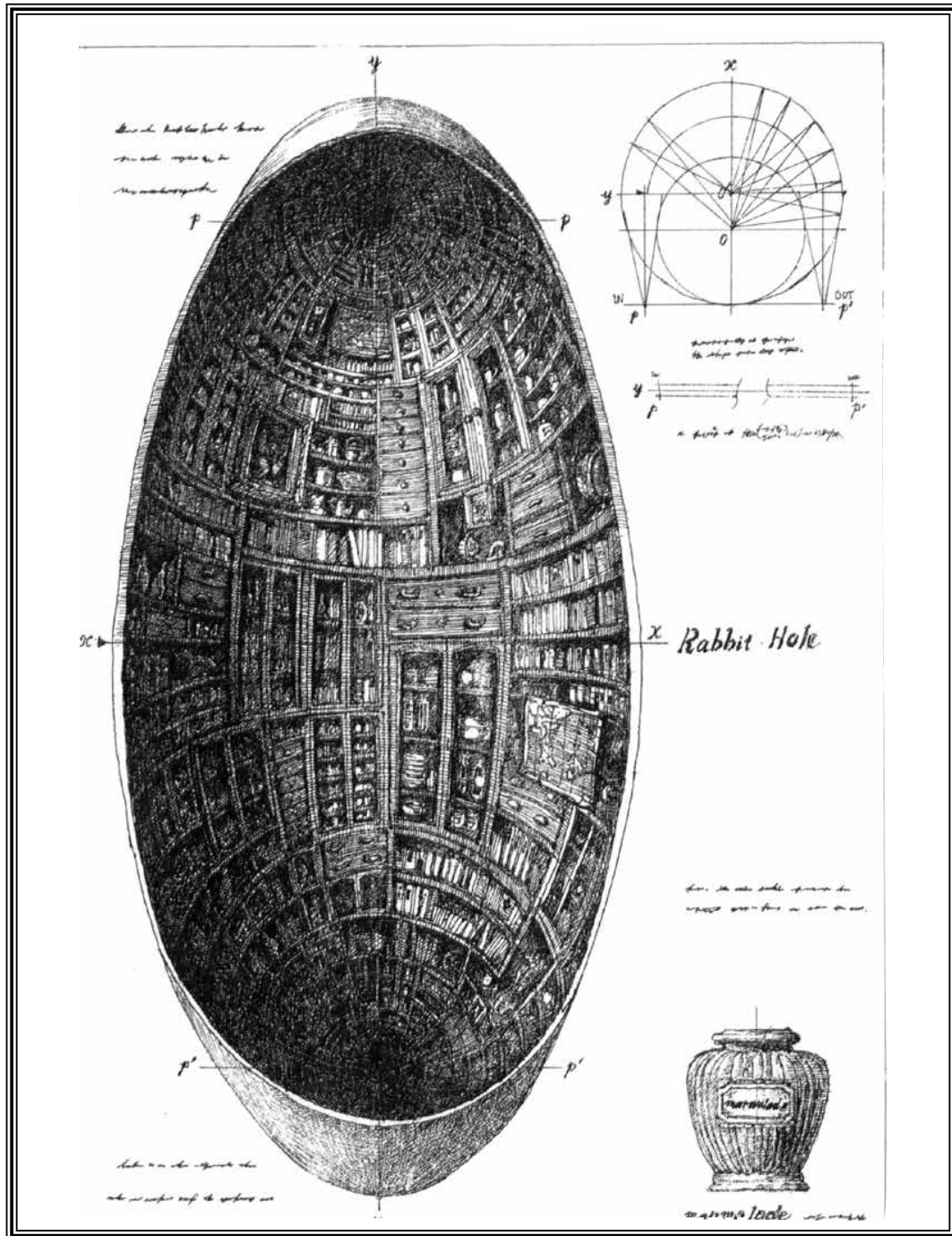


K N I G H T L E T T E R

The Lewis Carroll Society of North America



CONTENTS

THE RECTORY UMBRELLA

<i>Moving Pictures and Conversations</i>	1
<i>LCSNA Virtual Events</i>	8
MARK BURSTEIN & RAY KIDDY	
<i>Humpty Dumpty in Czarytorium</i>	13
DANUTA RADOMSKA-FILIPEK	
<i>The Hunting of the WHAT?</i>	16
DANUTA RADOMSKA-FILIPEK	
<i>I'm Not Married to This, But . . .</i>	18
ROBERT WATKINS	
<i>Poetry Quoted in the Sylvie and Bruno Books</i>	28
LISA BUDD	
<i>The 2023 Wonderland Awards</i>	29
MICHAELA RODGERS	
<i>The Queen's Gambit: Paint the Roses</i>	30
SARAH K. CROTZER	

MISCHMASCH

<i>Leaves from the Deanery Garden— Serendipity—Sic, Sic, Sic</i>	34
<i>Ravings from the Writing Desk</i>	38
ARNOLD HIRSHON	
<i>Illustrator Spotlight: Ksenia Lavrova</i>	39
MARK BURSTEIN	
<i>In Memoriam: Donald Rackin</i>	42
EDWARD GUILIANO	
<i>In Memoriam: Kenn Outram</i>	43
SELWYN GOODACRE	
<i>Alice in Advertising-Land</i>	44
DAYNA NUHN LOZINSKI	

CARROLLIAN NOTES

<i>Alice's Adventures in CluedUppland</i>	46
JIM GUIDA	
<i>Wonderland Dreams Are Made of This</i>	46
GRIFFIN MILLER	

<i>Nello Specchio di Alice: Il Sé e l'Altro</i>	48
STEFANIA TONDO	

<i>Encountering Alice in Japan</i>	48
AMANDA KENNEL	

<i>SurréAlice</i>	50
ILARIA CREMASCHINI	

OF BOOKS AND THINGS

<i>Into a Strange Land</i>	52
----------------------------	----

<i>Аліса в Країні Див (AW), ill. Inna Maslyak</i>	52
YVONNE KACY	

<i>Аліса в Стране чудес (AW), Butromeev</i>	52
DMITRY YERMOLOVICH	

<i>Alice in Wonderland: A Series of Drawings</i>	54
ANDREW OGUS	

<i>Run Towards the Danger</i>	54
ROSE OWENS	

<i>Alice in Wonderland, ill. Paolo Barbieri</i>	55
ANDREW OGUS	

<i>A través del espejo (LG), ill. Sozapato</i>	55
YVONNE KACY	

<i>Russian, Ukrainian AW & LG, ill. Zin'ko</i>	56
ANDREW OGUS	

<i>Alice's Adventures in Wonderland, ill. Hanna</i>	57
YVONNE KACY	

<i>爱丽丝漫游奇境记 (AW), ill. Sotés</i>	58
YVONNE KACY	

<i>Gallery</i>	59
----------------	----

FROM OUR FAR-FLUNG CORRESPONDENTS

<i>Art & Illustration—Articles & Academia— Auctions—Books—Comics & Graphic Novels—Events, Exhibits, & Places—Internet & Technology—Movies & Television—Music—Performing Arts—Things</i>	60
---	----

<i>The Funny Pages</i>	62
------------------------	----



Into a Strange Land
 Dr. Steven Strange's epic tale began in *Strange Tales* #110 (July 1963) and continued there and in *Marvel Premiere* comics; he was awarded his own eponymous comic, *Doctor Strange: Master of the Mystic Arts*, in June, 1968. The first issue of Volume 2 in that series (June, 1974) contains the story "Through an Orb Darkly" (hmm), which begins with his girlfriend Clea (a near anagram of Alice) manifesting a white rabbit. He soon meets Silver Dagger, a foe who looks exactly like Tenniel's White Knight. Strange soon finds himself falling down, down, down through a crystal ball, landing with a THUMP. He immediately sees a beatnik caterpillar sitting atop a mushroom and smoking a hookah. They discuss the nature of reality until the good Doctor runs off, as the caterpillar says, "but our conversation . . . is not yet . . . over!" A battle ensues, in which the caterpillar says things like "The furthest inside is the closest to the outside, dig?" In issue No. 2, "A Separate Reality," the good Doctor continues his investigation of "reality," mentions *Alice in Wonderland* by name, and fights a soul-eating demon that looks like a Jabberwock. The Silver Surfer soon appears, leading him to the castle of the White Queen, where some other superheroes (Hulk, Spiderman, etc.) are having a tea party. The tale continues through issue #5, where Strange, having faced Death (and died), eventually comes back to our reality, alive and even more powerful.

The stories were drawn by Frank Brunner, who went on to produce two portfolios of erotic art: *Alice in Wonderland* (Golden Graphics, 1977) and *Through the Looking-Glass* (Golden Graphics, 1981).

The former five stories were recently anthologized in *Doctor Strange Epic Collection #3: A Separate Reality* (Marvel, 2021); the latter in *Brunner's Carnal Delights* (Carnal Comics, 2005).

. . . and how she would gather about

her other little children, and make their eyes bright and eager with many a strange tale . . .



Аліса в Країні Див
 (*Alice in Wonderland*)

Illustrated by Inna Maslyak

Ранок [Ranok], 2019

ISBN: 978-6170955289

Yvonne Kacy

This oversize Ukrainian edition (10×13 in.) was one of the winners for illustration in the "Image of the Book" awards in Moscow in 2020. The illustrator, Inna Maslyak, is also an author and artist. Maslyak's illustrations are simple, colorful, spacious, and child-friendly, but what makes them most original is the innovative use of three-dimensional geometry.

When I started doing sketches for *Alice*, I based the concept on the Necker cube. It stands at the very beginning of the book. Then the curvature of space,



Maslyak

which was bending and distorting. It was all very interesting. And ambiguous. The main question was: Do we change reality by observation? That was the basis of my illustrations.

The cover portrays a very striking rabbit hole, a geometric polygon tube to another dimension. The Pool of Tears is another geometric tube, visually intriguing and effective. The Caucus Race has a geometric diagram reminiscent of the lines of da Vinci's Vitruvian Man sketch of superimposed circle and square.

The Duchess sits on a geometric Necker cube—again showing the changing dimensions of Wonderland with an optical illusion—and holds her piglet baby wrapped like a caterpillar pupa, with flying plates and Hungarian hot peppers surrounding her. A huge flamingo's head and neck dominate a double page spread, and another page has an equally large profile of the Queen of Hearts, with the piercing viridescent eyes of Shakespeare's green-eyed monster.

Typography is playful, with characters' thoughts or speech rendered large. An entire page is taken up by Alice wondering over and over if she will grow or shrink.



Аліса в Стране чудес
 (*Alice in Wonderland*)

Retold with commentary
 by V. P. Butromeev

Filipok, 2019

ISBN 978-5-6041556-8-4

Dmitry Yermolovich

This book impresses one immediately with its sheer size (9×12×1¼ inches), mass (4½ pounds, 448 pages), and printing quality: It is printed on an excellent smooth-finish light-yellow paper, is packed with illustrations (most of them in color and many full-page), and has a pictorial hard cover with embossed and varnished elements, not to mention a red ribbon bookmark. The

book's designers also deserve credit for the amazing ornamental page frames found at the beginning of each chapter and also on every page of the book's last part (to which I'll return later).

Talking of the illustrations, their assortment looks, well, a little weird. Although some are taken from various earlier public-domain editions of *Wonderland*, and a few others are pictures of Lewis Carroll, the Liddell family, Oxford, and other places in Britain, arguably a good half of the illustrations do not seem particularly relevant. Their subjects vary from automobiles to distant galaxies, varieties of garden berries to types of clouds, Socrates to Dante, and so on. There's also an obvious slant toward images rooted in Russian culture and history, such as a troika, a samovar, a dish of blini, a medovik (Russian honey-cake) baking pan, a Russian merchant's wife in a low-necked dress, Russian tsars, soldiers, authors, and the like. I counted at least four pictures of the poet Alexander Pushkin and five of Tsar Peter the Great.

To clarify what all these pictures are doing in the book, one naturally turns to their captions, but some of them openly proclaim no association whatsoever: "A dog which is totally irrelevant here" (p. 72); "Catherine the Second, not a queen but a Russian empress, who has nothing to do with Alice except that, as a child, she was also a very curious girl" (p. 275). The book numbers around two dozen pictures of girls and young women (maybe more) with the uniform explanation: "Alice, if her portrait had been painted by the artist [name or description follows, e.g., an ancient Egyptian painter, the Russian artist G. Ostrovsky, the Italian painter A. Bronzini]." There's even "One of Alice's hands, had it been depicted by the English painter T. Gainsborough" (p. 156). The question is, how does Mr. Butromeev know?

Incidentally, the book cover is adorned with a picture of a Russian peasant girl by Aleksei Venetsianov, an early nineteenth-century painter of rural life. The girl is cute, no doubt, but considering that all peasants in Venetsianov's time were serfs—that is, slaves of the landowner class—it is open to question how she is supposed to represent Carroll's Alice.

Some of the captions are certain to send the reader's eyebrows up: "As the saying goes, [women have] long hair and short sense" (p. 241); "I hate the French together with their Napoleon" (p. 296).

Well, it's about time we turned to the body of the book. It is, indeed, a loose retelling of *Alice in Wonderland*, but the part traceable to Lewis Carroll's text is drowning in Mr. Butromeev's exercises at expanding and "embellishing" the original with whatever ideas and associations may have crossed his mind in the process (including remarks on and quotes from some earlier Russian translations). No, the annotations are not given in separate boxes or pages—it's a story-and-notes mix styled in affectedly child-directed language.

An inscription on the back cover says: "Read this book, and you will understand Alice!" And the foreword claims that it's "an encyclopedia of world culture for young and adult readers alike" which "must doubtlessly be translated into all the languages in which the original Alice exists."

Well, let me do my bit to comply with that plea and translate a sample for you. Here is a piece of the "encyclopedic" knowledge you can draw from this edition (pp. 17–19):

What kind of country is it, England, and what is it famous for in the first place?

First, everybody in England loves to eat oatmeal, and horses eat oats with pleasure, but also hay, of course, when oats are short.

Secondly, the English do not only eat bread-and-butter,

as is the custom in Germany, from where they have resettled to the island of Great Britain. The German word for bread-and-butter is Butterbrot. The English have somewhat forgotten the German language, which used to be their native tongue, and speak English only, which is the reason why they also put a piece of ham or cold veal between two slices of bread. That type of food was invented by the Earl of Sandwich, and that's why they're called sandwiches. The English seafarer Cook was very fond of grabbing a sandwich without interrupting his business.

That Cook, short as his name is, made two voyages 'round the world. He circled the globe one time from west to east, then another time from east to west, and thus got convinced that the globe was round, no matter how you circle it. Cook discovered Australia and nearly Antarctica with its eternal ice, but then he discovered the Hawaiian Islands and called them the Sandwich Islands in honor of the earl who had invented ham sandwiches. Cook wanted to teach locals to make sandwiches but, speaking no English, they did not understand him and ate Cook himself instead.

The rest of the book's "encyclopedic" additions are of similar quality, being full of trite stereotypes and dubious "facts."

The parts traceable to Carroll's text are associated with it very loosely. The book's general writing style is not always grammatical or logical. This is how, for example, the Duchess explains the Cheshire Cat's grin (as in most other Russian versions of *Wonderland*, mistranslated as "smile"): "It's a Cheshire Cat. They smile exactly in the same way as cats in Russia stuff themselves

with pancakes at Shrovetide.” (Do not think this makes any more sense in Russian than it does in English.)

The poems are given in copyright-expired versions by early twentieth-century translators, sometimes several at once. Some are credited right in the text, while others are not—but no, those are not the work of Mr. Butromeev either. Their author, mentioned inconspicuously in endnotes, is A. P. Rozhdestvenskaya, although the quality of her verse, as has been noted by several critics, is below par. Based mostly on what’s called “impoverished rhymes” between verb infinitives, they look like an amateur poet’s first and extremely inept steps.

Now let me quote from the last part of the book, entitled “The Roots and Branches of Lewis Carroll’s/Charles Lutwidge Dodgson’s Life Tree.” Those roots, according to Mr. Butromeev, go back thousands of years (p. 369):

Obsidian is black volcanic glass. Had Carroll written his *Through the Looking-Glass* 7,500 years ago, all the characters of his book would have

the same face color as the black slaves that Lewis Carroll’s maternal ancestors traded in.

Insightful, is it not?

To sum it up, the book’s design and quality are several orders of magnitude above the quality of its content, a hard mix of dated stereotypes, weird associations, and a near parody of an encyclopedia. Nice to hold in one’s hands and to look through, but not recommended for reading to or by children.



*Alice in Wonderland:
A Series of Drawings*

Cavin Jones

Independently published
[POD], 2020

ISBN 979-98605235187

Andrew Ogus

This black-and-white pen-and-ink series is an intriguing example of the wide range of Carrollian inspiration. Cavin Jones did his first Alice drawing in high school, a huge, complex image called “Into the Looking-Glass.” Returning to Alice as an adult, he worked with an unusual model to render Alice as a mature Black woman. Although this Alice is almost a visual opposite of the

original, in homage to Tenniel her tank top is accompanied by striped tights. Many human and some animal characters in these charming and imaginative illustrations appear as African sculpture come to life. Black-and-white patterned floors swirl below them, black-and-white-striped walls sometimes surround them. Light and shadow are skillfully rendered, but the almost obsessive mark-making and too even texture mean the background sometimes obscure the figures, making them hard to find. One wishes for negative space, or strong solid areas of light and/or dark.

Jones’s own verbal interpretations of the scenes he’s chosen to depict—“Alice Reading,” “A Tiny Alice,” “The Caucus Race” (including an aardvark, as well as the requisite Dodo, Duck, Lory, and Eaglet), “Alice Finds the Door into the Queen’s Lands”—accompany each image. Extensive explanations follow the drawings.

The uncomfortable, far too wide, erratically arranged text and errors reflect the independence of the production. Admirable though his efforts are, Jones would have been well served by another eye or two to help with format and editing.



Run Towards the Danger

Sarah Polley

Penguin Press, 2022

ISBN 978-0593300350

Rose Owens

This memoir by Sarah Polley, the accomplished actress, writer, and director, is subtitled “Confrontations with a Body of Memory” and is full of essays that both trouble and inspire. I highly recommend this book for those who identify as female, who have had major physical ailments, or who have repeatedly butted up against difficult men around gender and sexual power issues. It is not only for those demographics, but the text will resonate



Jones