

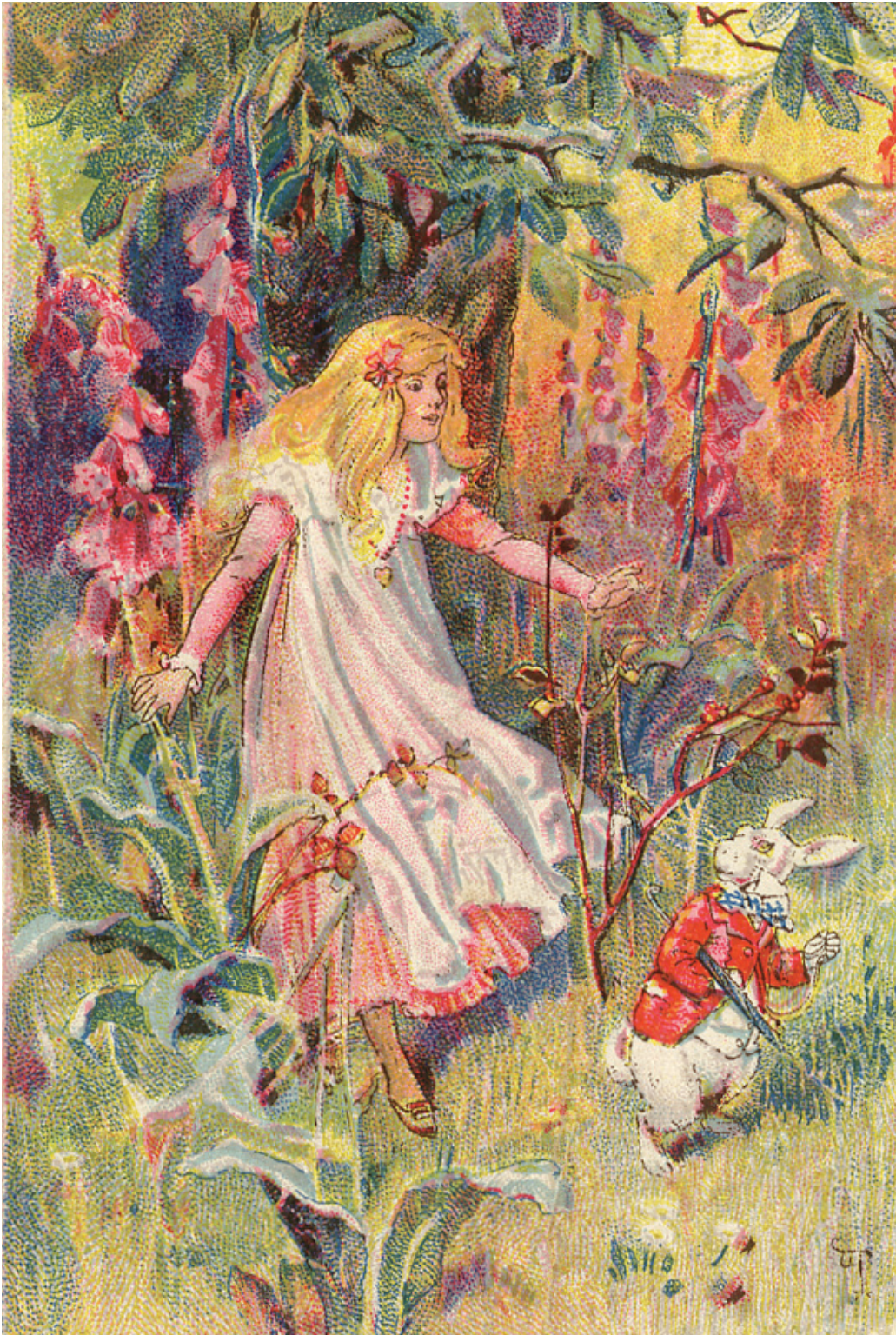
CELEBRATING 150 YEARS OF *ALICE IN WONDERLAND* IN PERFORMANCE

ALICE LIVE!



October 2, 2015 – January 16, 2016

DONALD AND MARY OENSLAGER GALLERY The Shelby Cullom Davis Museum
THE NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS Dorothy and Lewis B. Cullman Center




A nursery magician took

All little children by the hand;
And led them laughing through the book,
Where Alice walks in Wonderland,

Ours is the task with Elfin dance

And song, to give to Childhood's gaze
That Wonderland; and should it chance
To win a smile, be his the praise.

— HENRY SAVILE CLARKE



Alice's *Adventures in Wonderland* began as a performance—a one-man improvisational story-telling show given by the Oxford mathematics lecturer Charles Dodgson to three little girls named Alice, Lorina, and Edith Liddell. Dodgson told them the story on July 4, 1862, while rowing leisurely up the river Thames near Oxford. Three years later (and 150 years ago) he published a much-expanded version of the tale under the pseudonym Lewis Carroll, calling the book *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. A sequel, *Through the Looking-Glass and What Alice Found There*, followed six years later.

Charles Dodgson was more than just an inventor of tales—he was a lifelong entertainer, especially of children. As a child, he put on puppet plays and magic shows for his siblings. As a young man, he narrated magic lantern exhibitions for schoolchildren. Among his adult friends, he read plays aloud and assisted in amateur theatricals. His storytelling captured the imagination of

children, whether singly, in twos and threes, or in groups as large as a hundred. He invented a wide variety of games and puzzles for the amusement of old and young. His rooms were filled with gadgets used primarily for entertainment—from mechanical music devices to his 1888 Hammond typewriter, on which his child friends would “print” poetry. He played chess on the railways with his traveling chess set and gave a table-top croquet set to the Liddell children.

Soon after the publication of *Alice*, Dodgson, a passionate theatregoer, entered into a series of discussions with playwrights, theatrical managers, and potential collaborators (including Arthur Seymour Sullivan), hoping to bring *Alice* to the professional stage. These efforts did not meet with success until 1886, when the dramatist and newspaper editor Henry Savile Clarke asked for Dodgson's permission to adapt the *Alice* stories. Savile Clarke's *Alice in Wonderland: A Dream Play for Children* was the hit of the Christmas season



and toured well into the next year. The play, which featured both child and adult actors and songs by Walter Slaughter, was revived in 1888, when it starred Isa Bowman, who would remain close friends with Dodgson.

Alice arrived in New York at least as early as 1898, when Emily Prime Delafield's stage adaptation was presented in a benefit performance at the Waldorf. As a character, Alice appeared on Broadway in 1905's Victor Herbert musical *Wonderland* and in Jerome Kern's song "Alice in Wonderland" in 1914's *The Girl from Utah*, but not until 1915 did a production of *Alice in Wonderland* open on the Great White Way. The script was adapted by Alice Gerstenberg and the show starred Vivian Tobin, whom the *New York Times* called the "perfect embodiment of Carroll's and Tenniel's Alice."

In the first week of September 1933, just months after its opening, Radio City Music Hall played host to the Lionel Barrymore film *One Man's Journey*. Part of the surrounding program was a live number titled "An Impression from *Alice in Wonderland*," which featured, among other performers, the Roxyettes (who would become known as the Rockettes the following year). As was usual for Radio City, the film and complementary entertainments ran for only a week until the next movie came to town.

Meanwhile, Eva Le Gallienne had overseen a production of *Alice* at her Civic Repertory Theatre. The production, which meticulously reproduced both Carroll's dialogue and Tenniel's illustrations, transferred to Broadway with Josephine Hutchinson as Alice. It was revived in 1947 as part of Le Gallienne's American Repertory

“What is the use of a **BOOK** without *pictures* or *conversations*?”



Theatre when it ran on Broadway with Bambi Linn as Alice and was revived again on Broadway in 1982 with Kate Burton in the title role. Le Gallienne's *Alice* is a perhaps unique example of the same production appearing on Broadway three times over a span of fifty years.

The 1970s brought a more experimental approach to *Alice* in off-Broadway and off-off-Broadway theatres, first with *Alice in Wonderland* under the direction of Andre Gregory—the result of a two-year process of experimentation and improvisation which culminated in what *American Theatre Magazine* called “one of the seminal works of the era.” In 1978, Joseph Papp previewed the music from Elizabeth Swados's *Alice in Concert* at the Public Theatre before presenting a fully staged production, with Meryl Streep in the title role, in 1981.





1886
PHOEBE CARLO



1888
ISA BOWMAN



1900
ELLALINE TERRISS



1904
MAIDIE ANDREWS



1906
MARIE STUDHOLME



1910
IVY SAWYER



1915
VIVIAN TOBIN



Dance was a part of the first stage production of *Alice* in 1886 and remained an important element in many subsequent versions. The text of the book, after all, includes a “Lobster Quadrille.” In 1953, London’s Festival Ballet staged a major ballet of *Alice*. The *Spectator* called the ballet, with music by Joseph Horowitz and choreography by Michael Charnley, “a most charming piece of work; full of the modern movements with which he seeks to rejuvenate classical ballet; excellent in its characterisation of the well-loved roles; and faithful in spirit to the fantastic dream world which is the child’s escape from reality.” Alice ballets have been especially popular in recent years with major productions staged by the Royal Ballet, Festival Ballet, Washington Ballet, Cincinnati Ballet, and National Ballet of Canada.

The mixture of human and non-human characters in the *Alice* stories has led to many productions (including those



1932
JOSEPHINE HUTCHINSON



1934
CUREGWIN LEWIS



1947
BAMBI LINN



1956
MANDY MILLER



1981
MERYL STREEP



1982
KATE BURTON



2015
JANESSA TOUCHET

by Eva Le Gallienne) that combine actors and puppets. The great German-American puppeteer Tony Sarg brought his *Alice in Wonderland* marionettes to Broadway for a short run at the Belmont Theatre from December 24, 1930 to January 4, 1931. Brooks Atkinson called the performance a “merry and unreasonably touching puppet show.” Forty-five years later, Sarg’s protégé Bil Baird presented *Alice in Wonderland* at his puppet theatre in the West Village. Baird used an actress to play Alice and then “shrank” her into a marionette.

Composers have been drawn to *Alice* almost since its publication. Some of the poems in the *Alice* books are parodies of existing songs, so the idea of musical settings inspired by Lewis Carroll’s stories is perfectly natural. While this music began with setting Carroll’s own poems to music, *Alice* music soon ran the gamut from popular songs like 1918’s “Alice I’m in Wonderland (Since the Day That First I Met You)” to symphonic works like those by Deems Taylor and David Del Tredici.

No type of performance has remained uninfluenced by the *Alice* books—straight plays and musicals, Broadway shows and experimental theatre, opera and classical music, ballet and puppet theatre, even ice shows and underwater performances. Alice has found a place on the stages of the world in a multiplicity of forms. Even 150 years after the publication of *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland*, Lewis Carroll’s books continue to inspire new playwrights, composers, directors, and choreographers. The bizarre characters, witty dialogue, and infinite mutability of the *Alice* stories have attracted performing artists since the nineteenth century, and Alice herself is certain to tread the boards in the centuries to come.

— CHARLIE LOVETT, Curator



“I’ve had **SUCH** a
curious dream!”

Credits and Acknowledgments

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We thank the following for assistance in acquiring additional artifacts for the exhibition: Center for Puppetry Arts, Fales Library of New York University, Jon Lindseth, Charlie Lovett, Andy Malcolm, North London Collegiate School, The Rosenbach of Philadelphia, University of Southern California Special Collections, and Byron Sewell. Additional artifacts in the exhibition are from the research and circulating collections of The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts.

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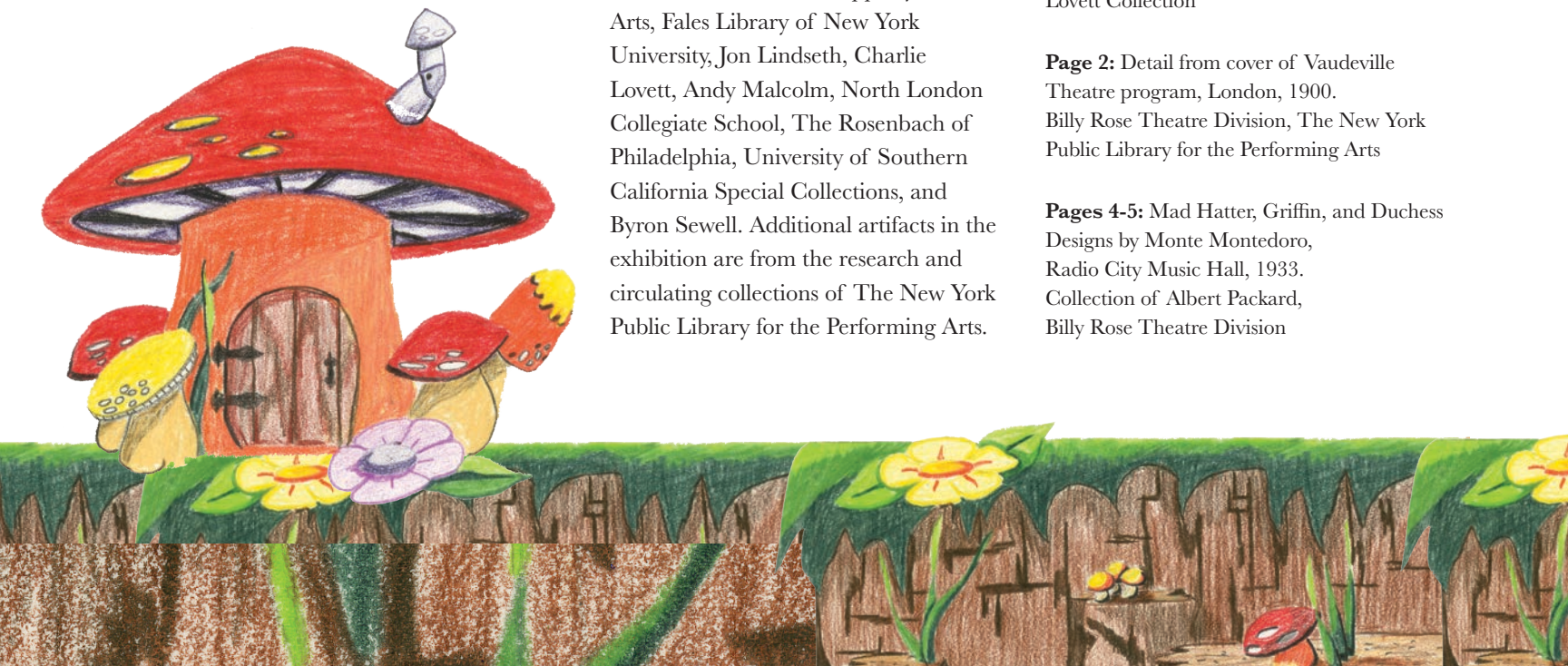
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Cover: Detail from poster for Emile Littler's production of *Alice in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass*, 1933. Lovett Collection

Page 2: Detail from cover of Vaudeville Theatre program, London, 1900. Billy Rose Theatre Division, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts

Pages 4-5: Mad Hatter, Griffin, and Duchess Designs by Monte Montedoro, Radio City Music Hall, 1933. Collection of Albert Packard, Billy Rose Theatre Division



Page 5: Sheet music by C. H. R. Marriott, ca. 1872, an early coloring of the Tenniel illustrations.
Lovett Collection

Page 7: Cover of Emily Prime Delafield's adaptation of *Alice in Wonderland*, 1898.
Lovett Collection

Pages 6-7: Timeline of Alices (left to right):

Phoebe Carlo and Dorothy d'Alcourt, published in *The Theatre*, 1887.
Lovett Collection

Isa Bowman, 1888.
Lovett Collection

Ellaline Terriss, 1900.
Vaudeville Theatre production.
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Maidie Andrews, 1904.
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Marie Studholme, 1906.
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Ivy Sawyer, 1910.
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Vivian Tobin, 1915.
University of Southern California

Josephine Hutchinson,
Eva Le Gallienne production, 1932.
Photograph by White Studio, NY.
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Curegwin Lewis, 1934.
Lovett Collection

Bambi Linn, revival of the
Eva Le Gallienne production, 1947.
Photograph by Vandamm Studio.
Billy Rose Theatre Division

Mandy Miller, 1956.
Lovett Collection

Meryl Streep, 1981.
Photograph by Martha Swope.
Martha Swope Collection,
Billy Rose Theatre Division

Kate Burton, revival of the
Eva Le Gallienne production, 1982.
Photograph by Martha Swope.
Martha Swope Collection,
Billy Rose Theatre Division

Janessa Touchet, 2015.
Photograph by Peter Mueller.

Pages 8-9: Design by Howard Crabtree for the City of Toronto Ballet.
Howard Crabtree Papers,
Billy Rose Theatre Division

Page 10: Promotional still of Viola Savoy in the 1915 film *Alice in Wonderland*.
Courtesy of David Schaefer

Half-tone images adapted from John Tenniel's illustrations for *Alice in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking-Glass*.



Public Programs



OCT 13
Alice in Wonderland

On A Golden Afternoon: Lewis Carroll's Premier Alice Performance

SAT, OCT 3 | 10:30 AM

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland began as a performance. On a "golden afternoon" in 1862 Lewis Carroll improvised the story aloud, as he entertained the three daughters of Henry Liddell, including, most importantly, the precocious Alice Liddell. Charlie Lovett, author, scholar, and curator of the Library's current exhibition, shares the details of Carroll's love for performing and his invention of *Alice in Wonderland*. Participate in a reading of a scene from the original 1886 "dream-play" of *Alice in Wonderland* and enjoy a morning of storytelling, wordplay, and interactive Wonderland fun.

Cafe at LPA 

Who's Alice: An Evening with Kate Burton, David Del Tredici, Larry Pine, Monica Edinger, and Robert Sabuda

MON, OCT 5 | 6 PM

In 1982 the acclaimed actress Kate Burton launched her career portraying Alice in the Broadway revival of *Alice in Wonderland*. With *Alice Symphony*, *Haddock's Eyes*, *In Memory of A Summer Day*, and other works, Pulitzer Prize-winning composer David Del Tredici has conjured the sounds of Wonderland throughout his career. In 1968 Larry Pine and director Andre Gregory flung audiences down a reinvented, psychedelic rabbit hole. Today, Monica Edinger, celebrated teacher, author, and blogger at "Educating Alice," helps us understand Lewis Carroll's legacy, creating new stories about inquisitive, intelligent, adventurous children. Pop-up book artist Robert Sabuda literally makes worlds of paper and color explode up from the pages of a tiny book. Five great artists come to the Library to examine the enduring allure and fascination of Alice. The program will be moderated by Lewis Carroll expert and author Charlie Lovett.

For Adults 

ASPECTS OF ALICE

FILM *Alice in Wonderland*

TUES, OCT 6 | 2:30 PM

Directed by Cecil Hepworth, 1903

SCREENING WITH

Alice in Wonderland

Directed by Norman Z. McLeod, 1933

With Charlotte Henry, W.C. Fields,
Gary Cooper, Cary Grant

ASPECTS OF ALICE

FILM *Alice in Wonderland*

TUES, OCT 13 | 2:30 PM

Directed by W.W. Young, 1915

SCREENING WITH

Alice in Wonderland

Directed by Bud Pollard, 1931

With Ruth Gilbert

ASPECTS OF ALICE

FILM *Dreamchild*

TUES, OCT 20 | 2:30 PM

Directed by Gavin Millar, 1985

With Coral Browne, Ian Holm, Peter Gallagher

PRECEDED BY

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland

Produced by the Edison Company, 1910

ASPECTS OF ALICE

FILM *Curious Alice*

TUES, OCT 27 | 2:30 PM

Produced by the National Institute
of Mental Health, 1972

SCREENING WITH

Alice

Directed by Jan Svankmajer, 1988

**What's Wonderland: New Poetry
and Spoken Word Performances
Inspired by *Alice in Wonderland***

THURS, NOV 19 | 7 PM

Since the Alice stories were first published in the late 19th century, the imaginative characters and absurd scenes of Lewis Carroll's underground world have inspired artists of all types. Join us for a distinctly 21st century take on a journey to Wonderland. With words, music, and images, celebrated NYC poets and spoken word artists Miles Hodges and Alysia Harris relate, rearrange, and reinterpret the classic Carroll stories, and answer for a new generation — "What's Wonderland?"

For Adults

Story Pirates Raid the Library

MON, NOV 23 | 6 PM

Story Pirates is a nationally respected education and media organization founded in 2003 to celebrate the words and ideas of young people. Each year Story Pirates' team of educators and actors visit hundreds of schools, providing empowering lessons about imagination and storytelling. They turn original stories written by kids into hilarious, uplifting live performances. For this program, using music, puppets, and improv comedy, the Story Pirates will share a glimpse of the world through the minds of kids.



The Library for the Performing Arts is proud to offer free admission to programs on a first come, first served basis.

All programs take place in the Bruno Walter Auditorium unless otherwise indicated.

Admission lines form one hour prior to each program at the 111 Amsterdam Avenue lobby.

For select programs, you may reserve your seat in advance online or at our Lincoln Center Plaza entrance welcome desk.

Visit us online at nypl.org/alicelive or call 212.642.0142 for more detailed information. All programs are subject to change or cancellation.

Special thanks to David Schaefer of the Lewis Carroll Society of North America.





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ALICE
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