RARE BOOKS AND SPECIAL COLLECTIONS PRESENTS

Across Enchanted Lands: Universal Motifs in Illustrated Fairy Tales

CURATED BY RENEE GAUDET, KAREN NG, AND ASHLYNN PRASAD

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Acknowledgements

Our exhibition, *Across Enchanted Lands: Universal Motifs in Illustrated Fairy Tales*, is located and situated on the unceded and ancestral territories of the sḵwx̱wú7mesh (Squamish), selílwitulh (Tsleil-Waututh), and xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam) nations.¹

We would like to extend our thanks to Professor Kathie Shoemaker for her guidance and supervision, Chelsea Shriver for her assistance and expertise at Rare Books and Special Collections, Anne Lama and her team at the preservation unit, and Charlie Prasad and Carmen Marchal for their assistance at the Education Library.

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¹ “Why We Acknowledge Musqueam Territory.” Musqueam & UBC. Retrieved from aboriginal.ubc.ca/community-youth/musqueam-and-ubc/?login
About the curators

**Renée Gaudet** is a second year MLIS candidate at the University of British Columbia. She completed her undergraduate degree in English at the University of Victoria, where her areas of interest included children's literature, Rare Books and Special Collections, and Victorian literature. During her time at UVic, she published one paper in the campus literary journal *(The Albatross)* entitled "'You Eat the Red Cheek and I'll Eat the White Cheek': Wholesome Nourishment and Chaotic Consumption in the Grimms' Fairy Tales." Her Honours English thesis focused on the interplay between text and image in Victorian serial publications.

Given her related interests, Renée jumped at the chance to tackle this exciting project and work with rare fairy tales. Her favourite discoveries in this exhibit are the beautiful illustrations in *The Hungarian Fairy Book* by Nandor Pogány and Willy Pogány, *Forty-four Turkish Fairy Tales* by Ignácz Kúnos and Willy Pogány, and Ivan Bilibin's illustrations for *Vasilisa Prekrasnaia*.

**Karen Ng** is a dual MAS/MLIS student set to graduate in spring of 2020. She is interested in transnational histories of the book, reading rooms, and identity formations in special collections. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in English and Medieval Studies, also from UBC, and has previously co-curated an exhibition in Rare Books and Special Collections celebrating the 200th anniversary of Jane Austen's death. She especially likes “The Princess and the Tin Box,” “The Little Mermaid,” and a Chinese folktale about ten brothers that her mother used to tell her.

**Ashlynn Prasad** is a second-year master's student in the Archival Studies and Library and Information Studies program at UBC. She has a bachelor's degree in Modern Literature and American History from the University of California, Santa Cruz. Her favourite fairy tale-related films include *The Little Mermaid* and *Shrek*. Her favourite item in the *Across Enchanted Lands* exhibition is *Han's Andersen's Fairy Tales* in the Powerful Women case, which portrays the Icemaiden.
Introduction

The primary goal of this exhibition is to showcase various themes and archetypes common in fairy tales, with particular attention to the ways in which those themes appear in stories from a variety of cultures. While many of the archetypes exhibited here - including peril, romance, and fairies and little folk - may be familiar to consumers of modern-day fairy tales, this exhibition also features characteristics common to early fairy tales that have since changed and evolved.

This exhibition showcases just a small portion of the vast collection of children’s literature housed at UBC’s Rare Books and Special Collections, and also includes some items from the Education Library. Part of the strength of these materials is the fact that they span the course of hundreds of years, which means that this exhibition was able to display illustration styles from different eras of fairy tales and point out the ways in which certain fairy tales have evolved over time. The illustrations highlighted here showcase both the beauty and light side of fairy tales as well as some of the darker and sinister undertones that often creep up in these narratives. In this way, the exhibition offers a well-rounded perspective on the history of the modern fairy tale and the various roles the fairy tale genre has played in different cultures.

The exhibition is located partly in Rare Books and Special Collections and partly on the second floor of the Irving K. Barber Learning Centre. On the second floor, the cases cover the following themes: Global Fairy Tales; Cinderella and Red Riding Hood Across Cultures; Not for Children; Powerful Women; Pop-Up and Interactive Books; Illustration Styles; and Abodes. On the first floor in Rare Books and Special Collections are Beautiful Books; Canonical Writers; Global Fairy Tales; Cinderella Across Cultures; Fairies and Little Folk; Animals; Mythological Creatures; Peril; and Romance. The cases work together and inform one another in order to provide a well-rounded picture of the many essential archetypes and motifs that have made fairy tales so iconic.
Although the popular literary fairy tale canon as we know it today was developed in Europe, similar tales have always been told in cultures around the world. Stories share these common motifs, including plot points, character archetypes, environments, drives, and antagonists. As preeminent fairy tale scholar Jack Zipes explains:

[European tales] have a great cross-cultural appeal that transcends their particularity: they contain ‘universal’ motifs and experiences that writers borrow consciously and unconsciously from other cultures in an endeavor to imbue their symbolical stories with very specific commentaries on the mores and manners of their times. They also address common instinctual drives and social problems that arise from the human attempts to ‘civilize’ these drives. (Why Fairy Tales Stick, 41-42)

1. R.C. Armour (illustrator). *North American Indian Fairy Tales: Folklore and Legends*. PZ6 1900z N677
2. Christoph Martin Wieland and Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. *Romantische Märchen*. PZ32 1910z R64
5. Edmund Dulac. *A Fairy Garland: Being Fairy Tales from the Old French*. RBSC, PZ7.3.DC1 F35 Fr 1928
Along with *Sleeping Beauty* and *Little Red Riding Hood*, *Cinderella* is often cited as one of the core stories of the western fairy tale canon; however, around the world, in its many forms and by its many names, it is one of the most culturally universal tales.

Essentially, in every version the virtuous and unappreciated protagonist struggles against oppression to arrive at well-deserved success and happiness. But it is more than a magical rags-to-riches story; *Cinderella* stories inspire hope to the rejected and downtrodden and offer satisfaction when the protagonist’s patience and virtue are finally acknowledged and she becomes a princess.

Charles Perrault’s French *Cendrillon* (1697) may have been one of the first to be formally written down and certainly the most well known, with its glass slipper, fairy-godmother and pumpkin coach, but numerous versions from every culture—such as Russia’s *Vasilisa the Beautiful*, Mexico’s *Adelita*, or Iraq’s *The Little Red Fish* and the *Clog of Gold*—have persisted down through the ages and spawned further adaptations the world over.

- Ai-Ling Louie and Ed Young (illustrator). *Yeh Shen: A Cinderella Story from China*. Education, PZ7.3.DS81 L69 YH 1982
- Brittany Marceau-Chenkie and Shelley Brookes (illustrator). *Naya, the Inuit Cinderella*. Education, PZ4.9.M3282 My 1999
C | One Fairy Tale Over Time—Red Riding Hood

Although this fairy tale can be traced back as far as the 10th century and its numerous iterations to nearly every continent, the versions of *Little Red Riding Hood* that we have come to know best today can be directly attributed to Charles Perrault and the Brothers Grimm. *Little Red Riding Hood* lacks the magic and fantasy of tales like *Sleeping Beauty* or *Cinderella*, yet it persistently captures our imaginations as a cautionary tale, like *Hansel and Gretel*.

The story sprung up during an age when the werewolf archetype was a common explanation for violence and atrocious acts perpetrated out of hunger. Later, during Perrault’s time, *Little Red Riding Hood* became a cautionary tale about sexual assault, meant for a readership of girls and young ladies. Over the centuries, the violent tale has been toned down and evolved to suit contemporary young audiences, with markedly less gore, but it still retains a strong message about “stranger danger.” Looking at the illustrated story over time, we can see how the message has changed and the violence sanitized to suit modern readers.

Although a contemporary understanding of fairy tales involves children as the primary audience, early fairy tales were conceived of more as cautionary tales for adults and therefore included dark themes that were even occasionally gruesome or gory. Many of the fairy tales that we recognize today are sanitized versions of early fairy tales that include vivid and sometimes disturbing imagery such as decapitations, people being turned to stone, hangings, and nudity.

This case contains examples of some of the more gruesome or adult imagery that used to be a cornerstone of fairy tales before they were sanitized for a modern audience.

1. Charles Kingsley and William Russell Flint (illustrator). The Heroes: Or, Greek Fairy Tales For My Children. RBSC, PZ6 1924 K563
3. John Cargill Brough. The Fairy Tales of Science: A Book for Youth. RBSC, PZ6 1866 .B76
7. Ludwig Tieck and Karl Borschke. Romantische Märchen. RBSC, PZ33.R64 Tc 1923
One unique and noteworthy aspect of the fairy tale genre is how often female characters are protagonists in the stories. Strong female characters are occasionally portrayed as powerful because of the way they emulate traditionally masculine traits, as is the case in the image we’ve selected from *The Pink Fairy Book*, which portrays a girl dressed in traditionally masculine clothing, seen in the image adopting a powerful, authoritative pose (#3). However, women are also often portrayed as powerful, strong characters in fairy tales in ways that don’t shy away from their more feminine characteristics or styles of dress. This is emphasized especially in *Perrault’s Fairy Tales* (#4), which illustrates Cinderella arriving at the ball. Her presence in the scene is commanding and arresting, drawing the attention of all the other characters portrayed in the image as she looks down upon most of them from her elevated position. The illustration portrays her as a powerful presence in the room without detracting from the fact that she looks distinctly feminine in her ball gown.

Other female characters commonly found in fairy tales are powerful not necessarily as the protagonists of the stories, but sometimes as the possessors of magical or fantastical abilities who may aid other characters or perhaps act as antagonists. One such character is the Ice Queen, who was put to paper and popularized by Hans Christian Andersen, but who has been present in oral traditions from all around the world going back for centuries. She is portrayed here in *Hans Andersen’s Fairy Tales* as a figure of power as well as graceful femininity (#5). Another character who features as a fantastical character with special powers that have the potential to help the protagonist is the personification of the North Wind in *At the Back of the North Wind* (#7). She is illustrated here as a larger-than-life figure with long hair and flowing garments.

7. George MacDonald and Jessie Willcox Smith (illustrator). At the Back of the North Wind. RBSC, PZ6 1919 .M333
One interesting feature of fairy stories, particularly in their modern iterations, is the way in which they invite the reader to participate in the story in a tactile, tangible way. This is one feature of modern fairy tales which indicates that the audience for fairy tales has shifted from an adult audience to a child audience.

Interactive books invite readers, particular illiterate or pre-literate readers, to participate in the stories in different ways. Pop-up books in particular illustrate important elements of the story through visual storytelling rather than simply textually. In *Little Red Riding Hood* by Marjorie Priceman, the terror that Red Riding Hood feels upon discovering the wolf in her grandmother’s clothes is conveyed to the reader by the fact that the wolf literally jumps off the two-dimensional page (#2). In *Cinderella* by Matthew Reinhart, the majesty of Cinderella’s ball gown and the power of her transformation from a pauper into a princess is similarly conveyed through the three-dimensional construction of her dress. In *Old Fairy Tales* by Edric Vredenburg, the reader has illustrated the pages themselves, thereby engaging the audience in a different way.

One of the most important aspects of fairy tales is the fantastical and whimsical elements that can spark the imaginations of children and adults alike. Many of the fairy tales that are popular today have long histories, beginning with oral traditions and eventually finding life on the page in both written and visual form. Countless artists and writers have tried their hand at reshaping classic stories, which has resulted in a rich and diverse array of artistic portrayals of fairy tales from around the world. This case showcases just a few of our favourite visually striking fairy tale illustrations from a variety of cultural traditions and a variety of artists. Illustration styles change with the times but continue to capture the fantastic and the whimsical in ways that can spark the imaginations of children and adults alike.

2. William Butler Yeats and Rowel Friers (illustrator). *Irish Folk Tales*. RBSC, PZ7.3 DA4 Y43 Ir 1973
The physical setting of fairy tales often affects the style and theme of the story, injecting into the narrative a feeling of nostalgia and timelessness that carries through after “once upon a time…”

“In itself the setting holds significance as a physical place while also providing a landscape that generates an appropriate atmosphere to the tale’s action and theme. Further, setting often exists as one manifestation of the fairy tale’s ongoing dialectic between matter and magic, between the material world and the marvelous forces that transcend, transmute it. Ultimately, setting functions as an external, tangible correspondence to things internal and intangible.” Joyce Thomas (1986), “Woods and Castles, Towers and Huts,” p. 127

In these illustrations, we can see how the castles are often positioned in the landscape to contrast wealth and poverty (The Sleeping Beauty and Other Fairy Tales, #7), and how such abodes are often situated on water or mountaintops, often elevated from the abodes of common folk and positioned from afar. These fortress- and tower-like castles are often inaccessible; in this edition of Grimm’s fairy tales (#3), the castle is made entirely of gold and stood atop a glass mountain in the middle of a forest. Unable to reach the bewitched maiden, the man in the story builds a hut at the base of the mountain to wait for her.

1. Ignác Kúnos and Willy Pogány. Forty-Four Turkish Fairy Tales. RBSC, PZ6 1913 K956
3. Jacob Grimm and Wilhelm Grimm. Grimm’s Fairy Tales. RBSC, PZ7.3.DD1 G75 Fn 1962 vol. 1
Case Labels – Rare Books and Special Collections Reading Room

1 | Beautiful Books

Once upon a time, during the advent of print culture in the sixteenth- and seventeenth centuries, authors began committing oral folklore and fables to paper for aristocratic and middle-class audiences. These tales, which were originally penned largely for adults, had been told in hearth and home for centuries.

They were reshaped and reiterated over time to elucidate contemporary ideologies and mores, becoming the canonical tales we have come to know today. By the eighteenth- and nineteenth- centuries, readership had expanded to younger audiences, and the whimsy and fantasy of the literary fairy tale world inspired authors, illustrators, editors, and printers all over the world to produce visually striking books, to capture the imagination and give the stories appropriately imaginative homes.

2. George MacDonald and Maud Humphrey. *The Light Princess: And Other Fairy Tales*. RBSC, PZ6 1893 M322
In Europe during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, academics and aristocrats began “collecting” oral folktales and writing them down. French author Charles Perrault laid the foundation for the fairy tale during the late 1600s, when he adapted folktales into stories like Cinderella, Sleeping Beauty, and Little Red Riding Hood to entertain French courtiers. During the same era, the Countess D’Aulnoy was known to host gatherings where she would read her similarly imaginative contes de fees (fairy tales), thus coining the term we still use today.

Later, in the early 1800s, two scholarly brothers, Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm, studied and compiled over 200 local stories, producing a collection that would become the foundation of the Western fairy tale canon as we know it today. These stories included Snow White, Rapunzel, Hansel and Gretel, The Frog Prince, and many more. Later authors, such as Hans Christian Andersen, would continue the tradition of adapting folktales from oral to literary with tales like The Little Mermaid and Thumbelina. Together, these European authors produced a canon that has endured, capturing the imaginations of children and adults alike.

2. Madame (Marie-Catherine) d’Aulnoy, James Robinson Planché, and John Gilbert (illustrator). Fairy Tales. RBSC, PZ6 1868 A845
3. Albert Ludwig Grimm and Robert Cruikshank (illustrator). Fairy Tales from the German. RBSC, PZ6 1827 G755
5. Jacob Grimm, Wilhelm Grimm, John B. Gruelle (illustrator), and Robert Emmett Owen (illustrator). Grimm’s Fairy Stories. RBSC, PZ6 1922 .G882
6. Jacob Grimm, Wilhelm Grimm, Lucy Crane (translator), and Walter Crane (illustrator). Household Stories: From the Collection of the Brothers Grimm. RBSC, PZ6 1882 G754
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1. Cyrus Macmillan. Canadian Fairy Tales. RBSC, PZ7.3.FB1 M325 Fr 1928
2. Frances Jenkins Olcott and Willy Pogány (illustrator). Tales of the Persian Genii. RBSC, PZ7.O4455 Ti 1927
3. Lafcadio Hearn and Ruth McCrea (illustrator). Japanese Fairy Tales. RBSC, PZ7.3.DS82 H42 Jn 1958
4. Peter Christen Asbjørnsen, Jørgen Engebretsen Moe, Helen Rebecca Gade, and John A. Gade. Norwegian Fairy Tales from the Collection of Asbjørnsen and Moe. RBSC, PZ6 1924 A824
5. Idella Purnell Stone, John M. Weatherwax, and Helen Smith (illustrator). Why the Bee is Busy: And Other Rumanian Fairy Tales. RBSC, PZ6 1930 .S766
7. Catherine Armsmith. Fairy Tales of Kootenay. RBSC, PR9202.R65 F2
Along with Sleeping Beauty and Little Red Riding Hood, Cinderella is often cited as one of the core stories of the western fairy tale canon; however, around the world, in its many forms and by its many names, it is one of the most culturally universal tales.

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- Shirley Climo and Ruth Heller (illustrator). Egyptian Cinderella. Education, PZ7.3.DT22 C655 EG 1989
5 | Fairies and Little Folk

Often illustrated or depicted to appear human (although obviously much smaller), fairies and little folk can appear suddenly in scenes. The appearance of little folk such as dwarves in Heath Robinson’s Book of Goblins (#5) frighten children, but still exude a commanding and magical presence.

In this case, we have selected depictions of fairies and little folk that cast them in magical and whimsical manners. These fairies are delicate and ethereal in gold, sleeping in flowers, playing with children, and riding on birds.

1. Grace James and Warwick Goble (illustrator). Green Willow: And Other Japanese Fairy Tales. RBSC, PZ7.3.DS82 J34 Gr 1910
4. Edouard Laboulaye, Mary L. Booth (translator), and Edward G. McCandlish (illustrator). Laboulaye’s Fairy Book. RBSC, PZ7.3.A1 L32 Lb 1920
6 | Animals

Part of the whimsy of fairy tales is due to the reimagining of regular everyday objects, people, and creatures. This case aims to highlight the various ways in which regular animals have been reimagined as greatly outsized versions of themselves, more human-like versions of themselves, friends or steeds of human characters, and occasionally foes that human characters must overcome. Fantastical versions of real-world animals can act as narrative tools that more seamlessly immerse readers in the fantastical worlds of fairy tales, which are often so similar to the real world, yet different in such key ways.

2. Mary H. Wade. *Indian Fairy Tales as Told to the Little Children of the Wigwam*. RBSC, PS3545 .A28
7 | Mythological Creatures

While fictional fantasy creatures may seem like they belong more in the realm of mythology than fairy tales, there are many instances in which fairy tale characters encounter mythological creatures that are often wondrous and occasionally terrifying. The creatures portrayed here come from a wide variety of cultural traditions, including a firebird and a dragon from East Asia, a chimera from Ancient Greek tradition, and certain figures like the sea witch, which are present across the oral traditions of a variety of cultures. We have also included a few instances of more anthropomorphic fictional creatures like ghosts and giants, which likewise appear in stories worldwide.

2. Hans Christian Andersen and Harry Clarke (illustrator). *Fairy Tales*. RBSC, PZ 7.3 A54 C1 1931
One of the narrative elements that has remained consistent in fairy tales throughout the centuries has been the element of danger and characters’ attempts to overcome various perils. The dangers that we are showcasing here involve fairy tale characters in a variety of harrowing situations with a variety of antagonists, but one of the key commonalities in all those situations is the characters’ willingness to face those dangers head-on. Courage in the face of adversity has long been a moral of fairy tales and continues to appear in modern fairy tales.

In these books, peril is often depicted in a struggle between humans and animals or monsters. The Bunyip emerges from the water, and the young men scatter; warriors, princes, and princesses advance to confront predators; and brave characters outwit people and creatures with bad intentions.

The roots of many fairy tales are darker and more sinister than the stories we have come to recognize today as classic fairy tales. Andersen’s little mermaid cannot bring herself to kill her prince, and instead throws herself into the sea and dissolves into foam; Sleeping Beauty is originally sexually assaulted in her deep sleep and gives birth while still asleep. One of the most significant archetypes that has come to be a part of modern fairy tales is romance or true love, and idea of happily ever after. The images in the books displayed here depict heteronormative visions of romance, displaying reunions between men and women, sometimes in the form of the man rescuing the woman, and the woman embracing him in gratitude.

Fairy tales have the power to take a reader through journeys rife with peril, mythological creatures, journeys into various cultural traditions, whimsy, beautiful colours and imagery, and more. Here, we add romance, reunion, and gratitude as part of the fairy tale tropes that have brought joy to so many people over the course of hundreds of years.

1. Jacob Grimm, Wilhelm Grimm, and J. Monsell (illustrator). Grimm’s Fairy Tales. RBSC, PZ6 1924 G745