

Jade Dillon

“I must have been changed several times since then”

Exploring Camille Rose Garcia’s (Re)-interpretation of Alice through the Disney Lens

Abstract: Plagued in Wonderland by questions of self-uncertainty, Alice endures a journey of nonsensical adventures only to wake up and discover it was all a dream. However, the Caterpillar’s enigmatic question – “who are you?” – prevails, and this article asks the same question of Camille Rose Garcia’s illustrated Alice – who is she? This article explores the character of Alice in Garcia’s Wonderland and investigates the impact of Walt Disney’s 1951 animated film on her illustrative styling. The Disney metapicture is an important lens here as the uncanny resemblance to the 1951 Alice looms in Garcia’s depiction of Carroll’s protagonist. Thus, I perform a close reading of a selection of illustrations from her 2010 published edition of Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland through a Disney lens. The idea of a “gothic Alice” is quite significant in relation to girlhood studies as it (re)-positions the notion of normative femininity and allows for expanded interpretations of what it means to identify as “girl.” In this case, Garcia’s Alice repositions the protagonist away from the image of the Victorian child (John Tenniel’s image in the first edition) and the docile, doe-eyed young girl of Disney’s construction. Instead, she represents the “other.” Overall, Garcia’s version of Alice stems from the haunting presence of Disney’s 1951 animated dreamchild. Through allusion and metapicture, Garcia creates a wasteland that adds to the contemporary (re)-interpretation of Alice.

Keywords: Alice studies, Disney studies, girlhood, visual art, illustration, adaptation, Carroll, Garcia

[There is] a spectrum of Alice imagery, the ways in which, rather like Alice's own dreams and nightmares, everything is recognisable – yes all these versions of Alice are Alice – but also new, unfamiliar, unusual, unexpected. (Vaizey 11)

Originally published in 1865, Lewis Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (illustrated by John Tenniel) is considered one of the most adapted and translated texts throughout the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. One can argue that Carroll's novel has transcended the temporal, spatial, and cultural discourse of its original novel format. *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and its sequel, *Through the Looking-Glass; and What Alice Found There* (1871), have been adapted across a wide range of multimodal platforms to create new and complex character identities. By extension, Alice transcends the conditions of her production and her originary text, and becomes a polysemic character.

Plagued in Wonderland by questions of self-uncertainty, Alice endures a journey of nonsensical adventures only to wake up and discover it was all a dream. However, the Caterpillar's enigmatic question – “who are you?” – prevails, and this article asks the same question of Camille Rose Garcia's illustrated Alice – who is she?¹ Zoe Jaques and Eugene Giddens argue that “some of the more radical artistic interpretations [...] are indicative of an interest in moving the text beyond the reach of the child reader, via a process of rendering *Wonderland* dark and grotesque [and] obliquely sexual” (184). In many ways, Garcia's illustrations of Alice capture those radical qualities outlined by Jaques and Giddens and transition the character of Alice from the serene banks of Oxford into a much darker and more sinister version of Wonderland. This article explores the character of Alice in Garcia's *Wonderland*, whilst also referring to the Disneyfication of Alice's appearance. The Disney metapicture is an important lens here as the uncanny resemblance to the 1951 Alice looms in Garcia's depiction of Carroll's protagonist. Thus, I investigate the impact of Walt Disney's 1951 animated film on Garcia's depiction of Alice and perform a close reading of a selection of illustrations from her 2010 published edition of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* through a Disney lens. I will also consider Garcia's Alice as a contemporary representation of the “Gothic child.”

This is a timely contribution to existing *Alice* scholarship as the sesquicentenary anniversary of *Through the Looking-Glass; and What Alice Found There* reinvigorated ideas of character development. To date, there is a lack of academic analysis on Garcia's contribution

to the *Alice* canon. While scholars such as Anna Kérchy and Jack Zipes have noted the impact of Garcia's gothic positioning of Alice,² there is a space for re-examining her illustrative works. The idea of a "gothic Alice" is quite significant in relation to girlhood studies as it (re)-positions the notion of normative femininity and allows for expanded interpretations of what it means to identify as "girl." In this case, Garcia's Alice repositions the protagonist away from the image of the Victorian child (John Tenniel's image in the first edition) and the docile, doe-eyed young girl of Disney's construction. Instead, she represents the "other."

Camille Rose Garcia's Wonderland

Mark Burstein notes that Camille Rose Garcia's "colourful but creepy, cartoony, lowbrow LA Goth-punk decorations exist in not a Wonder- but a Waste-land. Alice herself is a nightmare: emotionally unstable, with a distorted and metamorphic body and wildly melting mascara" (99–100). Meanwhile, Jack Zipes describes Garcia as a:

provocative American artist and illustrator whose illustrations, paintings, and sculptures are influenced by cartoons and have a Gothic if not grotesque aura [...] Her "creepy" images tend to subvert classic tales and to bring out their outrageous aspects. Garcia's grim view of the world is particularly noticeable in her depictions of Alice and Snow White, young girls who are brutalized so much that their survival cannot be likened to a happy end. (Zipes, *Oxford Companion*)

Burstein and Zipes both mention the grotesque and distorted elements that appear in Garcia's illustrations, which are of particular interest in relation to how the body is depicted in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. Burstein's assertion that Alice is a nightmare is significant as she becomes a monstrous character in a desolate and gothic Wonderland. The composition of Garcia's illustrations, specifically those of Alice, juxtaposes vivid watercolours with gothic associations and the macabre. As Mike McGee notes in "The Evident Charm of Camille Rose Garcia" (2005), "Garcia always offers a delectable mix of the repulsive and the attractive" (9). This is especially true when examining Garcia's approach to Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. The images combine the creepiness of the uncanny with an aesthetically pleasing colour palette as "the dark and macabre fictions exude a cuteness that is distinctly feminine while avoiding overt sentimentality" (McGee 9). Interestingly, this edition of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* was published in the same year as Tim

Burton's live-action movie, *Alice in Wonderland*. This Alice is noticeably different from previous cinematic depictions of Alice, namely Disney's 1951 Alice, as Burton's protagonist is now represented as a young woman in her late teenage years. Antonio Sanna states that "Burton's 2010 film evidences the most frightening aspects of the tale and thus presents the narrative as a nightmare rather than a dream" (84). This nightmare narrative is presented through a distinct colour palette and gothic imagery, much like Garcia's illustrations. The coincidence of these gothic depictions of Alice being released in 2010 further demonstrates 1) the longevity of Alice's significance in popular culture, and 2) that gothic interpretations of girlhood are relevant to the wider canon of *Alice* studies.

Garcia defines her work as being a part of the low-brow pop-surrealist movement. This is an underground visual art movement that originated in Los Angeles in the 1970s. Pop-surrealism juxtaposes street art with underground comix and punk aesthetics. Lynn Zel-evansky notes that Garcia's work "exploits multiple dimensions of popular culture, making reference to mass media through cartoons, comics, and a fashionable 'gothic' look, but also harnessing the power of ancient popular forms such as myths and folk fairy tales" (11). This is evident in Garcia's edition of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* as the illustrations portray continuous juxtapositions of the cartoon and the fairy tale, the punk and the classic, the uncanny and the cute (image 1).

Alice and the Disney Metapicture

Theory and Context

In *Picture Theory: Essays on Verbal and Visual Representation* (1994), and *What Do Pictures Want? The Lives and Loves of Images* (2005), W. J. T. Mitchell discusses the idea of the metapicture as a form of self-awareness and self-reference. He states that his research on metapicture is concerned with "pictures about pictures" and "if pictures provide their own metalanguage" (Mitchell, *Picture* 38). Alongside Mitchell's theory of metapicture, I also examine the notion of meta-adaptation. Meta-adaptation is a term that demonstrates the possibility of dual perspective, whereby "the object in the reflecting lens is no longer one medium or another - fiction or film - but rather both" (Hermansson 152). *Filming the Children's Book: Adapting Metafiction* (2019) by Casie Hermansson focuses on contemporary children's film alongside adaptation, meta-fiction and meta-adaptation. Hermansson explains that

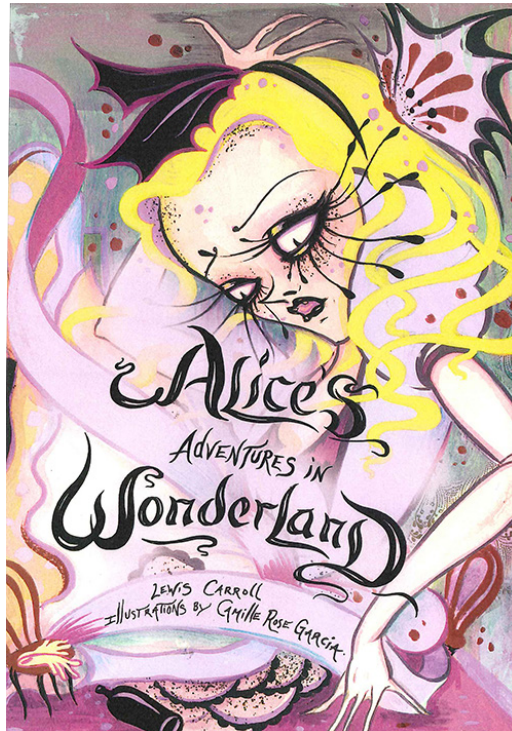


Image 1. Cover image of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (2010), illustrated by Camille Rose Garcia.

the term “meta-adaptation” is a relative newcomer to critical discourse. Eckart Voigts-Virchow coined the hybrid term: “meta-adaptation” to describe the phenomenon “for films and other texts that foreground not just the film-making process or other processes of text production, but also the adaptive processes between media, texts and genres”. (Hermansson 152)

Thus, considering metapicture (and meta-adaptation) in relation to the *Alice* narrative, Garcia’s illustrations depict Alice through inspiration and previous referential images. More explicitly, there are echoes of Walt Disney’s 1951 *Alice in Wonderland* in Garcia’s artwork which can be categorised as a form of metapicture. Linda Hutcherson argues that “adapters are first interpreters and then creators” (18). Contextualising this notion then, Garcia’s 2010 *Alice* is created through a new identity that has echoes of Walt Disney’s “Alice” figure. Therefore, Garcia is first an interpreter of an existing *Alice* and, through the process of adaptation, creates a new character that exists outside of the previously existing figures.

The Disney Effect

Jack Zipes states in *The Enchanted Screen: The Unknown History of Fairy-Tale Films* (2011) that

our contemporary concept and image of a fairy tale have been shaped and standardized by Disney so effectively through the mechanisms of the culture industry that our notions of happiness and utopia are and continue to be filtered through a Disney lens even if it is myopic. (Zipes, *Enchanted* 17)

The notion of the Disney lens distorting the underlying aspects of children's literature and fairy tales is a familiar trope that often taints the original texts with the utopian idealism of their animated counterparts. The form of artistry that is involved in Disney's *Alice in Wonderland* is an immense showcase of animation and colourisation. Karen Lury notes that the "Alice" figure "appeals to animators because she is either experiencing a dream (a preferred narrative frame) or being dreamed of herself or, possibly, both" (110). She suggests that Alice has a "plasmatic quality" that allows her to "squash and stretch" into the desired animated effect and narrative trajectory (Lury 110).

While it was not the first screen adaptation of the *Alice* stories, Disney's 1951 *Alice in Wonderland* became the primary visual association and primary filmic embodiment of Alice's character for viewers/readers in the second half of the twentieth century. Despite the evident alterations to the illustrative qualities of Carroll's Wonderlandian characters, Walt Disney felt that he had maintained a sense of loyalty to the original *Alice* books. In the article "How Walt Disney Cartooned 'Alice,'" which featured in *Films in Review* (1951), Disney states that:

for the cartoon medium, the characters virtually had to be born anew, since their behaviour would have to be conveyed in movement, rather than with words and pen-and-ink drawings. And yet, I think we have managed to follow Tenniel in such close detail that no one can say our delineations distort the images Carroll and Tenniel worked out together. (Disney 10)

Despite this, there are significant differences between the original novel and Disney's animated production. Disney's visual ambience creates a utopian fantasy that merges childlike animation with the mystical Wonderland universe. The vibrant colourisation of Disney's Wonderland appeals to the child consumer, as do the fictitious characters that live there. For example, as Alice falls down the rabbit

hole, there are vibrant and disorientating animations that alter the description provided by Carroll in the original novel. Carroll's Alice offers a much more intellectual dialogue when falling down the rabbit hole, whereas Disney relies heavily on the visual tactics of filmic construction. Similarly, the music that plays in this scene adds to the utopian essence of the Disney adaptation. Opening in a discordant and dissonant tone, the soundtrack to the adventure on which Alice embarks transitions to a major key, which would suggest a light atmosphere. Both the visual and aural additions to Carroll's original narrative enhance Disney's reinvention. Demonstrated through the iconic blue pinafore and blonde hair, the aesthetic of Alice is altered through the cinematic sphere of visual pleasure. As Disney himself notes, "we have made her figure less stubby. Her hair is more kempt in our portrait" (10). These alterations to Alice's physical appearance highlight the fascination with the portrayal of the ideal feminine child. However, as we will now see, Garcia distorts this model of femininity in her (re)-interpretation of Alice.

Garcia's Illustrations through the Disney Lens

As Alice falls down the rabbit hole, Garcia depicts a surrealist landscape through the use of cool-toned watercolours, while the uncanny elements of Wonderland frame the illustration (image 2). Alice's limbs flail around her body while her dress balloons around her exposed legs. The dress and styling resemble a gothic version of Disney's *Alice in Wonderland*, which creates a conscious metapicture. The bat-shaped hairband, swirled stockings, and frilled petticoat is a direct (re)imagining of Disney's image of the "Alice" figure.

Garcia openly discusses that the inspiration of her general artwork relies on the Walt Disney franchise, as she calls upon Disneyland imagery to frame her aesthetic narratives. When asked to describe her version of *Alice* in an interview with Liesl Bradner, Garcia states that

The original John Tenniel illustrations were always some of my favorites and those were definitely lodged in my head. I wanted to stay true to his vision but I'm so influenced by Disney. I loved the backgrounds in their early movies, ("Snow White," "Pinocchio") so I watched a lot of those films to try to get more of a color feel. They were all done in the '30s with watercolor which has that very classic touch. It did occur to me to give Alice black hair, make it more edgy and unique but I wanted to stay true to the classic feel of the book. Using watercolors referred back to the Tenniel work but I added a little bit of a modern gothic touch as well. That was my vision for the work. (Garcia)

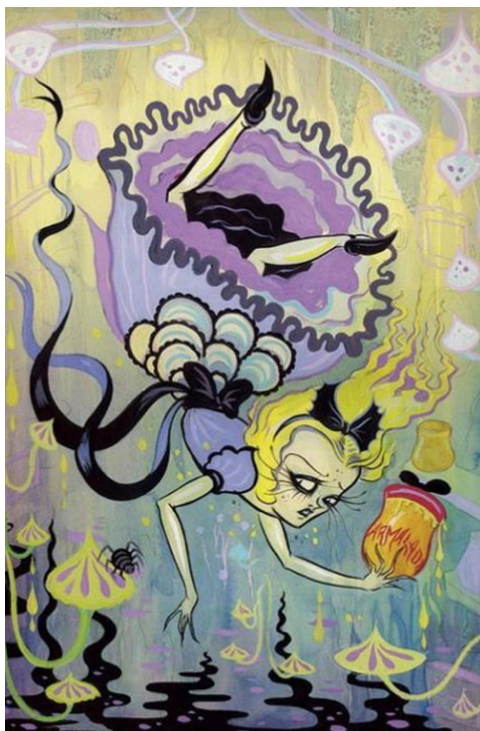


Image 2. Garcia's Alice falling down the rabbit hole. Garcia (2010).

Recalling the notion of metapicture, it is clear from Garcia's above statement that her *Alice* illustrations maintain a strong link to the Disney image. Thus, while Garcia's approach to the *Alice* illustrations is nuanced in terms of the gothic representation of Wonderland and Alice herself, the referential existence of Disney's visual narrative is evident. Garcia asserts that her surrealist approach to *Alice* allows for an expansion of interpretation:

I always liked the themes of Alice and playing with the idea of landscape being somewhat surreal, cartoonish, not totally based in reality. The story lends itself to the kind of work I do anyway. The sort of shifting of realities. (Garcia)

Garcia's artwork and its connection to the Disney image have not gone unnoticed in popular culture. In 2013, Garcia held an exhibition entitled "Camille Rose Garcia: Down the Rabbit Hole" at the Walt Disney Family Museum. Curator Tere Romo declared that "Garcia's aesthetics have pushed illustration further into the art

world and brought it to the attention of a new, younger generation.” While this is a generalised statement, there is validity to Romo’s assertion – Garcia does have a nuanced approach to her depiction of Alice as a protagonist, one that is fresh and important in both popular culture and academic scholarship.

Theory and Context

To contextualise the critical dynamic of the visual narrative, Gillian Rose’s *Visual Methodologies: An Introduction to Researching with Visual Materials* (2001) is an important source for understanding the visual narrative and modes of interpretation. Rose discusses three forms of modalities that contribute to the visual text: technological, compositional, and social. As the following subsections focus on close readings of Garcia’s *Alice* illustrations, the compositional mode is applied in the analysis of each image. Rose explains that “the compositional mode consists of the ‘content, colour and spatial organization’ of the image” (17). Thus, the method of analysis focuses on these three areas and explores their significance in the narrative structure.

Of course, semiology is also important when interpreting an image, as it “offers a very full box of analytical tools for taking an image apart and tracing how it works in relation to a broader system of meanings” (Rose 69). While semiotics is not a focal point of this particular research methodology, it is relevant when examining the symbols attached to the iconotextual narrative. For instance, the blue and white costume of Disney’s Alice can be perceived as a symbol of purity (compositional mode), while also creating its own semiotic response as a popular symbol for the “Alice” figure (social mode). This semiotic response in Garcia’s work is important as it demonstrates the viability of this image in popular culture and furthers her significance as a contributor to the *Alice* canon.

Garcia and Disney: A Fusion

From a theoretical vantage point, Jean Baudrillard argues that “Disneyland is a perfect model of all the entangled orders of simulacra” and that

Disneyland is presented as imaginary in order to make us believe that the rest is real, whereas all of Los Angeles and the America that surrounds it are no longer real, but belong to the hyperreal order and to the order of simulation. (Baudrillard 12)

In many ways, Baudrillard's idea of the hyperreal is of importance to this reinvention of Alice as Garcia creates an Alice that exists in the hyperreal. Garcia's Alice moves away from Carroll's original character, and, instead, finds inspiration in the cartoon Alice created by Walt Disney in 1951. Garcia fuses the gothic aesthetics with the cuteness of the animated simulation. As noted by Zelevansky, Garcia's creations define "what she calls a 'mindscape,' a place of the imagination" (11). This is evident throughout her work as the real and the hyperreal are mixed together in a pop-surrealist mindscape. In image 2, Garcia includes insects and flora to encapsulate the gothic atmosphere and the surrealism of Alice's experiences. The black spider and the creeping vines create a distinct "creepy" feeling that unsettles the reader and quickly establishes this edition as a radical fusion of Carroll's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and Disney's *Alice in Wonderland*. Garcia uses aspects of the uncanny to distort reality. Reality merges with imagination to a point where the hyperreal becomes "a space of [...] regeneration" (Baudrillard 13). This regeneration creates a new space for Alice and further separates her identity from previous illustrated versions of herself. In turn, Garcia uses the uncanny to enhance the hyperreal space of Wonderland. The following subsections explore Alice's identity through a close reading of four of Garcia's illustrations from *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*.

Exploring the Uncanny through a Disney Lens

The uncanny and the gothic aspects of Garcia's illustrations depict the distorted female body as a central component as Alice is physically reshaped and she begins to embody the Gothic child.³ Of course, Carroll's Alice is already distorted in the original descriptions of her. However, Garcia's illustrated character Alice as the Gothic child lingers on the boundary of innocence and experience; Garcia frames Alice as an assertive and disobedient child figure, yet frequently illustrates her as a crying delinquent. Discussing the concept of the Gothic child, Steven Bruhm notes that "invariably, the Gothic child knows too much, and that knowledge makes us more than a little nervous" (106). The uncanny features of Garcia's collection stem from the mistrust of the "Alice" figure. She does not replicate the warm or childish illustrations that proved popular in the early twentieth century. Rather, these images transgress the normative representations of childhood through psychedelic influences and imagery. Anna Kérchy notes that "Camille Rose Garcia's 2010

pen and ink watercolors reimagine a bold Alice on a bad trip, exaggerating Tenniel to invest Wonderland with a dark goth sensibility and a mean psychedelic feel sprung from the sixties' hallucinogenic countercultures" (16). As Alice eats and drinks the Wonderlandian treats, the scene is depicted through a grotesque distortion of Alice's limbs and neck.

Throughout this edition of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, Garcia features a serpent motif that creeps along the chapters. This motif is foreshadowed in "The Rabbit Sends in a Little Bill" as Alice's neck slinks away from her body. This is then replicated in chapter five, "Advice from a Caterpillar," as Garcia stretches Alice's neck across a two-page spread with a gothic-style typography spelling "Serpent" in black font. Carroll's narrative causes Alice to question her own identity and her bodily autonomy:

"But I'm not a serpent, I tell you!" said Alice. "I'm a - I'm a -"

"Well! What are you?" said the Pigeon. "I can see you're trying to invent something!"

"I - I'm a little girl," said Alice, rather doubtfully, as she remembered the number of changes she had gone through that day. (Carroll and Garcia 63)

It is evident that Alice's shifting form questions the relationship between Alice and her body. Garcia relies on the grotesque and the uncanny to (re)produce an Alice that has a kinaesthetic relationship with her own form. Her neck becomes so disjointed from her body that she has the capability to examine herself from a detached point of view which suggests an intense self-awareness for Garcia's Alice (image 3).

As her body moulds to suit Garcia's narrative trajectory, the reader becomes aware of the nonsensical and trippy nature of this Wonderland. The use of vivid purple backgrounds combined with the pastel watercolours creates a curious and expressive landscape. This particular colour pattern is repeated in two other illustrations in the collection, including the "The Rabbit Sends in a Little Bill" and "A Mad Tea-Party." Using Gillian Rose's compositional mode introduced in *Visual Methodologies*, the visual composition of these images can be examined by paying particular attention to the hue (colours), saturation (purity of a colour), and value (lightness or darkness of a colour) of the illustrations (17). The hue and saturation of Garcia's



Image 3. Alice's neck becomes distorted, thus creating a kinaesthetic awareness. Garcia (2010).

Alice illustrations rely on a watercolour technique which suspends the pigment in a water-based solution. She combines this technique with the elements of pop-surrealism to enhance the changes to Alice's form and Wonderland. When discussing the colourisation of visual materials, Rose notes that "there is also the question of how harmonious the colour combination of a painting is" (39). Garcia creates a binary of light and dark through the colour composition of her *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* edition. The purple hues convey a sense of mystery while the heavy saturation provides a rich mind-scape for the reader and Alice alike. Furthermore, the heaviness of the purple colour contrasts the lighter tones in Alice's hair and the pastel detailing at the tea-party. Interestingly, Garcia maintains a purple motif throughout her edition, including typography and detailed edging on the pages. Despite this constant presence of purple hues throughout the text, she only illustrates Alice with purple tones once she is in Wonderland. Alice is depicted through green hues at

the opening and closing scenes of the text which creates a visual separation of reality and imagination.

Space and Adolescence

Garcia's "The Rabbit Sends in a Little Bill" is one of the most evocative illustrations in her edition of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (image 4). As her limbs lose all normative proportion, Alice becomes a displaced and abject figure. Alice's identity is continuously destabilised through physical alteration and distortion. Her body stretches, shrinks, and spirals through varying degrees of bodily autonomy. Ruth Y. Jenkins notes that this abjection threatens the normative order of culture (79). However, this abjection is more threatening to Alice's identity *within* herself rather than to the social hierarchy of reality and imagination. Using this assertion in line with Garcia's illustration of the "Alice" figure, the position that Alice maintains in *this* Wonderland is diminished through the grotesque representation of the female body. In this illustration, Alice's legs are spread apart through the house, while one of her arms is dislocated from her body and appears bent in the roof window. There is a nonsensical atmosphere in this image as the dislocated arm seems to be a separate part of Alice.



Image 4. Alice's limbs are dislocated in "The Rabbit Sends in a Little Bill." Garcia (2010).

She is aghast as she watches her body distort around the White Rabbit's house, her face stricken by the assumed pain her body is experiencing. Alice's body and facial expressions are constructed through intricate linework and colour patterns. Garcia highlights this through Alice's downcast expression and spider-web eyelashes. Her black petticoat spills through the vacant space. All available space is occupied by Alice's form. Meanwhile, the White Rabbit watches this scene from the left foreground; he seems both curious and fearful. This aligns with Rose's thoughts of spatiality within images as the "spatial organization of an image offers a particular viewing position to its spectator" (40). By fusing the spectatorship of the White Rabbit and the enlarged Alice to create a whole image, Garcia positions the reader in a submissive vantage point that feels claustrophobic. This claustrophobia is created through the lack of available space within the scene, and the sense of corporeal discomfort that resonates with the implied reader.

The scene itself is artistically sophisticated – Garcia manages to create fear and beauty in equal measure. Garcia uses the space of the White Rabbit's house to illustrate the ever-changing female form and the discomfort that accompanies it. As she becomes too big for the available space, Alice's limbs thrash about the living room; one leg becomes tangled in the chandelier, the other smashes against the mirror while her arms knock over the remaining furniture (image 5).



Image 5. Garcia's evocative display of Alice's form. Garcia (2010).

These “clumsy” moments mimic the awkwardness that accompanies the growing female form during puberty and menstrual development. As Elizabeth Grosz notes:

adolescence is also of significance in understanding the development of the body image, for this is a period in which the biological body undergoes major upheavals and changes as an effect of puberty. It is in this period that the subject feels the greatest discord between the body image and the lived body, between its psychical idealized self-image and its bodily changes. (Grosz 75)

The discord between the child-body and that of the adolescent becomes clear, as Alice’s body expands and grows to uncomfortable dimensions. Here, Garcia’s “Alice” figure becomes a signifier of the pubescent female form. Garcia’s *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* captures the innate beauty and fear of Wonderland that exist simultaneously in Carroll’s text. She distorts the Wonderland mindscape so that it resembles a wasteland of discomfort and the grotesque.

Garcia’s Mad Tea-Party

Alice’s demeanour is immediately altered in “A Mad Tea-Party.” In stark contrast to her earlier pain and shock, Garcia’s Alice is now stern and angry (image 6). Sitting beneath a gothic parasol, Alice



Image 6. Garcia’s “A Mad Tea-Party” scene. Garcia (2010).

exhibits a position of power that she seems to lack in Garcia's other illustrations. In terms of the relationship between Carroll's text and Garcia's imagery, the scene captures Alice's growing frustration with the Hatter and the tea-party creatures:

"Take some more tea," the March Hare said to Alice, very earnestly.

"I've had nothing yet," Alice replied in an offended tone, "so I can't take any more."

"You mean you can't take any less," said the Hatter: "it's very easy to take more of nothing". (Carroll and Garcia 93)

The Hatter and Alice seem to mirror each other's indignant attitudes, while the March Hare embodies the lunacy of Carroll's Wonderland. This particular tea-party scene is chaotic and uncivilised; Garcia piles plates and saucers on top of one another while the cups are overflowing with black liquid. She continues this discombobulated scene by the dripping motif that accompanies many of her *Alice* illustrations. The trees drip along the edges of the image, while the bottles leak droplets of orange ink across the table. Furthermore, the Hatter's most famous riddle is scrawled across the background of the image, questioning Alice and the reader:

"Why is a raven like a writing-desk?"

[...]

"Have you guessed the riddle yet?" the Hatter said, turning to Alice again.

"No, I give up," Alice replied: "what's the answer?"

"I haven't the slightest idea," said the Hatter. (Carroll and Garcia 84-89)

Garcia uses a very distinct form of typography that unsettles the implied reader. The letters drip along the top of the image while transitioning from purple to orange. This particular colour gradient evokes a sense of mystery and danger, whilst also suggesting a sexualised Alice. The warm hues enhance the libidinous possibilities Wonderland poses to Alice as she transitions from girl to woman. These colours can also suggest the pubescent development of Alice, which is another important facet of transition. As touched

upon earlier, the female body is an incredibly important area of discussion when examining the “Alice” figure. The gothic femininity of the “Alice” figure is evident in her bodily performance. Interestingly, Garcia gives feminine attributes to all of her Wonderland characters. The Hatter wears makeup and is explicitly feminine in his actions, while the White Rabbit is doe-eyed and docile. In many ways, Garcia transfers the discourse of femininity to highlight the inversion of normalcy in Wonderland, and the lack of concrete identity.

In Conclusion...

The juxtaposition of the cute and the wicked is a powerful message in Garcia’s work. She highlights the wicked nature of Carroll’s dystopia and shows how cuteness “exploits the reality that when indeterminacy is pressed beyond certain points it becomes menacing” (May 6). The menacing cuteness of Garcia’s narrative is most evident in the closing image as Alice runs away from the Wonderland cards (image 7). The Disneyfication of the image is obvious as the forest resembles the forbidden forest trope of various Disney films. However, despite the Disney allusion, Garcia achieves a unique image that calls upon various aspects of gothic artistry. The darkened hues immediately draw the reader into a dangerous environment while the vivid red trimmings of Alice’s petticoat foreshadow the malicious intentions of the bat-like cards; the scene is almost vampiric, as the bats hunt for their prey.



Image 7. Garcia’s closing image of *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland*. Garcia (2010).

Garcia's images are not transparent windows into Alice's identity; rather they interpret her through artistic expression, and it could be said, these interpretations also help to create different avatars of the idea of Alice. Garcia's (re)imagining of Alice and her Wonderland is unique and nuanced, radical and dangerous. As Carroll's dreamland is turned into Garcia's nightmare, the "Alice" figure becomes the gothic child of pop-surrealism. In "Camille Rose Garcia in Oblivion's Playground" (2007), Carlo McCormick says that

when the grit of your daytime nightmares turns like magic dust into the sweet dreams of night, Camille Rose Garcia will be there. That's where she lives, and that's why she paints so well. Cute and wicked, Garcia reminds us, are not mutually exclusive attributes. Indeed, they're far too comfortable in one another's company. (McCormick 11)

Overall, Garcia's version of Alice stems from the haunting presence of Disney's 1951 animated dreamchild. Through allusion and metapicture, Garcia creates a wasteland that adds to the contemporary (re)-interpretation of Alice. As this article has demonstrated, Garcia's Alice finds inspiration in the cartoon Alice created by Walt Disney. To allow the gothic aesthetics to work alongside the cuteness of the animated simulation, Garcia creates a mindscape to portray the "Alice" figure. In this mindscape, she often distorts the female form while depicting Alice as a Gothic child, lingering on the boundary of innocence and experience.

This article illustrates how Camille Rose Garcia has redefined and reshaped notions of Alice; Alice is in a constant state of flux, ever-changing and growing to achieve new representations of girlhood. Similarly, this article demonstrates how artists such as Camille Rose Garcia contribute to the *Alice* canon and continue to reinterpret Alice through visual means.

Biographical information: Jade Dillon is an Associate Professor of Children's Literature and Young Learners at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Norway. Her research interests include children's literature, visual texts, cinematography, and gender studies. She is currently co-editing a volume titled Family in Children's and Young Adult Literature (Routledge) with Dr Eleanor Spencer. Jade is co-founder of the Children's Literature Education and Research (CLEAR) group at NTNU with Dr Alyssa Lowery. Jade tweets from the account @jade_dillon, and her website is www.jadedillon.com.

Notes

1 I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Camille Rose Garcia who very kindly offered permission for her illustrations to be included in this research article.

2 Anna Kérchy's and Jack Zipes' respective publications relating to Camille Rose Garcia are briefly referenced in this article. For more detail, please refer to Kérchy's *Alice in Transmedia Wonderland: Curiouser and Curiouser New Forms of a Children's Classic* (2016) and Zipes' entry on Garcia in *The Oxford Companion to Fairy Tales* (2015).

3 Steven Bruhm and Margarita Georgieva have both contributed greatly to the definition of the "Gothic child." Their respective conceptualisations of the Gothic child are incredibly relevant when examining contemporary examples of otherness within childhood. For more context, please see Bruhm's article "Nightmare on Sesame Street: or, The Self-Possessed Child" (2006) and Georgieva's *The Gothic Child* (2013).

Works Cited

Alice in Wonderland. Directed by Clyde Geronimi, Wilfred Jackson, and Hamilton Luske, Walt Disney Pictures, 1951.

Baudrillard, Jean. *Simulacra and Simulation*. The University of Michigan Press, 1994.

Bruhm, Steven. "Nightmare on Sesame Street: or, The Self-Possessed Child." *Gothic Studies*, vol. 8, no. 2, 2006, pp. 98–113, *Gale Literature Resource Center*, link.gale.com/apps/doc/A392573462/LitRC?u=nt-nuu&sid=bookmark-LitRC&xid=832c7909. Accessed 16 September 2022.

Burstein, Mark. "Alice in America." *Illustrating Alice: An International Selection of Illustrated Editions of Alice's Adventures in Wonderland and Through the Looking-Glass*, edited by Marina Vaizey et al., Artists' Choice Editions, 2013, pp. 88–103.

Carroll, Lewis, and Camille Rose Garcia. *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. Harper Design, 2010.

Disney, Walt. "How I Cartooned 'Alice': Its Logical Nonsense Needed a Logical Sequence." *Films in Review*, vol. 11, no. 5, 1951, pp. 7–11.

Garcia, Camille Rose. "Camille Rose Garcia Visits a Different 'Wonderland.'" Interview by Liesl Bradner. *Hero Complex Blog: Los Angeles Times*, 2010, www.latimes.com/archives/blogs/hero-complex-blog/story/2010-02-26/camille-rose-garcia-visits-a-different-wonderland. Accessed 26 September 2022.

- Georgieva, Margarita. *The Gothic Child*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2013.
- Grosz, Elizabeth. *Volatile Bodies: Toward a Corporeal Feminism*. Indiana University Press, 1994.
- Hermansson, Casie. *Filming The Children's Book: Adapting Metafiction*. Edinburgh University Press, 2019.
- Hutcheon, Linda. *A Theory of Adaptation*. 2nd ed., Routledge, 2013.
- Jaques, Zoe, and Eugene Giddens. *Lewis Carroll's Alice's Adventures in Wonderland and Through the Looking-Glass: A Publishing History*. Routledge, 2016.
- Jenkins, Ruth Y. "Imagining the Abject in Kingsley, MacDonald, and Carroll: Disrupting Dominant Values and Cultural Identity in Children's Literature." *The Lion and the Unicorn*, vol. 35, no. 1, 2011, pp. 67–87. Project Muse, doi.org/10.1353/uni.2011.0003.
- Kérchy, Anna. *Alice in Transmedia Wonderland: Curiouser and Curiouser New Forms of a Children's Classic*. McFarland, 2016.
- Lury, Karen. "Animating Alice: The Heroine without a Heart." *Illustrating Alice: An International Selection of Illustrated Editions of Alice's Adventures in Wonderland and Through the Looking-Glass*, edited by Marina Vaizey et al., Artists' Choice Editions, 2013, pp. 108–113.
- May, Simon. *The Power of Cute*. Princeton University Press, 2019.
- McCormick, Carlo. "Camille Rose Garcia in Oblivion's Playground." *Tragic Kingdom: The Art of Camille Rose Garcia*, Camille Rose Garcia, Last Gasp, 2007, pp. 11–13.
- McGee, Mike. "The Evident Charm of Camille Rose Garcia." *The Saddest Place on Earth: The Art of Camille Rose Garcia*, Camille Rose Garcia, Last Gasp, 2005, pp. 9–10.
- Mitchell, W. J. T. *Picture Theory: Essays on Verbal and Visual Representation*. The University of Chicago Press, 1994.
- . *What Do Pictures Want? The Lives and Loves of Images*. The University of Chicago Press, 2005.
- Romo, Tere. "The Walt Disney Family Museum Reexamines *Alice in Wonderland* with Contemporary Artist Camille Rose Garcia alongside words by Disney Legend Mary Blair." The Walt Disney Family Museum, 2013. Press release.

Rose, Gillian. *Visual Methodologies: An Introduction to Researching with Visual Materials*. SAGE, 2001.

Sanna, Antonio. "Nightmares and the Struggle for Existence in *Alice in Wonderland* and *Planet of the Apes*." *A Critical Companion to Tim Burton*, edited by Adam Barkman and Antonio Sanna, Lexington Books, 2017, pp. 73–89.

Vaizey, Marina. "Foreword: Alice, Everywhere." *Illustrating Alice: An International Selection of Illustrated Editions of Alice's Adventures in Wonderland and Through the Looking-Glass*, edited by Marina Vaizey et al., Artists' Choice Editions, 2013, pp. 10–11.

Zelevansky, Lynn. "Landscapes of the Mind." *The Saddest Place on Earth: The Art of Camille Rose Garcia*, Camille Rose Garcia, Last Gasp, 2005, pp. 11–12.

Zipes, Jack. *The Enchanted Screen: The Unknown History of Fairy-Tale Films*. Routledge, 2011.

---. *The Oxford Companion to Fairy Tales*. 2nd ed., e-book ed., Oxford University Press, 2015.