Fig. 1 Giuseppe Arcimboldo, 'The Librarian' (1566).

# Ghosts at an Exhibition: From Image to Text in Angela Carter's Strange Worlds

Marie Mulvey-Roberts

For the 30th anniversary of the death of Angela Carter in 2022, I wanted to wind the clock back to her 25th and revisit the exhibition *Strange Worlds: The Vision of Angela Carter*, which I co-curated at the majestic Royal West of England Academy, Bristol (RWA), and remind myself of those artworks which never made it to the show.[1] At first sight, an art exhibition about a writer might seem slightly incongruous, unless of course that writer is Angela Carter, whose writing is so strikingly visual. It is less well-known that she was herself an artist, at home in the medium of both watercolour and charcoal. It is revealing that in an interview, Carter explained that her writing method was 'always to think first in images, and then grope for the words'.[2] For such an accomplished wordsmith, it is perhaps surprising that the catalyst for her highly wrought and intricate language was the visual and that words, for which she claimed to have fumbled in the dark, were the afterthought. The exhibition provided a unique opportunity to reflect upon that fecund symbiosis between image and word and throw new light on Carter's legacy. In the Preface to the exhibition catalogue, Carmen Callil, her former editor at Virago Press, brings artist and author together in a moving tribute to her friend as 'clever as the paint she loved, but taking it all further, leaving behind a lasting canvas, painted in words'.[3]

The art exhibition was in many ways an endorsement of Carter's creative method, which began with the image. For those new to her, it was hoped that the show might entice them to read her work for the first time. Like low-hanging fruit, second-hand copies of novels were left out on a table near the entrance to the main gallery for visitors to browse, whilst brand-new copies were available to buy in the gallery bookshop. For others already familiar with her oeuvre, images formed in their mind's eye from reading her work might be coaxed into merging with the lines, shapes and colours occupying a picture frame, art installation or digital screen. However, the artworks selected for the show were not intended to be merely derivative or imitative, but also evocative. Indeed, there were some contemporary artists whose work was on display who had never actually read or even previously known about Carter, and yet now found themselves running parallel to her strange worlds. One of the dangers in trying to transpose Carter's words directly into images is to render concrete the abstract, literalise the metaphorical or inadvertently shackle the

boundless literary imagination. As my co-curator Fiona Robinson pointed out, 'The selection needed to be as open to possibilities as she herself was, to go beyond work that was directly inspired by her writing.'[4] This was the first time that the art gallery had held an exhibition on a writer and, as Robinson insisted:

> In staging an exhibition predicated on storytelling it was vital to avoid the trap of selecting art that, by its subject matter, served merely to illustrate her narratives. It was essential to search out work that resonated with ideas that Carter explored in her writing; that mirrored her complexity or for which her fiction had inadvertently provided a catalyst. … It had to start from the premise of limitless potential. Was it possible to surprise those who knew Carter's writing well, to offer a different interpretation, an alternative viewpoint?[5]

The range of artworks in the show, whether it be sculpture, drawing, animation or painting, was intended to open up Carter's work to ever-widening perspectives and reflect upon her own multi-disciplinarity interests and influences.[6] As Fiona and I noted in our introduction to the catalogue, 'Carter's kaleidoscopic language, through which she transforms the mundane into the extraordinary,' opens up 'new conversations between word and image – art and life.'[7] We envisaged the exhibition as a continuation of that process.

The title, *Strange Worlds: The Vision of Angela Carter*, set out to convey the visuality of a writer who, in spite of the wording in the subtitle, was by no means constrained by a single vision and this was reflected in the eclectic and multi-dimensional exhibits we selected. I had initially suggested the idea for an anniversary show to raise awareness of Carter's importance to Bristol's literary heritage, as it was not widely known at the time that she had lived and worked in the city for nearly a decade during the 1960s. It was here where she first published her poetry, worked as a journalist and produced more novels than anywhere else. Appropriately, her love of folk-singing, which she had cultivated in Bristol, found a place in the exhibition, brought back to life through artwork, drawing on a sound and textual archive lent by her friend, artist and fellow-folk singer Christine Molan, which Molan is now donating to the British Library. Samples of pop-art montages Carter created were kindly loaned by yet another old friend. These seemed especially appropriate to display for, as I discovered not long before the preview at the RWA, she had actually studied art in the very same building in which the exhibition was taking place. Furthermore, Carter had lived less than a mile away in the same Clifton area of the city. While the exhibition certainly resonated with her roles as amateur artist and art lover, it was important that the artwork should not overshadow her writing. An artefact making a statement to this effect was her

fountain pen, which we had the good fortune to exhibit, notwithstanding the danger of it being venerated as a holy relic by her fans! As one visitor put it, 'that is what this is all about'. Other reminders included copies of her novels being displayed beneath the original paintings of corresponding book covers, a proximity requested by the artists. And for this dialogue between art and literature, I donated my own precious collection of Carter novels, including her Bristol trilogy, and my teaching text of Carter's most well-known collection of short stories, *The Bloody Chamber* (1979). This battered, well-thumbed and marked-up copy took pride of place inside a vitrine, under the gaze of countless visitors, having been replaced temporarily in class by a pristine stand-in.

On considering how best to represent the relationship between Carter's writing and art, I started to imagine a curious embodiment, the idea of the author as text or the writer as book and was drawn to a peculiar painting of a human figure, made entirely out of books, *The Librarian* (1566, Fig. 1) by the Mannerist painter Giuseppe Arcimboldo. In a *Guardian* review of the catalogue for a one-man show of Arcimboldo's work at the Palazzo Grassi in Venice, Carter observed, 'No amount of explanation removes the strangeness from the pictures.'[8] In the failure of the art critic lies the triumph of the artist. The dream-like use of the book as material object by supplying the building blocks of portraiture provided an ideal image for our very own *Strange Worlds*. Arcimboldo appealed to Carter on many levels, not least in the way in which she too embedded the intellectual within her own aesthetic, though for him, as she pointed out in her review, beauty was being superseded: 'It was as if Renaissance painting had exhausted the idea of the beautiful, something more cerebral became the vogue.'[9] The painting reminded me of visits made by reading groups to the exhibition organised by local librarians. Such visits underlined the fundamental link between reading and art. I had envisaged Arcimboldo's painting as marking the start of the exhibition – the beginning of a journey into a series of strange worlds. But it was not to be. *The Librarian* resided permanently at Skokloster Castle in Sweden and, for this particular show, we were unable to borrow artworks from abroad. However, a compromise was reached when it was adopted as the teasingly performative frontispiece to the catalogue. A pile of books constructs the torso, while the impression of a right arm, devised from two angled volumes, props up more books. The geometry of the face is carved out of books and the headgear consists of an open volume with fanned-out pages. Carter was possessive of her books. She once described feeling the wrench of lending a book from her personal library as if she had suffered a minor amputation.[10] Arcimboldo's *The Librarian*, whose body parts consist entirely of books, provided the perfect mirror of Carter's inner bibliophile.

Another artwork on my wish list of failed attempts was for a more material representation of amputation in the form of a prosthetic leg encased in an ornate red leather boot. This had once belonged to Frida Kahlo, an artist much admired by Carter, who pronounced that she had 'painted the strangeness of the world made visible.'[11] This artefact resonated with Angela Carter's strange worlds, not least as an uncanny disembodied

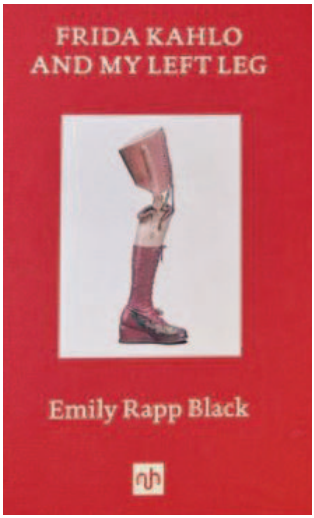


Fig. 2 *Frida Kahlo and My Left Leg*, Emily Rapp Black (Notting Hill Editions, 2021).

mechanical body part but also as a canvas, painted by Kahlo herself, that served as an extension of her body. As such, it is in keeping with Kahlo's trademark as an artist, as one who painted herself obsessively. As Carter reminds us, Kahlo painted her own face over and over, but as she indicates, 'we will never know what this urgent self-interrogation concerns. Frida Kahlo uses narcissism, exhibitionism, as a form of disguise.'[12] While her paintings were destined for public scrutiny, the artificial leg hidden beneath her long skirts was most definitely not. Shortly before she lost her flesh-and-blood leg to a surgeon, she wrote in her diary for 1953, 'Why do I need feet if I have wings to fly?'[13] Carter's own winged woman, the aerialist Sophie Fevvers in her novel *Nights at the Circus* (1984), would doubtless have agreed. By attaching a piece of decorative Mexican folk art to her own body, Kahlo continued to turn herself into a piece of art, fused to the concept of the iconographic that she had, in every sense, set literally in motion.

The prosthetic leg lives on in books, most vividly in Emily Rapp Black's powerful memoir *Frida Kahlo and my Left Leg* (Fig. 2, 2021), as well as in magazines and exhibitions. As it was out on loan to another gallery at the time of our exhibition, there was no possibility of including it. Nowadays, Kahlo's face has global currency, but that had not always been the case. It was actually Carter herself who played a pivotal role in publicising the artist through an essay, first published in the form of a booklet and included in a postcard box set of photographs and paintings entitled *Images of Frida Kahlo* (1989). These images, along with Carter's introductory essay, are entombed within a handsome black imitation enamel box, lined at the bottom with a sepia photograph of Kahlo in an open coffin at her funeral. In my mind's eye, I could see the false leg at the *Strange Worlds* exhibition standing defiantly upright at the centre of a circle constructed from a fan-like arrangement of those postcards. At the foot, literally, would be placed the booklet, its cover emblazoned with the signature of the artist, and below that with the name 'Angela Carter'. The two dozen brightly coloured postcards forming the circle would have aptly illustrated an observation from Carter's essay that Kahlo was a container of 'multitudes',[14] an observation just as true of the writer herself.

An idea for a larger exhibit demonstrating that all important connection between artist and writer, literature and art, was triggered by a photograph I spotted on the internet. It was of a wedding dress made from 2,500 pages from Angela Carter's books of fairy tales. This *Word Dress* (2012, Fig. 3) was made and designed by Jennifer Pritchard Couchman, who used pleated, folded papers to imitate traditional bookbinding. It was worn by


Fig. 3 *The Word Dress* (2012), wedding dress made out of Angela Carter's fairy-tale books, designed by Jennifer Pritchard-Couchman (with kind permission of photographer Jonathan Bean).

fairy-tale author Claire Massey for a public reading at LitFest, the annual literary festival in Lancaster. Carter was fascinated by the 'marital mythology'[15] of the wedding dress, describing the bride rather disparagingly as a 'gift-wrapped girl'.[16] This was now apparent in the sight of a model encased in paper. In her essay on Carter's bridal Gothic, with its ironic main title, 'Isn't it *Every* Girl's Dream to be Married in White?',[17] Sarah Gamble quotes a passage from Carter's novel *The Magic Toyshop* (1967), in which the heroine Melanie contemplates her parents' wedding photograph, paying particular attention to the bridal dress her mother is wearing: 'Symbolic and virtuous white. White satin shows every mark, white tulle crumples at the touch of a finger, white roses shower petals at a breath. Virtue is fragile. It was a marvellous wedding dress.'[18] So, too, was the one I beheld on the computer screen. I contacted the designer only to be told that it was no longer in such immaculate condition but sadly had deteriorated over time. Its fictional equivalent was now more like the decaying wedding dress described in Carter's *Heroes and Villains* (1969), whose wearer, Marianne, is married in a bizarre ceremony after being raped. The satin bodice of her dress is cracked, and the tulle of the long skirt is yellowing with age. We are told that Marianne 'screwed up a handful of the hem and watched the fabric shiver to dust between her fingers', just as the yellow paper in which it was wrapped had disintegrated. She felt 'menaced' by this 'crumbling anachronism',[19] which had seen better days with another bride.

Similarly, the freshly made wedding dress whose frilly imbricated pages had once been white as snow, which I had hoped to borrow for the exhibition, existed no longer. Instead, it was browning, shrivelled, curling, desiccated. This aging, withered bridal gown reminded me of Miss Haversham, the jilted and now aging bride from Charles Dickens' *Great Expectations* (1860), who is rejuvenated in Carter's tale of the lonely vampire in 'The Lady of the House of Love' (1979). Yet the dilapidated state of the actual bridal gown was by no means a disincentive for its inclusion in the show, particularly when placed next to the photograph as a reminder of its once resplendent glory. Together these artifacts spoke to Carter's critique of the wedding dress and what it symbolised for her. However, the logistics of transporting the dress in its geriatric state were formidable. It was not inconceivable that the journey from Lancaster would have shaken it to pieces, leaving us with a dismembered corpse on our hands. We could then only share in Melanie's discomfiture in feeling 'like a grave-robber'[20] as she disinters her mother's wedding dress from a trunk. Moreover, the destruction of the dress would have simultaneously wasted the fairy-tale books whose pages had been liberated from their spines to fashion a bridal garment never to be worn outside on a rainy day, even though Virago Press had donated multiple copies of Carter's fairy-story books to be desecrated on the altar of haute couture.

I boasted to the official photographer of the wedding dress, Johnny Bean, of my good fortune in having obtained a signed copy of the *Virago Book of Fairy Tales* (1990) when I went to see Angela Carter give a reading from the book at the Cheltenham Literary Festival. In return, he told me, 'I missed my one opportunity to get my first edition of *Wise*

*Children* signed some years back when I was bookshop manager at the ICA in London. Whilst working the late shift one night I was idling time by reading. Someone could be heard singing the Red Flag in the cinema and staff were called to remove the person, it was Angela! And as she passed, she looked at me reading *Wise Children* and said, "I wrote that you know"!![21] Like me, Johnny had been entranced by the idea of a dummy clad in pages from her fairy-tale books having a place in the exhibition as a defiantly dilapidated bride, but the wedding dress, once literally the stuff of fairy tales, never risked making that hazardous journey north to south.

An exquisite exhibit which did materialise and indeed made material Carter's imaginative fairy-world was selected by my co-curator. This was Di Oliver's *The Fairy Tale* (2005, Fig. 4), which consisted of two objects. The first was a book entitled *Moments of Truth: Twelve Twentieth-Century Women Writers* (2002), whose author was Carter's friend, Lorna Sage. The volume was opened on the first page of a chapter on Carter and the fairy tale, which was folded to form a bolster for the sleeping, diminutive figure of a girl. Pieces of cut strings dangling from her joints reveal that in a previous life she had been a puppet and now, like Carter's debauched Lady Purple, was free from the strings which had once moored her.[22] She looked as though she had crept into the exhibition and found a bed to lie on, leaning against a page imprinted with words written about Carter. One likes to imagine her dreaming of fairies.

Fig. 4 Di Oliver's *The Fairy Tale* (2005) (with kind permission of the artist).

As Christine Molan pointed out to me, Carter did not really write fairy tales so much as folktales. Her most sustained engagement with fairies was through her love of Shakespeare, which inspired the short story 'Overture and Incidental Music for *A Midsummer Night's Dream*' (1982) and her final novel, *Wise Children* (1991). I managed to persuade the National Gallery of Scotland to lend us Joseph Noel Paton's magnificent *The Quarrel of Oberon and Titania* (1849), having reminded them of Carter's Scottish heritage. Unfortunately, that success did not carry through for my efforts to secure any of the bewitching fairy paintings by Bedlam artist Richard Dadd, the subject of Carter's radio play *Come unto these Yellow Sands* (1978). The title is taken from one of his paintings and is a quotation from Shakespeare's *The Tempest*. Carter had the painting reproduced for the cover of her book of radio plays. It depicts a ribbon of Dionysian fairies prancing across a beach draped in transparent fabrics. She was scathing about certain Victorian fairy-painters, whom she regarded as fetishising naked fairies in order to indulge in 'a kind of pornography of the imagination'.[23] But to return to the folktale, Carter's most well-known reimaginings of these traditional stories enchant with their animal/human transformations, as in her renditions of 'Beauty and the Beast' ('The Courtship of Mr Lyon' and 'The Tiger's Bride') and 'Little Red Riding Hood' ('The Werewolf', 'The Company of Wolves' and 'Wolf Alice') in *The Bloody Chamber*.

A fantastical evocation of how animal and human inhabit the same continuum can be seen in a startling bronze sculpture by Kiki Smith called *Born* (2002, Fig. 5), which is of a deer delivering a woman. The oneness between animal and human occupies the point of connection in the birthing process before the moment of separation. Birth is a conduit for change, a slithering out into a new beginning. So often this animal/human transition takes place in Carter's endings when, for example, beauty turns into beast, or the vampiric werewolf Duke in 'Wolf Alice' metamorphoses into something human. It was disappointing to discover that the sculpture resided at an art gallery in Buffalo, New York, too far away to loan.

Fig. 5 Kiki Smith, Born (2002), Albright Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, New York, USA, www.albrightknox.org.

One large animal that did make its way to the exhibition was a zebra. Painted on a triptych folding screen by Carter's friend, the artist Corinna Sargood, it stands rather incongruously on tropical sands, surrounded by wheeling seabirds, in marked contrast to its native grasslands or savannahs. The artwork was made for the celebration of Carter's life following her untimely death in 1992. The memorial took place at the Ritzy cinema in Brixton, London and was themed around the Radio 4 programme *Desert Island Discs*.[24] Carter was going to be a guest on the show, but her lung cancer was too advanced for her to get to the studio for the recording. She had already chosen her eight records, a book and luxury item to take to an imaginary desert island, which is the format of the programme. Instead, the selected pieces were played in her memory and introduced by friends. The book she chose was a cookbook, an unexpected choice for those who had never ventured into her kitchen, but it was the luxury object which proved to be the bigger surprise. It was concealed on the other side of the screen, which depicted a desert island scene with an old-fashioned gramophone, a vintage nod to *Desert Island Discs*. Carter's husband Mark and son Alex turned it round to reveal – a zebra. It was a typically bold, off-beat, tongue-in-cheek and deliberately absurdist choice.[25] As our own tribute, we adopted the zebra as the logo for the Angela Carter Society, which had started life in Bristol, the home of the exhibition for which I had welcomed the prospect of Sargood's solitary zebra being joined by a striped companion, though again this was not to be.

**Fig. 6 P J Crook, *Now and Then* (1997) (with kind permission of the artist).**

A fascination with zebras can be seen in the work of P J Crook, an academician of the RWA, whose distinctive work chimes so well with Carter's strange worlds. Her painting *Now and Then* (1997, Fig. 6) is a self-portrait of the artist painting a zebra sitting on the opposite side of the table. On close inspection, this figure resembles a human wearing an animal head. The scene is reflected in a mirror, as a painting within a painting. Partly obscured by a vase of flowers, it is located further away, as if distanced through time, perhaps signifying the '*Then*' part of the title as opposed to the '*Now*', which comprises the rest of the painting. Crook explains that the zebra represents her grandmother as part of an experiment with memory, time and imagination. An actual zebra dominates the centre of the companion painting, *La Prunelle de mes Yeux* (*The Apple of my Eye*) (1997, Fig. 7). On either side are seated a boy and girl, flanked by two paintings. Crook identifies these as ancestral portraits, which are a counterpoint to her self-portraiture as a young girl. Eerily, the figures reach outside the picture frames, as if they have come to life. In her commentary, Crook explains

Fig. 7 P J Crook, *La Prunelle de mes Yeux* (1997) (with kind permission of the artist).

that children can imagine communicating with portraits from which ancestors entertain them with stories of the past. The tableau is comforting and cosy, apart from the uncanny ghostliness emanating from its edges. As Crook admits, her work can often contain a note of unease.[26] Time is distorted by the phantom figures, whilst the spatiality of the picture has the hallucinogenic clarity of a vision or dream.

A similar quality pervades Angela Carter's novel *The Infernal Desire Machines of Doctor Hoffman* (1972), renamed for the American market as *The War of Dreams*. In Crook's painting, the zebra framed by the curtains of a window resembles a *trompe-l'oeil*, which somehow belies its disguise as a trick of the eye. In the world of Carter's mad scientist, Dr Hoffman, these optical illusions make real their imitation of verisimilitude so that '[p]ainted forms took advantage of the liveliness they mimicked'.[27] As in Crook's artwork, here pictures come to life. But instead of just reaching an arm or veil beyond the picture frame, inhabitants of Carter's art worlds, both animal and human, walk straight out of their paintings. A corpulent Bacchus emerges from a Titian wearing just a few grapes, only to dive into the nearest bar where he sets about whipping up Bacchanalian revelry. 'Horses from the pictures of Stubbs in the Municipal Art Gallery neighed, tossed their manes and stepped delicately off their canvases to go to crop the grass in public parks.'[28] The Impressionists are evoked in a description of ladies 'in states of pearly, heroic nudity, their hair elaborately coiffed in the stately chignons of the *fin de siècle*, [who] might be seen parading beneath their parasols as serenely as if they had been in the Bois de Boulogne'.[29] Distortions of time and space, as when the hands of a wristwatch turn into ivy or honeysuckle and writhe across its face, are in the terrain of the Surrealists. Separations between life and art, reality and representation break down, plunging the city's inhabitants into a vortex of unreality in which even paintings have been mobilised as weapons of war in Hoffman's onslaught against the mundane.

The hero of the novel, Desiderio, as his name suggests, is caught up in the pursuit of desire. This is embodied in the form of Hoffman's shapeshifting daughter, Albertina. Both get lost in 'nebulous time' in a land where the mythological has entered reality, or so it seems. They find themselves in a world of centaurs, whose bodies are covered in intricate tattoos, an elaborate embroidery on the skin of curvilinear designs, equine gods and demons swathed in flowers and 'mammiform cacti'.[30] Forging these designs on the body is excruciatingly painful, executed by a Tattoo-master, who penetrates the skin with cruel instruments, gouges and awls, with no

'relatively humane needle'[31] or analgesic. Art has become martyrdom. For her description of this beautification through cruelty, Carter drew on her knowledge of *irezumi*. This is the Japanese art of tattooing, which she had witnessed while living in Japan for over two years. The skin of individuals is inked with extensive decorations of flowers, leaves and mythical beasts. In an article for *New Society* called 'People as Pictures' (1970), Carter explains that *irezumi* transforms individuals into living works of art at a terrible cost by painting 'pain on a canvas of flesh'.[32] So extensive is the coverage that it resembles clothing. In the novel, Desiderio at first mistakes these finely wrought tattoos on the bodies of the centaurs for lace. In her article, Carter reveals that a private museum in Tokyo collects human skins to put on display. These works of art were often family heirlooms and, as Carter notes: 'It is said that, in the heyday of *irezumi*, some enthusiasts would buy the pictures off a man's very back, making an initial down-payment and waiting for the demise of the bearer of the masterpiece to collect it. So, for the poor workmen, tattooing may have been a form of investment or even of life insurance.'[33]

That gave me the idea of exhibiting a framed sample of *irezumi* along with corresponding illustrations from Carter's books. Unfortunately, the aspiration proved short-lived. There were potentially complicated ethical issues to navigate when it came to transporting and exhibiting an actual body part and there was also the possibility that such a grisly canvas might deter school visits. In my mind's eye, the preserved human flesh beneath the glazed surface would hang alongside two prints depicting *irezumi*, which had appeared as frontispieces for Carter's Virago books of fairy tales. The artist was Corinna Sargood, who had worked on the linocuts while visiting Mexico, chiselling away with tools similar to those used by the Tattoo-master in Carter's novel. In marked contrast to the glorious colours of *irezumi*, these are in black and white, and, contrary to Japanese tradition, one depicts a female figure. In her novel, it is telling that Carter's female centaurs are subjected to more extensive and painful tattooing than their male equivalents.

Fig. 8 Corinna Sargood, frontispiece to *The Virago Book of Fairy Tales* (London: Virago Press, 1990).

Emblazoned on the back of the female figure in Sargood's illustration (Fig. 8) is a graceful mermaid holding up a mirror to her face, above a pair of clasped hands. A swan floats from around her waist and an antlered deer adorns her left buttock. The male equivalent is more sinister, with a skeleton snaking along the top of his spine and a pelican resting on his right buttock. A network of vines and creepers are entwined across his back and on each arm stands a naked figure, one male and the other

Fig. 9 Photograph of Marie Mulvey-Roberts and Charlotte Crofts at the opening of *Strange Worlds: The Vision of Angela Carter*, December 2016 (with kind permission of photographer Janet Evans).

female. As frontispieces, these book illustrations serve as gateways to the collections of folktales which Carter gathered from around the world. As Susannah Clapp notes in a book review aptly entitled, 'No one got Angela Carter like Corinna Sargood', the imaginations of this writer and artist/book illustrator 'were highly attuned'.[34] For the actual exhibition, these prints were displayed in close proximity to the books for which they had been intended. It was certainly a less controversial pairing than my original idea for a meeting with page and desiccated flesh.

So, to return to the actual show, I will always be grateful to the RWA Bristol for giving me the opportunity to co-curate this major exhibition.[35] I was tasked with curating the historical works, while my co-curator Fiona Robinson gathered the contemporary artwork and arranged the 'hang'. I also mainly curated the Carterian memorabilia, which included a first edition of *Bananas*, the magazine in which 'The Company of Wolves' was first published before making its appearance in *The Bloody Chamber*. Art and Design students at my university had entered a competition to design a poster for the exhibition, which had been organised by the Festival of Ideas, Bristol. Entries were hurriedly pasted up by their tutors the day before the opening. *Strange Worlds* went on to become the dynamo for numerous satellite events; a contemporary music concert performed in the main gallery with newly composed pieces inspired by specific paintings, a folk concert performance by musicians who had sang and played with Carter in Bristol over fifty years ago, workshops on creative writing, shadow-puppetry, an art-inspired poetry competition, drawing classes in the realm of fairy tale, readings from Carter's work and many more. For three months, throughout the galleries, a dazzling array of artists' works ranging from Chagal to Ana Maria Pacheco went on show for over 11,000 visitors and the exhibition received much acclaim. But, for me, the memory of it will always be haunted by those unseen artworks, the ones which got away, the ghosts at the exhibition.

## Marie Mulvey-Roberts

**Notes**

1. Artworks fail to make the final cut for numerous reasons. For example, if they are too fragile or precious, are undergoing restoration, or being loaned out to another gallery. A particular artist might have been over-exposed in a previous exhibition at the gallery or be earmarked for a future show. Lenders might feel that an insufficient justification has been made by the curator for an artwork in question. The size or quality of the artwork might be incompatible with the exhibition space. The gallery might be unable to accommodate specific atmospheric or lighting conditions required by the artist. The cost of transportation can be prohibitive, especially if coming from overseas, and of course, curators might have conflicting views as to what should end up in the exhibition.

2. Moira Paterson, 'Flights of Fancy in Balham', *Observer Magazine*, 9 November 1986, 43.
3. Carmen Callil, Preface, *Strange Worlds: The Vision of Angela Carter*, ed. Marie Mulvey-Roberts and Fiona Robinson (Bristol: Sansom & Co, 2016), 7.
4. Fiona Robinson, 'Contemporary Art and the Continuing Influence of Angela Carter', *Strange Worlds: The Vision of Angela Carter*, ed. Marie Mulvey-Roberts and Fiona Robinson, 66.
5. *Ibid*.
6. See *The Arts of Angela Carter: A Cabinet of Curiosities*, ed. Marie Mulvey-Roberts (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2019).
7. 'Introduction', *Strange Worlds*, ed. Mulvey-Roberts and Robinson, 10.
8. Angela Carter, 'Pontus Hulten: The Arcimboldo Effect', *Shaking a Leg*, ed. Jenny Uglow (London: Penguin, 1997), 431.
9. Carter, 'Pontus Hulten', 430-1.
10. See letter from Angela Carter to Father Brocard, dated 21 July 1966, Aylesford MSS, Manuscripts Department, Lilly Library, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana, USA. My thanks to Sarah Gamble for drawing my attention to this archive.
11. Carter, 'Frida Kahlo', *Shaking a Leg*, 438.
12. Carter, 'Frida Kahlo', *Shaking a Leg*, 434.
13. 'Frida Kahlo's Paw', Lisa's History Room, https://lisawallerrogers.com/tag/frida-kahlos-crippled-leg/ (accessed 10 April 2023).
14. Carter, 'Frida Kahlo', *Shaking a Leg*, 437.
15. See Sarah Gamble, '"Isn't it *Every* Girl's Dream to be Married in White?", Angela Carter's Bridal Gothic', *Angela Carter: New Critical Readings*, eds Sonya Andermahr and Lawrence Phillips (London: Bloomsbury, 2012), 23.
16. *Ibid*.
17. It is ironic because this sentiment from *The Passion of New Eve* (1977) is articulated by an aging transgender woman, who is being forced into a shot-gun wedding with a male-to-female transexual who has undergone an involuntary sex-change.
18. Quoted by Gamble, 'Isn't it *Every* Girl's Dream to be Married in White?', 26.
19. Quoted by Gamble, 'Isn't it *Every* Girl's Dream to be Married in White?', 28.
20. Carter, *The Magic Toyshop* (London: Virago, 1996), 15.
21. Email from Johnny Bean to Marie Mulvey-Roberts, 11 March 2022.
22. Angela Carter, 'The Loves of Lady Purple', *Burning your Boats: Collected Short Stories* (London: Vintage, 1996), 50.
23. Angela Carter, *Come Unto These Yellow Sands: Four Radio Plays* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Bloodaxe Books, 1985), 24.
24. See Susannah Clapp, *A Card from Angela Carter* (London: Bloomsbury, 2012), 98-103.
25. For a detailed account of the event, see Clapp, *A Card from Angela Carter,* 98-103.
26. See P J Crook, *P J Crook* (Cheltenham: Artemesia Press, 2003), 13.
27. Angela Carter, *The Infernal Desire Machines of Doctor Hoffman* (London: Penguin, 2011), 15.
28. Carter, *The Infernal Desire Machines of Doctor Hoffman*, 15.
29. Carter, *The Infernal Desire Machines of Doctor Hoffman*, 14-15.
30. Carter, *The Infernal Desire Machines of Doctor Hoffman*, 208.
31. Carter, *The Infernal Desire Machines of Doctor Hoffman*, 228.
32. Carter, 'People as Pictures', *Shaking a Leg*, 234.
33. Carter, 'People as Pictures', *Shaking a Leg*, 235.
34. Susannah Clapp, 'No one got Angela Carter like Corinna Sargood', *The Guardian*, 20 June 2021, https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2021/jun/20/no-one-got-angela-carter-like-corinna-sargood (accessed 10 April 2023).
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