappeared since a terrifying argument for which his father is blamed. In fact,

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**"Using step-sisters serves to make acceptable to the child feelings of animosity between siblings..."**

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(Continued on page 7)

## A 'Cinderella' Character? (continued)

because Emlyn's mother is suffering from depression, she and the child are being cared for by Emlyn's uncle, who happens to be the father of Nia's friend Gwyn, himself a magician. Hence the interdiction to Nia: stay away from the chapel.

But Emlyn and his father long to be reunited with their mother. This is the realistic element of the plot, but there is also a magical element. Emlyn is placed under a spell by children of ice and is saved only by the intervention of Gwyn and Nia. Nia becomes the catalyst that reunites the family and so brings about a resolution. Throughout the story Nimmo uses fairy tale motifs; Nia herself begins as a 'Cinderella' in need of rescue and, like the fairy tale character, Cinderella, with the help of her 'fairy god-mother' she metamorphoses into a heroine.

There are further parallels between Nia and Cinderella. There is no room for Nia in her older sisters' bedroom: 'Nia followed her older sisters upstairs. Nerys and Catrin disappeared into a room overlooking the High Street. Nia glimpsed a wide sunlit window before the door was closed against her.' A similar motif is found in Grimm's 'Cinderella': '... she [Cinderella] didn't have a bed...' The fairy tale Cinderella is told that she cannot go to the ball, but she dresses up anyway: 'the bird tossed down a dress of gold and silver, with slippers embroidered with silk and silver. She slipped the dress on hastily...' Nia also dresses up: 'Nia had found a violet dress, patterned with pink and white flowers. She stood up and slipped it over her head... She drew out a pair of... pink shoes with stars on them.'

The presence of a fairy godmother character is typical of the fairy tale. Nia's fairy godmother is Nain Griffiths, Gwyn's grandmother, who 'was wearing a purple cardigan so bright it was almost shouting and there were pearly pink parrots swinging from her ears.' The colours of her clothing echo the colours of those worn by Nia, effectively linking the two characters.

Nia's perception of herself as a middle child equates with the dictionary definition of 'Cinderella': '1. A person or thing of unrecognised or disregarded merit or beauty' '2. A neglected or despised member of a group' (Concise Oxford Dictionary). By the end of the book, however, she has achieved a greater degree of self esteem, aided by her teacher's admiration for her art: 'We'll hang it right in the middle' Pride of Place!

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## The Kids on the Carpet

**Geoff Fox** entitled his workshop 'What does it mean to the kids on the carpet?'. He was interested in going beyond the grand generalisations about 'The Power of Oral Storytelling' towards a clearer sense of what children actually learn or gain from the telling of a traditional tale.

He began by reminding the group of what aboriginal peoples (his examples came from Canada and Outer Mongolia) have said about the centrality of story in their cultures. Then he told a story himself—the North American Indian legend of The Burnt Faced Girl, a Cinderella story which, coincidentally, had just been mentioned in Jack Zipes' plenary session.

Geoff's hopes were that the group would then suggest what children in a hypothetical class of nine year olds might take from the experience. The group duly obliged in particular terms about the story and more generally about oral storytelling itself. Suggestions ranged from messages about generosity, virtue rewarded, anti-materialism, hypocrisy and vanity to thoughts about the peculiar quality of storytelling which builds a unique sense of community in the classroom. Interesting though many of the group's ideas were, there was perhaps some frustration in that time limits and group size inevitably precluded a more searching exploration of the topic.

The Kids on the Carpet

# Bravo, Mr. William Shakespeare!

by Marcia Williams

Mr. Shakespeare  
Marcia Williams

**'You don't mess with the great Bard, Marcia.'** This was the response of my editor when I first proposed a Shakespeare retelling. But children's authors have been messing with the 'great Bard' since 1807 when Charles and Mary Lamb published *Tales from Shakespeare Designed for the Use of Young Persons*. It is this book that drove me to beg my editor to allow me to do my own retelling. It had been my own introduction to Shakespeare and I had yawned and fidgeted through every page. The small numbers of quotations that are included are hidden in dense paragraphs of descriptive text, but what was worse was that I never had a copy that included illustrations, even though the first edition of Lamb, published by Godwin, had pictures, admittedly uninspiring by modern standards. But at a time when books were scarce, illustrations scarcer and artwork actually produced for an existing text, even scarcer, they must have been pleasing to the eye.

Allowing for the moral norms of the time, Charles and Mary Lamb told the stories with loving care. They must have brought Shakespeare to many children and adults of the 19th century, creating a new audience, even creating a new genre, the retelling of the classics for children. In that same year (1807), another retelling was published, *The Family Shakespeare* by Henrietta Bowdler. Her approach makes one realise just how innovative and lively the Lambs' *Tales* must have appeared when first published. Shakespeare without the naughty bits! The Lambs' retellings would certainly raise no blushes, but they were at least written for the pleasure of children.

So I must heap praise upon the book that did more to put me off Shakespeare as a child than anything else. But should we expect a book, published in 1807, that is a retelling, not an original work of literature, still to talk to the twentieth-century child? Should they make way for new images of Shakespeare that will speak directly to the modern child? There have been many other published retellings of Shakespeare between 1870 and today, but none have stuck like the *Lambs Tales*.

G.B.Harrison, illustrated by C.Walter Hodges, was aiming for the schools market. E. Nesbit wrote a retelling of Shakespeare which, with its angelic looking children taking the parts of Shakespeare's great

heroes and heroines, appears somewhat patronising.

The director, Richard Eyre, claims that Shakespeare is a 'measure and template of our humanity'. I believe that it is worth 'Reimagining Shakespeare for Children and Young Adults'. Each generation deserves the best from the Bard. They should be looking to contemporary actors, directors, writers, animators, film makers, teachers and parents to find a new 're-imagining', in order to fire their own imaginations and to inspire them to explore Shakespeare. We now live in a fast moving, visual world and work for children and young people should reflect this.

For writers that reimagine Shakespeare for a

younger audience, space will always be a problem. Shakespeare's plays are sometimes too long, while children's books are sometimes too short! Michael Foreman told me that the author Leon Garfield said of their two volumes of Shakespeare retellings, which are longer than most, 'It was like trying to paint the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel onto a postage stamp.' The limited space calls for

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**"I am a creative student. My place is still at the back of the class, doodling and wondering what is for supper..."**

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ruthless editing and puts a severe limit on self-indulgent waffle. Stanley Wells, in the *Times Literary Supplement*, describes their retelling as, 'Narrated with a vivid sense of their theatrical impact... not pale reflections of the plays, but fresh creations with a life of their own.' A retelling that does not take on a life of its own has not succeeded. Leon Garfield's knowledge and understanding of Shakespeare's plays is ably supported by the originality, wit, emotion and depth of Foreman's illustrations.

Since the second of these two volumes was only published in 1994, you may wonder why I wanted to set out along a similar path. Garfield's book inspired me to create a book for another audience, those children who might not get hooked into Shakespeare through him. His is an outstanding and scholarly book, a book for children who have ample access to books and are already avid readers. Garfield was a creative academic; I am a creative student. My place is still at the back of the class, doodling and wondering what is for supper. I need to write and illustrate for that student within me, because another bit of me says, someone, somewhere, somehow failed to make literature more interesting than doodle and supper.

**(Continued on page 9)**

## Shakespeare (continued)

No one told me that life and literature are all one and that Shakespeare was writing about you and me and the old grump next door.

An author/illustrator has the ability to integrate words and pictures in a way that no separate authors and illustrators have. In recreating something like a play, which is so visual, this seemed to me a great advantage. When I first started the project, it took me a long time to find a way 'in'. I realised that there had been some truth in my editor's words, but it was not that you 'don't mess with the great Bard', but that you do not

mess with him lightly. What I had always found lacking in other retellings was the feeling that these were plays to be performed, not stories for silent reading. They were public proclamations on the state of man, they were open to many interpretations and many renditions according to the actor or director, but there was nothing silent or private in Shakespeare's playwriting: I wanted to do him noisy justice. The breakthrough came when I visited the reconstructed Globe Theatre in London. I was given a tour by an actor who made

me realise that Shakespeare's theatre was a bawdy, riotous affair, with heckling from the audience, with vendors and prostitutes selling their wares, the stink of the unwashed bodies, members of the audience wandering on and off the stage, missiles and garbage. No audience hush followed by polite clapping. But this was the theatre that Shakespeare wrote for and I wanted to get some sense of this into my reimagining. There was no curtain between Shakespeare and his audience. The line between stage and life blurred, as the audience partook of the performance, some from the stage itself. As Shakespeare said, 'All the world's a stage'. That is what I wanted to capture a sense of, between the covers of my book.

Adding an audience to the page, as I have done, has many advantages. They not only lend atmosphere, but they can also inform and support the text and the actor's words. They can bring modern humour, anarchy and idioms that might

seem out of place in the main body of the text. While the rest of the book may be considered my retelling of Shakespeare's conversation with his reader, the audience's speech bubbles are my conversation with the reader, our personal interaction, gossip and backchat.

Comic strip is not an easy option as it requires skilled reading; it is my experience that children, particularly of primary school age, are far better at this than adults. In a comic strip it is not enough to be literate, you must also be visually literate, an important ability in this multimedia society and a vital skill when watching a play on stage. You have to have the adeptness to dive in

and out of the various levels created. In my Shakespeare books there is the narrative text, the visual text, Shakespeare's text and the audience text, the jokes that develop through the book and even from book to book, the recurring characters and historic asides. Not to mention the hidden clues that the pictures contain, mirroring the 'meaningful gesture', found in a stage performance. In fact you could liken comic strips to Shakespeare's own multilayered texts!

My intention is to be nothing more than a stepping stone to the Bard himself. Bravo, Mr William Shakespeare, we are still messing with you. And I would like to encourage

as much messing as possible, for us, for our children, and for our children's children!

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**“Shakespeare's theatre was a bawdy, riotous affair, with heckling from the audience, with vendors and prostitutes selling their wares, the stink of unwashed bodies, missiles and garbage...”**

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# Dreams and Transformations: Illustrating the Fairy Tales

by Jane Ray

Illustrating Fairy Tales

Jane Ray

**Being asked by Walker Books to illustrate the Fairy Tales retold by Berlie Doherty was the kind of job that illustrators long for.** I was intensely aware of the tradition I was following in, and to carry on that tradition from the likes of Dumas, Rackham and Kay Nielson was a fairly awe-inspiring task, but an exciting one. These stories are in our blood, we've known them so long we can't remember when we first heard them. As Berlie says in her Introduction to the book, 'We remember them as if they had been sung to us while we were under the spell of a long, deep sleep, and when we hear them again we think, Ah, yes! I know this from long ago. That is because they are hundreds of years old and have been told a million times before...' At the same time I was anxious to fulfil the brief given by Wendy Boase at Walker that this should be a contemporary collection, for the year 2000, as well as not being too eurocentric in approach.

As a child I was familiar with fairy tales in the Ladybird books and Disney versions, and much of what I then drew and painted was about them: witches, princesses, gingerbread houses etc. As I grew up I also became interested in mythology, as well as theatre, masks, puppets and the art and craft of many different cultures such as Africa, Indonesia, Japan and Mexico. My paintings are often inspired by mythology, fairy and folk tales and dreams, and based on the archetypal fairy tale themes of finding one's place in the world, of birth, love, death, fear and fortune. My paintings have portrayed Ceres, the Roman goddess of the harvest, angels and winged figures such as a winged pregnant horse, part dream, part mythology. These images were made fairly instinctively without too much planning as opposed to illustration work where there has to be much more sense of design and planning. Some, such as a winged zebra, derive from a series of dreams I had when I was pregnant, about feeding strange little ravenous creatures. Egyptian beliefs about the next world also feature.

Nowadays I am often commissioned to illustrate themes which inspire me, so that my own work has begun to combine with my illustration work, and I have been able to draw upon my own bank of images to illustrate fairy tales. I wanted to make a central image, a painting for each story, something that didn't necessarily illustrate a specific incident or detail in the story but rather said something about the story as a whole. In some cases this was the first

image that came into my head when I thought about that story—for example, Snow White in her glass coffin, Rapunzel in the tower, Cinderella putting on the golden slipper, Red Riding Hood approaching the wolf/grandmother or the prince kissing Sleeping Beauty. For 'The Frog Prince' and 'The Wild Swans', I made a picture about a dream described in the story. Then there are transformations through either a reflection or enchantment; for 'Cinderella' Berlie used the Grimm version as her source in which Cinderella draws strength from the hazel tree that she planted long ago on her mother's grave. In illustrating 'Snow White' I used the borders as a collage, with old photographs and pressed flowers to suggest a connection with her real mother. In 'The Frog Prince' I have pond weed floating around the edges, and in 'Rumplestiltskin', a piece of cloth on a loom, with a

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**"My paintings are often inspired by mythology, fairy and folk tales and dreams..."**

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very simple heavy border emphasizing the overwhelming impossibility of the task facing the young girl. These border ideas came about through the input of Amelia Edwards at Walker Books, who has just been given the Eleanor Farjeon Award. Working with someone like her is a complete joy because she sees possibilities in your work that you haven't seen yourself. A technique I'd not used before was the silhouette, following once more in the fine

tradition of Arthur Rackham; again this was an idea from Amelia which provided the perfect solution and seemed to add a different dimension.

In a picture from 'Rapunzel' I wanted to evoke some sympathy for the 'bad guy', the witch who is an almost unbearably sad character in this story, left alone in the tower that she tried to imprison Rapunzel in. Similarly, in 'Hansel and Gretel', I wanted to try to portray that baddy of all baddies, the Wicked Step Mother, in a different way—trying to see the impossibility of her position faced with these starving children for whom she has no food. The final picture from 'Hansel and Gretel' reflects how this is an inspirational story despite its truly grim content. Even though the children are let down and betrayed by all the adults they encounter, they ultimately survive through their own wits and intelligence. My picture shows them devouring a birthday cake version of their terrifying ordeal, and is intended to show them firmly back in control of their own destiny, something I would wish for any child.

# I Want...! Interpreting Childhood Collections for Children

by Diane Lees, Director Bethnal Green Museum of Childhood

**The museum at Bethnal Green has had many identities.** It opened in the 1870s as a Museum of the Arts and Sciences for the 'poor of the East End of London' (Sabin 1875), and has sometimes been criticised over the years as a poor relation to its parent, the Victoria and Albert Museum in South Kensington. Its relaunch as a Museum of Childhood in the mid 1970s was a direct response to the popularity and complexity of this subject and the realisation of the wealth of material within the V&A to support it. The collections therefore include over 150,000 items, ranging from toys, dolls, books, games, puzzles, furniture, nursery equipment, costume, learning toys and our world famous collection of dolls houses. The largely aesthetic reasons for the original collection of most of the exhibits, however, tends to bias our ability

to interpret different childhoods of the past. Only from the mid 1970s do collecting patterns reflect the desire to represent the subject of childhood as such. Additionally, objects such as toys have been handed down by adults over time rather than specifically created for the child. The issues of what to collect in the contemporary field will continue to exercise us and our successors for many years to come.

The process of globalisation and the move from craft to mass production has swamped the field with ever changing ranges of the same thing (how many different types of Barbie can you name?) A second dilemma is: Who are we interpreting childhood for? Our role as the de facto National Museum of Childhood gives us the responsibility for being the repository of both material and knowledge in the field. But our academic role does not always seamlessly fit with the audience profile for our visitors. While specialists represent about 12% of our visitors, children under 16 make up some 60% (90,000 visits). What should the museum look like?

Thinking about how museums should present their subjects has been revolutionised in recent years, keywords now being cultural diversity, social inclusion and lifelong learning. Museums face new challenges in responding to a culture of globally aware junior consumers whose view of the world is shaped by the external influences of new media. It is not trendy to go to museums—it is something you do with school.

Our next dilemma is: What is the real definition of childhood? I have been struck by the difference in opinions on when childhood began. Is it really only a product of the industrialised nation? To cre-

ate an artificial start point can cause us to omit the importance of archaeological evidence in the history of the changing lives of children, and can lead us to misinterpret the importance of play and discovery learning throughout time. This raises more questions, about the material culture of children and the extent to which this gives all children something in common, about the perception of children and about the link with other categorisations such as the adolescent and the elderly?

Indeed the archaeological community itself is uneasy in its admission that children peopled the past. In *Not merely Child's Play*, Laurie Wilkie describes children's artefacts as being 'discussed as by-products of parents attempts to instil values into their children, not as statements made by children.'

Children's literature too has been utilised in order to satisfy an adult desire for instruction and moral inspiration. The past, whether in history or literature, should not be overidealised. Even today, there is extensive evidence that large numbers of children are not benefiting from societal aid, with too many children in the UK living below the poverty line.

One of the most significant discoveries of my brief research was

the lack of child involvement in shaping children's future. This, for me, presents the most significant change, which will influence the way in which we develop the museum of childhood in the future, turning into a museum for childhood as well as of childhood.

Our challenges are to present the historical and contemporary evidence of childhood, in a meaningful way to the child, to integrate and encourage children's voices in shaping historic and contemporary views and to deliver on international, national, regional and local agendas without simply giving an adult establishment view. We also need to collect evidence for the future and to balance the popular with the academic. The museum is currently embarking on the first phase of a £10million development plan in which the first phase will be to pilot new interpretation and new ways of working. It will involve multiple voices including children and academics and attempt to create new ways of inspiring and engaging with the contemporary family. Work starts in March and the first phase is due for completion in November 2003.

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**“Museums face new challenges in responding to a culture of globally aware junior consumers...”**

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Bethnal Green Museum of Childhood

Diane Lees

# Animal Anecdotes: Reality Plays with Fantasy

by Mary Davidson

Animal Anecdotes

Mary Davidson

**My focus here is largely about animals as they appear in letters written by children to the two magazines, Aunt Judy's Magazine (1866-1885), and Little Folks (1871-1933).** Aunt Judy was edited by Mrs. Gatty, and later by her more famous daughter, Mrs. Ewing, but proved too rarefied to survive a long life. Little Folks was a popular, middle class children's magazine, rich in stories, competitions, puzzles, AND a treasure trove of correspondence. All the anecdotes in the letters had to be attested as 'true and original' by a parent or teacher. In these letters there is much use of the fairy-tale animal stereotype: a dog is faithful, a cat is sly, a bird knows it all. Additionally, the letters provide an extraordinary insight into the Victorian frame of mind. If the child is to his/her animal as the adult is to the child, treatment of pets has much to reveal about Victorian middle-class upbringing. The animal is a trigger for the imagination, and an entry into a subversive world. The animal in the letters represents the Victorian child's story—a mixture of civilisation and anarchy, discipline and desire. Keeping pets showed you could afford to feed useless animals, while the animals themselves were part of a class system in which pedigrees bloomed. Some breeds were considered downright common, like the whippet, which was understood to be a labourer's dog. Others, like the mastiff owned by Little Lord Fauntleroy's grandfather, denoted wealth or rank.

The range of pets in these letters extends from modest Dorothy Shoobert from East London, who writes 'we have only one pet and that is a cat. We are very fond of her.' (Little Folks 1899, 317) to lucky 10-year-old Priscilla Ponsonby from Coventry: 'Dadda has 27 horses, 14 dogs and 2 dear little kangaroos. I have a dear big black horse, 6 rabbits, 7 guinea pigs, a St Bernard dog, a dove, a pet goose, and last of all, my very dearest pet, a lovely big elephant.'

Animals, it was felt, encouraged self discipline. A letter of 1888 is a direct descendant of the animal moral tale tradition. Evelyn Moulton, aged 16, writes about her grandmother's two cats. One had kittens who were all given away; the other was allowed to keep just one. The bereaved cat, 'in her rage and jealousy ate the kitten all up. [The cat]

was well punished for her greediness for about an hour afterwards she was found dead. The kitten had evidently disagreed with her.' (Little Folks 1888,143) The child trumpets a fierce moral about anger, greed and jealousy.

Like Victorian people, animals were only good if they were useful, in which case they were regarded as very good indeed for the lower orders, servants and children. Owning a dog appears to have been a widespread middle-class child activity. The magazine letters show the child's understanding and longing for the liberty enjoyed by a dog but which is prohibited for children. The letters show a clear identification with dogs; indeed, many children write as though they are their dog. Here is a letter from Mita Woroniaks, aged 12, in 1890, which muddles the animal/child boundary: 'When we meet Papa before lunch we kiss his hand in saying "good morning". Monkey is also standing on her hind legs against Papa, doing as we do (Little Folks 1890,71).'

This 1908 letter from F.P. Short, aged 11, of London, revels in his dog's ferocity, noting happily how aggression triumphs.

'Dear Mr. Editor,

I am a Chinese Chow. I am sorry to say that my favourite sport is that of worrying cats, and my master says that I kill them too when I have a chance, and I am afraid it is all too true. I have two great cat enemies and one dog enemy. How I wish I could get at them. My dog enemy is a little wire-haired terrier who came to live here, but I fought him so much my master had to give him away.'

Tales of 'magical' pets crowd the correspondence pages; a rabbit pulls out hat pins with his teeth (Little Folks 1903, 318), a cat stops the pendulum of a clock (Little Folks 1903, 318), a cat rides on a dog's back to open door handles (Little Folks 1890,287), mice run over piano keys in the night and play music (Little Folks 1888, 351). The letters show the child's requirement of the wondrous, and the urge to tell the tale. Animals are the alter ego of the child's frustrated desire to behave badly. Marie Newman of Brunswick Square, London, takes a secret subversive pleasure in her bad dog; she writes in 1904, 'Jim was rather a naughty dog and had to be given away, but I think he was the nicest dog I have ever seen.'

Cats however earned a Victorian distrust. Mrs. Gatty in Aunt Judy's Magazine (1876, 64) tells how a young reader wanted cats to be helped as much as dogs,

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**“Keeping pets showed you could afford to feed useless animals, while animals themselves were part of a class system in which pedigrees bloomed ...”**

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**(Continued on page 13)**

## Animal Anecdotes (continued)

but explains 'They are not as amenable to discipline as dogs are. Let our little friend make the experiment, and see if she is able to persuade her dear puss to obey an order to sit by her toys and watch them till her return. . . We have a strong suspicion that the obedience and tractability of dogs form one of their great claims upon our admiration as well as our love.'

In their identification with their animals, children acknowledge their own wildness and separateness from adult rules of behaviour. At the same time, in naming and taming their pets, they verify order.

In fairy tales, dogs are loyal and devoted. So is 12-year-old Irene D'Olszowska's dog, from Belgium in 1884. This letter bursts with gripping relevance:

'I think you will like to hear how faithful an old dog of ours was... He was quite a common dog, but so faithful. He was fondest of my Papa... when last Christmas dear Papa died, our old dog did nothing but pine. He came in to our room to be caressed, then ran down the street as fast as ever he could. Next day the dust cart man came to our door and said he had found a dog lying dead at the corner of the street... He had evidently gone to look for his master, and not finding him, our old dog had died of grief. We had him buried at our gardener's, under a rose bush.' (Little Folks, 1888, 121)

Here is all the legendary fidelity of Ulysses's dog, Argus. Its imagery of steadfastness and devotion fell upon fertile ground. Irene's letter has all the ingredients of Victorian drama, heroism, death, sentiment, and an inherent class consciousness.

Caged birds were popular children's pets. In fairy tales, as Bettelheim says, 'birds which can fly high into the air symbolize...the freedom of the soul to soar, to rise seemingly free from what binds us to our earthly existence.' Victorian pet birds lived so intimately with their child owners that they fed not only from their hands but also from their mouths. Hazel Boulton, aged 10, writes of bullfinches 'so tame that you can put a piece of seed on your lip and they will peck it off.' (Little Folks 1904, 237) The caged bird in the letters seems to symbolise freedom in chains, with the child as adult jailor and the bird as the crafty, frantic child whose plans of escape are doomed. A letter of 1890 describes the way in which a parrot's young owner both admires and thwarts the ability of Miss Polly to open the padlocks on her cage. Maysie turns her bird into a girl, at once a little lady and a

wild girl who must be restrained—probably a reflection of how she sees her own upbringing.

On the theme of sex, fairy tales often use animals in a symbolic way. This letter is drenched in fairy-tale symbolism, and cries out for a happy ending. Vera Barclay, aged 14 in 1908, writes:

'I had a pet snake. I was very fond of him, and he went everywhere with me, curled around my neck; on cold days he would get inside my coat. He knew he belonged to me and hissed if anyone else took him of my neck. At breakfast he drank milk from my spoon, and lunch water from my glass. One day I went a walk with him round my neck, and after I had gone a little way I found he had slipped off. He was found by some boys who killed him; they brought him to us to feed to an owl belonging to my sister.' (Little Folks 1908)

Vera learns that brutality, accident, love, death and fate are horribly linked and beyond her control.

What do animal pets mean to the child? They symbolise, thus simplifying, the everyday world,

while providing a springboard into a fantasy world. Just as fairy tales teach by simplification, symbolism and fantasy, so, it appears, does the child's animal experience. And in turning the experience into a story, the child becomes his/her own key in addressing and clarifying the mysteries of being.

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**“Victorian pet birds lived so intimately with their child owners that they fed not only from their hands but also from their mouths...”**

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# Fate and Fortune in a Modern Fairy Tale: Louis Sachar's Holes

by Pat Pinsent

**A fairy tale may be defined as a story which includes magic, often taking the form of magic objects or words,** and which is often characterised by repeated themes, such as like the eventual success of younger sons or the underdog. It tends to be populated by princes, princesses, fairy godmothers, ogres, wicked stepmothers, witches and talking animals. It often has a happy ending, not infrequently brought about by what Tolkien describes as a 'eucatastrophe... a sudden joyous turn.' I would claim that Louis Sachar's *Holes* (1998), set in a bleak inhospitable landscape in contemporary America, has enough of these qualities to be described as a fairy tale, albeit one which has a good deal to say about today's society.

The story tells how the protagonist, Stanley Yelnats, always attributes bad luck to Elya, his 'no-good-dirty-rotten-pig-stealing-great-great-grandfather,' who was cursed by an old woman, back in Latvia. She had instructed him how to fatten a piglet in order to win a wealthy bride, but almost inadvertently he had neglected to fulfil the old woman's command to carry her up the local mountain, let her drink from a stream, and sing a song to her. He remembered this too late, on the ship in which he was emigrating to the US, but by then he had already incurred her curse. He made a good deal of money but, because of the curse, his son, the first Stanley, lost it to the outlaw, Kissin' Kate Barlow, so his descendants are now poor.

Stanley certainly has bad luck when he is arrested for stealing a smelly pair of sneakers belonging to his favourite baseball player, as he was simply walking underneath a freeway overpass when they dropped on him. He is sent to Camp Green Lake in the desert (there was once a flourishing town lake but the lake has dried up) where boys are expected to learn to reform by endlessly digging holes 5 foot deep and 5 foot wide. This isn't quite the mindless activity it seems to be, as the boys are unwittingly helping the Warden, Ms Walker, in a search for the treasure buried by the outlaw, Kissin' Kate Barlow, after she had stolen it from Stanley's great-grandfather. Kate, once a teacher, became an outlaw after the man she loved, a Black onion-seller, was killed by the racist sheriff, Trout Walker. Stanley's life at the camp is made bearable by his friendship with Zero (Hector Zeroni), whom he teaches to read. The boys escape to the nearest mountain, the Big Thumb; on the way there they survive on jars of peach juice buried in the wreck of a boat sunk before the lake dried up, while at

the top they find a muddy pool and plentiful onions. Eventually they return, find the treasure, and are preserved from the venomous yellow lizards because of the quantity of onions they have eaten. Zero, who himself actually stole the sneakers, turns out to be the great-great-great-grandson of the old woman who cursed Stanley's great-great-grandfather. By befriending him, Stanley has worked off the effects of the curse. Stanley's father also makes his fortune, by discovering a remedy for the bad foot odour suffered by the baseball player- it is based on the peach juice which saved the lives of the boys. So all ends happily ever after.

Elements of the fairy tale are many: Holes includes magic objects such as the peach liqueur, the onions, the two halves of the lipstick case owned by Kate Barlow (one of which is found in a hole, the other belongs to Stanley's mother). It also includes a curse which seems to work by magic.

Stanley and Zero are certainly underdogs, while the baseball player is the equivalent of a king, Madame Zeroni is something of a fairygodmother, Trout Walker is an ogre, and his presumed descendant, the Warden, is certainly a Witch—her nailpolish poisons people when she scratches them. Stanley is ultimately revealed as something of a prince.

There are many repeated motifs, notably the manifest presence of holes of many kinds: the holes in the desert; the hole under the boat; the holes in the hammock; the holes where the lizards and rattlesnakes hide; the hole

which some people think is in Zero's head; the hole in cyberspace which Zero's records have fallen into; the repeated 'oos...' in the song; and the holes in the narrative. Unlike fairy tale formulae such as 'once upon a time' or 'they all lived happily ever after', we have here the repetition of 'No-good-dirty-rotten-pig-stealing-great-great-grandfather.'

Happy endings in fairy tales are often achieved by coincidence, something which seems to imply a benevolent Providence watching over the characters. Coincidences are rife in *Holes*: Stanley is sent to the place where his great-grandfather lost his fortune, and meets the descendant of the man who turned Kissin' Kate Barlow into an outlaw—not so impossible, as she presumably knew about the treasure. But it is far less likely that he would meet the great-great-great-grandson of Madame Zeroni, and 'accidentally'—or

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**"Elements of the fairy tale are many... Stanley and Zero are underdogs, while the baseball player is the equivalent of a king..."**

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Holes

Pat Pinsent

(Continued on page 15)

# The Meaning of Disfiguement in Wilhelm Hauff's Dwarf Nose

by David Blamires

**Wilhelm Hauff (1802-27), a creator rather than a collector of fairytales, has been perennially popular with children in Germany** ever since his tales were first published in 1825-27. There have been many translations into English since 1844. One of the most popular individual tales is 'Zwerg Nase', of which there are three recent translations—Dwarf Long-Nose by Doris Orgel (Random House, 1960; The Bodley Head, 1979), Dwarf Nose by Anthea Bell (North-South Books, 1994) and Little Long-Nose by Rosemary Edwards and Percy E. Pinkerton (Walker Books, 1997), each beautifully illustrated, by Maurice Sendak, Lisbeth Zwerger and Laura Stoddart respectively.

Dwarf Nose tells the story of a twelve year old boy, Jacob, who is abducted by an old woman and bewitched into slavery as a squirrel for seven years, during which time he learns to cook. He escapes after smelling a mysterious herb, but finds himself then to have the shape of an ugly dwarf with a long nose. His parents do not recognize him and reject him. Eventually he finds employment as a cook with the duke and gains fame. A goose he buys at the market turns out to be an enchanted girl, Mimi, and she helps him to find the herb he needs to make a special dish. Smelling this herb turns him into a handsome young man. The two escape. Mimi is also turned back into human

shape by her enchanter father, who rewards Jacob with sufficient money to buy a shop and become rich. However, they do not get married; Mimi is simply a helper figure.

On one level Jacob's story reflects the early nineteenth-century experience of children put into service or apprenticed and separated from home. But on another it expresses the physiological and emotional changes of male adolescence.

The long nose can be interpreted as a displacement for the penis, and the various changes in bodily shape correspond to the embarrassed struggles the adolescent has before becoming an adult. Hauff gives hints about the possible sexual significance of the long nose. It is noteworthy that Jacob's father finds it embarrassing and suggests that he should get a leather case to cover it. A child reader would probably be completely unaware of this latent significance, but it would

not be lost on an adult. References in Freud's Interpretation of Dreams and Bachtold-Staubli's Handwörterbuch des deutschen Aberglaubens (Dictionary of German Folklore) support the symbolic equation of large nose and penis.

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**"He escapes after smelling a mysterious herb, but finds himself to have the shape of an ugly dwarf with a long nose..."**

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## Holes (continued)

by benevolent Providence—re-enact what Elya should have done. That Zero stole the sneakers (while Stanley's father's discovery of how to make them smell sweeter is based on peaches, just like the jars, bottled by Kate Barlow, which preserve the boys' lives) defies credibility, as does their escape from the yellow lizards because of the onions originally sold by Kate's lover (who owned the boat they hide under).

Fairy tales are often characterised by a polarisation between what may be termed Fate, as indicated by the characters' situations and the bad things which happen to them without their deliberate intent, and Fortune, shown by the good things, frequently the positive coincidences and the 'eucatastrophe'. Without Fate, however, Fortune would be impossible. In Holes, Stanley is sent as a result of Fate (the dropping of the trainers) to the desert, which is the place he needs to be to recapture his family's Fortune. It is because of the tyranny of those in charge at the Camp, particularly the Warden, that he and Zero go away to the only place where they can find the sploosh (which defeats the smell) or the onions (which defeat the yellow lizards). It is also Fate that has led Zero to be there at the same time as Stanley, but Fortune that brings them together. In particular, Fortune would be useless if their characters were not who and what they are: the descendants of people involved in what in effect is the original Folk Tale, but also benevolent, brave and intelligent boys.

Wilhelm Hauff

David Blamires

# Not Just a Pretty Face... Gardens in Wilde's Fairy Tales

by Leila Rasheed

**In my talk I attempted to synthesise the work of the sociologist Rob Shields**, who has written on the role of liminal spaces in society, and two fairy tales by Oscar Wilde: *The Selfish Giant* and *The Devoted Friend*. I examined how the garden acted as a metaphor for Wilde's political views as described in *The Soul of Man Under Socialism*, and suggested that it is particularly productive as a political/sociological metaphor because it is an example of what Shields calls the 'controlled limen'.

Shields' most effective example of the 'controlled limen' is the modern shopping mall, a space where social, personal and cultural identities can be temporarily assumed, 'tried on' as it were, but which is not completely separated from society as a true liminal space would be. The controlled limen is a space for experimenting with identity, but also involves concepts such as cultivation, civilisation, interaction and intervention—as opposed to the true liminal space which emphasises separation, introspection, and so on.

I thus argue that the garden is a peculiarly fertile setting for *The Devoted Friend* and *The Selfish Giant*, since Wilde is concerned in these two tales to pass on a political message (in brief, the necessity

of socialism). Setting the stories in the forest or the wilderness found in so many traditional tales would have placed emphasis on the characters' personal and internal identities within a static society, whereas setting the tales in the garden calls attention to the social intention behind them, thus constantly reminding

us that individuals do not exist in a vacuum. This device allows the reader the mental space to experiment with the identity of society itself.

By briefly mentioning the work of Wilde's contemporaries Ruskin and Morris, and also recalling the *Lyrical Ballads* as an earlier literary and historical event, I also attempted to give Wilde's writing some context. The garden serves both as an on-going literary metaphor and an indication of

the contemporary relevance of his political opinions. I ended by referring to some modern literary fairy tales which show various alternative uses of the garden as a setting.

The talk was adapted from an essay I wrote for the *Critical Theory and Perspectives* course of the Roehampton MA in Children's Literature. It was my first experience of speaking at a conference—terrifying but a great ego-boost!

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**“Setting the tales in the garden calls attention to the social intention behind them...”**

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## MANY STORIES, ONE WRITER by Adele Geras

**My talk at the IBBY Day Conference was a very anecdotal affair and was not even written down.** Therefore, all I have to help me in summarizing what I said is a series of very brief notes. I spoke mainly about my own work, and started out by saying how important fairy tales were to me when I was young. The first book I ever read all by myself was a picture book version of 'Rapunzel.' I went on to read Andrew Lang's colour fairy books and an edition of Hans Christian Andersen with illustrations by Rex Whistler, most of which I can still bring to mind quite clearly.

I then spoke about how restful and liberating it is to retell fairytales. There's no wondering about what will happen next and your only aim as a reteller is to do your best to make a narrative live again through your words. I mentioned how I tried, in my *Beauty and the Beast* and other stories to write in as simple a way as possible, in order to allow the artist, Louise Brierley, to do exactly what she needed to do when she came to working on the illustrations.

In my Egerton Hall trilogy, the challenge was very different and I had great fun adapting fairytale elements to modern times. I confessed to a blunder in *Watching the Roses* in which I quite needlessly gave Alice (Sleeping Beauty) a dozen aunts when there are only seven in the original Perrault. Mary Hoffman kindly sprang to my defence, saying that my version was 'a variant.'

Then I took issue with something Peter Hunt has written, which I saw quoted in *Signal* magazine. He contended that the subject matter of fairytales was unsuitable for children (murder, incest, betrayal, etc) while I said that it was precisely these themes that attracted children. I added, 'I hope he's not here.' Of course, he was, but gallantly said he didn't mind being disagreed with.

I greatly enjoyed the day.

Oscar Wilde

Leila Rasheed

Stories & Writer

Adele Geras

# Adult Agenda in Publishing Indigenous Tales for South African Children

by Elwyn Jenkins, Professor Emeritus of English

Vista University, Pretoria, South Africa

There are similarities between the history of publishing translations of indigenous tales for children in South Africa, Australia and Canada, but with the remarkable difference that, particularly up to the 1970s, South Africa produced a great many more than either of the other countries. From the beginning of the 20th century until the present, translations of indigenous folktales in English and Afrikaans have formed a large proportion of South African children's books. There are many reasons why writers and publishers have produced them and eminent persons have endorsed them. Some of these are distinctly adult agendas. Often the cover blurbs, introductions, endorsements, glossaries and notes suggest confusion as to whether the intended reader or audience is adult or child. A typical motive which is more appropriate for adults, although ostensibly for children, is that this is an ethnological project, collecting and annotating tales and publishing them for the 'scientific' record.

It has been argued that for most of the 20th century the books perpetuated an image of the indigenous peoples as 'primitive', thus reinforcing racist policies of relegating 'tribes' to homelands and denying black people a place in the development of the modern state.

On the contrary, my view is that although this might unwittingly have been to some extent the effect, the white authors themselves wished to enable white children to share in the culture of their black compatriots through myth, long before physical barriers between them were removed. The indigenous people of South Africa form such a large majority that they cannot be simply ignored, as happened in Australia and Canada. Black authors, for their part, want to share their disappearing lore with both black and white children.

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Correction

Please note that in our November issue, author Kathy Saunders was erroneously described as 'co-ordinator of The National Centre for Disabled Parents'. Though an active member of the Disabled Parents Network, Kathy is not co-ordinator of the Centre; for more information about the work of The National Centre, which exists to support disabled parents, potential parents, and professionals, ring 0800 0184730 or email [info@dppi.org.uk](mailto:info@dppi.org.uk)

\* \* \* \* \*

A rationale with racist overtones, still to be found occasionally today, dates back to social Darwinism and the early psychological 'recapitulation' theory that indigenous peoples in the three countries represented an earlier stage in the development of human society, which made their 'childlike' tales suitable for modern children.

Indigenous tales appeal to white adults for providing a way in to the mysticism and spirituality of the indigenous peoples. Their motives in retelling the stories can range from indulging the typical white South African taste for esoteric mumbo jumbo that they would like to think lies at the heart of 'darkest Africa', which is still current, to a sincere wish to make amends for the genocide of the Bushmen by honouring their memory and trying to learn from what they left behind.

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**“The white authors wished to enable white children to share in the culture of their black compatriots through myth, long before physical barriers between them were removed...”**

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Various images of the intended child audience can also be distinguished. Until the 1940s, much fantasy writing for children in South Africa and Australia took the form of whimsical tales that imported European fairies to mix with local children, creatures and plants. But alongside these effete concoctions other writers continued to retell authentic local tales, and as fiction about robust local children took hold, these local tales flourished, finally ousting the alien elements.

A few authors have tried to force upon indigenous tales various pedagogical functions which are not authentic, such as teaching about preservation of the environment. But those who really have the child at heart simply see the potential of these stories to entertain and enchant.

South Africa  
Elwyn Jenkins

**The next issue, due out before the end of the academic year, will focus on Translation and Children's Literature. Short articles on any aspect of this subject would be welcomed. Copy date May 1st.**

# International Children's Book Day - April 2nd 2002

by Pam Robson

**The birthday of Hans Christian Andersen on April 2<sup>nd</sup> has, for the past 35 years, been appropriated by IBBY National Sections** as an occasion on which to focus attention upon children's literature.

Each year a different section of IBBY has the opportunity to sponsor the event. The aim is to promote books and reading, and with this objective in mind a theme is selected, a prominent author writes a message for all the children of the world and a celebrated illustrator designs a poster.

This year this prestigious event is sponsored by Austria. The Austrian children's writer, Renate Welsh has composed a message entitled 'Climbing up Book by Book'. The last line of her symbolic message describes a small girl, alone in her garden, who can only read about other children in stories—until she uses her books to climb up and look over the garden wall:

Seven times the girl had to fetch more books, then the boy built a staircase on his side of the wall.

**"Seven times the girl had to fetch more books, then the boy built a staircase..."**

One step at a time he climbed up, very cautiously. The children put their arms round each other and laughed then they sat on top of the wall and dangled their legs.

The International Children's Book Day poster has been designed by the award-winning Austrian illustrator Maria Blazejovsky.

British IBBY regularly organises a special children's event on or around April 2<sup>nd</sup>. Storytelling sessions were, for a number of years, held annually in the wards of children's hospitals in England, Northern Ireland and Wales. Last year a major children's books event, sponsored by Walker Books, was organised at Tate Modern. Almost 200 school children attended the day which was led by Anthony Browne. Workshops were led by four well-known illustrators of children's books—Jez Alborough, Sara Fanelli, Bob Graham and Katharine McKewen. Once again this year British IBBY is planning yet another exciting ICBD.

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## IBBY News

### IBBYlink

We have discussed a number of suggestions, serious and facetious, and have decided that this is the title which more people like than dislike! Having a single word title makes referring to The Newsletter of the British Section of IBBY a good deal easier!

We have had a number of appreciative comments about the **November issue**. Sheila Wood, the chair of the children's bookselling committee of the Booksellers' Association, remarked on how well received it was by this group, and how useful it was to see the experiences of the contributors on the subject of disability.

Sheila Ray, whose commitment to children's literature over the years is well known, writes:

'Just a short note to say how much I enjoyed the latest issue of the IBBY British Section Newsletter—really worth having. It was interesting too to read about the updating of the collection of books for Disabled Young People in Oslo. I was very much involved in IBBY at the time this collection was being established and sometimes I got the job of acquiring suitable books published in the UK and eventually forwarding them to Oslo or Basle—I can't recall which now as, over the years, I've disposed of most of my IBBY materials, either to the NCRCL or Loughborough, to which the original British IBBY archives were sent when the Book Trust people felt they could no longer use them. I wonder where they are now?'

### Bookbird, the international IBBY journal

The second 2001 issue, vol.39 no.2, is on Fathers and Sons, with articles relating to masculinity in Australian, Japanese, Bengali, African American and Greek children's books. The third issue, vol. 39 no.3, is about Sense of Place in children's literature, featuring New Zealand (Margaret Mahy writes), Spain (Civil War), and a range of other localities. The theme of the latest issue is Autobiographical Writing for Children. Forthcoming issues during 2002 will be on South East European Children's Literature, Picture Books: Global Trends and Issues, and Celebrating Books and Children: 50 Years of IBBY. You may subscribe to Bookbird by contacting Anne Marie Corrigan, University of Toronto Press, 5201 Dufferin St., North York, Ontario, Canada, M3H 5T8, Email [journals@utpress.utoronto.ca](mailto:journals@utpress.utoronto.ca). Subscriptions are available at \$35 a year (payable by Visa or Mastercard).

Children's Book Day

Pam Robson

# Salon du Livre de Jeunesse

by Ann Lazim

**Every December for about a week the Paris suburb of Montreuil plays host to an enormous children's book fair.** All the French publishers have stands where they display and sell their books to thousands of teachers, librarians, parents, children and all others interested. There is a full programme of associated events, both for professionals and for the general public. Many authors and illustrators attend, take part in discussions, and sign their books. This year Anthony Browne was there, and had an interactive exhibition devoted to his work, focusing on Marcel au pays des albums (Willy in the Land of Picture Books).

Each year there is a focus on books from and about a particular country or region. This year the focus was on the Arab World. Publishers highlighted their relevant books and there was a centrally-placed bookshop selling Arabic as well as French books. This was an opportunity to promote Arab authors living in France and many authors from around the Arab world were invited and participated. Some stunning books were on display—for example, *Le Carnet du Dessinateur* by Mohieddine Ellabbad (Mango Jeunesse 1999, ISBN 2740407695) and *La Poesie Arabe*

illustrated by the calligraphy of Rachid Koraichi (Mango Jeunesse 1999, ISBN 2740408285). Both of these are bilingual books, the Arabic script being an integral part of the illustrations.

IBBY France collaborated with the Institut du Monde Arabe in Paris to produce an annotated list including books in Arabic and books in Arabic and French. It can be accessed on the institute's website [www.imarabe.org](http://www.imarabe.org). A guide to publishing for children in the Arab world was also produced.

This book fair or salon is well worth a visit. Even if your French is minimal, there are so many wonderful picture books to enjoy. The big publishers such as Gallimard and L'École des Loisirs are there, of course, but some of the smaller ones that caught my eye as they are producing some very original books are: Rue du Monde, Editions Thierry Magnier and Editions du Rouergue.

I don't know the dates for the 2002 salon yet but I'll try to find out and get it listed in the forthcoming events in our next newsletter. Au revoir!

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## Changing Faces, Changing Places Irish IBBY launches multicultural guide, by Ann Lazim

**During the last few years an increasing number of people from a variety of cultural and ethnic backgrounds have migrated to Ireland** and settled there, and there is a need to identify literature which reflects these demographic changes. IBBY Ireland's response has been to produce a multicultural guide and booklist, *Changing Faces, Changing Places*.

IBBY Ireland held a conference on 24<sup>th</sup> November 2001 at the Irish Writers' Centre in Dublin to launch the guide. I had been invited there to speak about multicultural education and publishing for children in the UK, and then the three editors talked about the work that went into compiling the guide. Each of them had different experiences to bring to the task, which they had clearly carried out with a great deal of enjoyment and commitment. Susanna Coghlan works for O'Brien Press, Mary Fitzpatrick as a primary school teacher, and Lucy O'Dea as a secondary school teacher. The final contribution of the morning was from Alexis Kouros, whose first children's book, *Children of Gondwana* won the first Finlandia Junior prize. Alexis was born in Iran, trained as a doctor in Hungary and now lives in Finland. His book was written in Finnish and has been translated into Greek, Japanese and Danish.

In the afternoon we heard from Benny Oburu who described her experiences of moving to Ireland from Kenya. She has found Irish people very welcoming and now is involved in a company called Cultural Links, running inter-cultural seminars with businesses and community groups. The last speaker of the day was writer Beverley Naidoo who spoke about her novels and about working with young people in South Africa.

After the conference, there was a ceremony in the nearby Teachers' Club, attended by many more people, when Liz O'Donnell, Minister of State at the Department of Foreign Affairs, officially launched *Changing Faces, Changing Places*.

The guide is an excellent production, well designed and in full colour. It is well worth acquiring by those outside Ireland also. Orders can be placed through the O'Brien Press, 20 Victoria Road, Dublin 6, Ireland Tel 00353 1 4923333, Fax 00353 1 4922777, email [susanna@obrien.ie](mailto:susanna@obrien.ie) The price is £7 plus £1 p&cp for sterling orders. Cheques should be made payable to IBBY Ireland. Advance payment is required on individual orders, and is preferable for all UK orders.

Salon du Livre

Ann Lazim

Irish IBBY Multicultural Guide

Ann Lazim

# CALENDAR & EVENTS

## Early March 2002

### MOVIE MAGIC AT THE NATIONAL FILM THEATRE

The NFT of London's South Bank always have interesting programmes for children at weekends and holiday periods. They often show films from other countries. In early March, they will be showing two Norwegian children's film Pinchcliffe Grand Prix and Only Clouds Move the Stars. At the end of the month there will be an extended run of the Icelandic film Ikingut.

Contact National Film Theatre, South Bank, London SE1 9XT. Tel. 020 7928 3232

## Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> March 2002, Centre for Language in Primary Education, London

### CONFERENCE ON POETRY AND EDUCATION

Speakers: Morag Styles and Sophie Hannah.

Centre for Language in Primary Education, Webber St., London SE1 8QW. Tel 020 7401 3382/3

Email [info@clpe.co.uk](mailto:info@clpe.co.uk)

## 22<sup>nd</sup>-24<sup>th</sup> March 2002, Marlborough College, Wiltshire

### JUST ONE MORE PAGE!

Federation of Children's Book Group Conference. Speakers include Malorie Blackman, Shirley Hughes, Robin McKinley, Geraldine McCaughrean, Nick Sharratt, Anthony Horowitz, Mairi Hedderwick.

Contact Joy Taylor, 27 Duke Street, Oxford OX2 0HX

## 22<sup>nd</sup>-25<sup>th</sup> May 2002, in Leuven, Belgium

### RELIGION, CHILDRENS'S AND YOUTH LITERATURE AND MODERNITY IN EUROPE, 1750-2000

Themes include Religion and Literature; Religious Publishing Houses; Use, Distribution and Control of Children's Religious Literature; Authors, Illustrators and Genres.

Contact [patricia.quaghebeur@kadoc.kuleuven.ac.be](mailto:patricia.quaghebeur@kadoc.kuleuven.ac.be) Further information available from [PatPinsent@aol.com](mailto:PatPinsent@aol.com).

## 28<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup> June 2002, New Lanark, Scotland

### SCIENCE FICTION AND UTOPIAN FICTION

Booking form at <http://www.SFRA.org/SFRA2002.htm>

## 5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> July 2002, De Montfort University, Leicester

### THE CHILD READER 1740-1940

Contact Matthew Grenby, 24 Cornwall Rd. London N4 4PH

Email [mgrenby@dmu.ac.uk](mailto:mgrenby@dmu.ac.uk)

## 25<sup>th</sup>-26<sup>th</sup> July 2002, Edge Hill College, Ormskirk, Lancs

### INFECTION AND CONTAMINATION

An interdisciplinary conference analysing the fiction, history and politics associated with this subject.

Contact Clare Horrocks, English Dept., Edge Hill College, St. Helen's Rd., Ormskirk, Lancs, L39 4QP

Email [horrocksc@edgehill.ac.uk](mailto:horrocksc@edgehill.ac.uk)

## 13<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> September 2002, College of Ripon and York, St. John, York

### ETHICS AND RESPONSIBILITY: THEOLOGY, LITERATURE AND FILM

With a panel on Ethics and Children's Literature

Contact Gaye Ortiz, College of Ripon and York St John, Lord Mayor's Walk, Work, YO31 7EX

Email [g.ortiz@ucrysj.ac.uk](mailto:g.ortiz@ucrysj.ac.uk)

## 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> November 2002, Liverpool John Moores University

### ANALYSING SERIES AND SERIAL NARRATIVE

Contact Nickianne Moody, Liverpool John Moores University, Dean Walters Building, St. James Rd.,

Liverpool L1 7BR. Email [N.A.Moody@livjm.ac.uk](mailto:N.A.Moody@livjm.ac.uk)

## Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> November 2002, Roehampton

### ANNUAL IBBY CONFERENCE: PERFORMANCE AND CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

More details soon!