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Fairy Tale Romance

The fairy tale is the essential genre of the theme park. Fairies and magic dust have long been used in the selling of the pleasure ground and are invoked in advertising that recurrently frames a visit as a 'magical experience'. The theme park space dedicated to the fairy tale genre is one of the few sites in a park that signals its appropriateness to young children and particularly to girls. The rides are coded as appropriate to young children but are also allied with the 'feminine' genre of romance. The page in the Disney guidebooks devoted to Fantasyland is vividly pink; it is also the only space in which attractions are named after women, as in 'Snow White's Scary Adventures' and 'Cinderella's Castle'. The fairy tale is one of the few popular narrative genres that allow for a heroine as the chief actant of the narrative; unlike the Western, adventure stories or science fiction, the heroine of fairy tale is not an accessory to the male protagonist but the focus of the genre. Romance – the one popular fictional genre written entirely by and for women – is mapped on to the fairy tale in the theme park, and is the only site at which it is to be found.

Fairy tale is the popular genre most associated with childhood, and it is the fairy tale site in any theme park that has attractions that are addressed to small children; miniature versions of rides and children's playgrounds are located at Fantasyland in Disney, at the Land of Make Believe at Alton Towers and at Chessington's Toytown. There is a paradox in the representation of femininity in the theme park, as these sites situate the feminine simultaneously as infantilised and as the subject of romance. The merchandising in Fantasyland and associated sites is clearly directed at girls and offers all the trappings necessary to a princess: jewellery, tiaras and miniature ball gowns.

The association of fairy tale with the feminine (and the maternal) has been the case since the publication of the first written versions of these stories.¹ As men (most famously Charles Perrault in France and the Grimm Brothers in Germany) took up the writing of fairy tale and turned popular stories into a literary genre, they regularly claimed an older woman as a direct source. This invented female narrator enabled scholarly and aristocratic transcribers of folk tales to distance themselves from the class and superstitious connotations of folk tale, and allowed them to claim a popular authority.

It is hardly necessary to say that the 'happy ever after' adaptations of fairy tale offered in Disneylands and other theme parks present a sanitised and defanged version² of the often violent and brutal tales written by Andersen,

Figure 4.1 *Cinderella; or the Little Glass Slipper*, by kind permission of Pollocks Toy Theatres Limited

the Grimm Brothers and Perrault. Jack Zipes, perhaps the most prolific scholar and historian of the genre, is among the many critics³ to bewail the sentimentalisation of the ‘Disney version’ of fairy tales; Zipes argues that ‘readers have been “Disneyized” – that is subjected to the saccharine, sexist and illusionary stereotypes of the Disney culture industry’ (Zipes 1991: xxvii). It would, however, be mistaken to suggest that traditional fairy tales have simply been bowdlerised in a process of Disneyfication; Disney is only one among a long line of tellers of these tales to have reworked traditional stories to fit prevailing mores. As Zipes’ own research demonstrates,⁴ there are no authentic versions of these stories, and Disney is by no means the first reteller to use them to promote particular constructions of morality and of gender.

Of all the popular genres, it is fairy tale that most evidently has no discernible origin. Fairy tales share the quality of the uncanny with the Gothic genre and, like Gothic tales, are grounded in folklore and superstition. The form of the fairy tale, with its traditional opening line ‘Once upon a time ...’ (a phrase regularly invoked in the theme park to signify the genre), places the fairy tale in a nostalgic and dehistoricised realm. Disney cannot be seen simply as a figure who has appropriated and sanitised ‘authentic’ stories, but rather as yet another stage in a process of transformations of tales that have no means of authentication. The perceived need to protect children from the edgier and bloody elements of fairy tale is a consequence of a long history of the editing

and reworking of traditional stories. The status of that 'tradition', however, is more complicated than it appears: the history of fairy tale is one of recurrent claims to authenticity, but these are all tales that have no discernible first teller. As Andrew Lang, one of the key compilers and historians of fairy tale, recognised in 1889, the origins of traditional tales are lost in the mists of time, and cannot be either dated or located: 'We are still repeating to the boys and girls of each generation the stories that were old before Homer sang, and the adventures that have wandered, like the wandering Psyche, over all the world' (Lang 1889: xii).

Every chronicler of fairy tale (including Lang himself) has nonetheless claimed their own versions to be faithful to an 'original', even while that source is an invention. The derivations of fairy stories have been the subject of scholarly speculation since long before the Grimm brothers took them as an object of academic study and folk tale became an academic discipline.⁵ Feminist scholars, most notably Angela Carter, Alison Lurie and Marina Warner, have done much to re-evaluate the significance of women writers in the formation of the literary fairy tale, but it is Perrault, the Brothers Grimm and Hans Christian Andersen who continue to be credited in popular culture as the originators of the most familiar fairy tales.

Perrault's stories are attributed to the fictional Mother Goose, in the title of his 1697 collection *Contes de ma Mère l'Oye*, although his sources were rather closer to the Paris salon than to the farmyard. As Angela Carter has explained,

When Charles Perrault first wrote down these fairy tales in the last years of the seventeenth century, they had already existed, in one form or another, for years, some for centuries, part of the unwritten tradition of folk-lore handed down by word of mouth from one generation to another. In France at that time, nursery tales like these were called 'Mother Goose Tales' ... though Mother Goose herself bore no relation to any real person, but was a collective name for every granny, nanny or old wife who ever kept children content with stories about unfortunate princesses, talking beasts or seven league boots. (Carter 1977: 9)

This 'collective' Granny is a recurrent figure in the telling of fairy tale, a device used to claim authenticity. One of the earliest published collections in England was the 1773 *Mother Bunch's Fairy Tales*,⁶ which has no discernible author but the invented Mother Bunch. 'Gammer Gurton' is ostensibly the author of the 1810 *Gammer Gurton's Garland* but is a fictional character who originally had nothing to do with fairy tale. Gammer Gurton first appeared as a comedy character, an early form of pantomime dame, who was most associated with a drinking song.⁷ Nonetheless, she gave her name to collections of 'Pleasant Stories' for children throughout the nineteenth century. The scholarly Grimm brothers invented an honest farmer's wife, 'Gammer Grethel', to tell the stories they had collected from a range of sources in their linguistic research. Despite their consistent claims to an originating voice and insistence on authenticity,

all these writers or transcribers edited and embellished these oral stories and presented them for their own purposes.

The seventeenth-century folklorist John Aubrey was among those who collected magical folk tales,⁸ but unlike later folklorists, he firmly believed in the fairies, magic and spells that he chronicled. Aubrey noted in 1686,

Before printing, Old Wives Tales were ingeniose: and since Printing came in fashion, till a little before the Civil Warres, the ordinary sort of People were not taught to reade; now-a-dayes Bookes are common and most of the poor people understand letters; and the many good Bookes and variety of Turnes of Affaires have put all the old Fables out of doors: and the divine art of Printing and Gunpowder have frightened away Robin-Goodfellow and the Fayries. (Aubrey 1881: 67–8)

In fact, the Fayries and the old Fables were to flourish with the ‘divine art of Printing’ and Robin-Goodfellow would long survive in the written word and beyond. The stories that had survived in the popular memory through shared rhymes and songs were preserved in ballad sheets and chapbooks, just as subject to variations and reworkings in their written versions as they had been in their oral form.

Gammer Gurton’s Garland, published as an illustrated volume for children (as one of a series in Lumsden & Son’s Juvenile Library), gives some insight into the range of sources for English folk tales. It is a collection of ballads and songs, traces of which have survived into pantomime and nursery rhyme.⁹ The collection demonstrates the extent to which the fairy tale is a hybrid form, drawing local legend, popular superstition, songs and sometimes historical characters into its purview. Figures such as Dick Whittington¹⁰ and Robin Hood regularly appear in collections of fairy stories for children, aligned to the genre through their appearances in pantomime. Chapbooks and collections of rhyme and fairy tale published their own pirated translations of French and oriental fairy tales and printed them alongside English stories familiar from ballads. Richardson’s Juvenile Library republished ballad sheets and chapbooks in volumes priced at threepence each, their titles including ‘Children in the Wood’, ‘Cinderella’, ‘Jack the Giant Killer’ and ‘Dick Whittington’. In a subtitle, Benjamin Tabart’s 1818¹¹ illustrated collection attributes his stories to a fanciful range of sources, claiming them to be written ‘by those Renowned Personages King Oberon, Queen Mab, Mother Goose, Mother Bunch, Master Puck and other Distinguished Personages at the Court of the Fairies’ (Tabart 1818: frontispiece).

Tabart reassures the early nineteenth-century reader that his book is appropriate for ‘every family where there are children and young persons’ and sternly regrets (as Andrew Lang was to at end of the century) the vulgarity of earlier versions of these tales:

Many collections of such stories have within the last century appeared in the English language; but many of them are so obsolete in their style, so gross in their

morals, and so vulgar in their details, as to be altogether unfit for the purposes to which they seem to have been adapted. Of this fact, every tender mother, and every intelligent tutor, must be so sensible, that they will hail with satisfaction the appearance of a selection of the most interesting of these stories, in which an attempt is made to elevate the language and sentiments to a level with the refined manners of the present age. (Tabart 1818: iii)

In here declaring the ‘elevating’ changes he has made to old stories, Tabart is acknowledging his own part in a process of their editing and retelling. As Zipes has explained, such editing and the transcription of folk tales established a set of conventions for the genre, which would lead to the fairy tale becoming a literary form:

As more and more wonder tales were written down in the fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, they constituted the genre of the literary fairy tale, which began establishing its own conventions, motifs, topoi, characters and plots, based to a large extent on those developed in the oral tradition but altered to address a reading public formed by the aristocracy and the middle classes. (Zipes 1991: xii)

Aubrey had attributed oral folk tales to ‘old wives’, and it was largely women who were responsible for the conversion of this oral tradition into a published and acceptable literary form. Marina Warner (1994a) has comprehensively charted the emergence of the literary fairy tale in the culture of the French salon and in the conversation of aristocratic women.¹² Despite their claims to ‘authentic’ sources, these women chroniclers mixed oral folklore with literary sources and with a medieval courtly tradition. Warner describes the wide range of popular and literary discourses that can be traced in the refashioning of these tales:

D’Aulnoy drew on Greek romances, medieval legends of Mélusin, on Tristan and on Merlin, on fableaux and the Lais of Marie de France, on her contemporary La Fontaine, as well as finding plots and much narrative incident in the down-to-earth and vigorous fantasies of story collections. L’Héritier, too, for all her protestations about her beloved childhood nurse also drew on printed literature. (Warner 1994b: 13)

This complex intertextuality blurred any clear attribution for the stories; while the *salonistes* claimed authenticity for their tales, their versions were subject to their own sophisticated gloss of literary reference and aristocratic wit. If Marina Warner (1994a), Jack Zipes (1991) and others have reclaimed the women writers in the history of fairy tale, they are firmly written out of the history of fairy tale at the theme park. At the Disneyland parks, fairy tale is entirely subsumed into the work of Charles Perrault, who is celebrated as the ‘author’ of fairy tales in the Disneylands of America and France; he features particularly large at Disneyland Paris. There is no acknowledgement that the ‘classic text’ (according to Iona and Peter Opie 1974) of ‘Beauty and the Beast’, currently staged daily at the Disney parks, was popularised (although not

originated) by Madame Le Prince de Beaumont. As a member of the literary establishment and as a man, Perrault is the popularly remembered collector of French fairy tales. Perrault's versions of 'Cinderella', 'The Sleeping Beauty', 'Puss in Boots' and 'Little Red Riding Hood' have become the standardised versions for these stories, reproduced in pantomime, drama and film.

The Victorian Andrew Lang is the significant figure in establishing Perrault (and his own translations) as the authoritative versions of French fairy tales. While Lang does acknowledge that he, like Perrault, has considerably revised and edited these stories, he nonetheless claims them as the 'true' tales. Perrault's use of Mother Goose claimed an affinity with an authentic folk culture, but he, like the salon women writers, extensively rewrote and expurgated his sources. For Lang this was not so much a form of censorship as a form of refinement, in which Perrault 'rescues' traditional tales from their 'degraded' origins in popular culture: 'Perrault in 1697, borrowed ... from tradition and gave them literary and courtly shape' (Lang 1897: xiv). Lang celebrates Perrault's versions of the tales over those of d'Aulnoy and other French women writers because he sees Perrault as closer to an 'original'. While he claims to be aware that there can be no 'pure' versions, Lang dismisses the retellings of 'these clever ladies' on the basis that the women 'embroidered on them ... nothing but the tissue into which they stitched their flowers of gold and silver thread was traditional. The long descriptions ... were pure Louis Quinze' (Lang 1897: xviii). Lang is here unwilling to recognise that Perrault's versions were no less of their 'Louis Quinze' moment, and that his own translations and edits are themselves pure Queen Victoria. Instead he claims Perrault as both faithful to a popular tradition and as an elegant embellisher:

Of all the old friends of the *Märchen* he clung most closely to tradition, giving often the very words of his boy's nurse, though he added a quip or a gentle piece of satire or a veiled *gauloiserie*, here and there. (Lang 1897: xix)

As Zipes has pointed out (1991), the fact that so many French writers of fairy tale were women did not necessarily imply a feminist sensibility in their stories. The romance and magic of the literary fairy tale were regularly marshalled to the proper education of young women. A central figure in the formulation of the fairy tale as a didactic tool for the education of young women was Jeanne Marie Le Prince de Beaumont, who used fairy tale as a means of educating her readers into appropriate codes of femininity. Le Prince de Beaumont was a governess and a successful and prolific author of moral fables for children. Her *Magasin des Enfants, ou Dialogues entre une sage Gouvernante et plusieurs de ses Elèves*¹³ set out to blend 'the useful' with 'the agreeable' in the form of a collection of moral fables. This was among the first French fairy tale collections to be translated into English, printed in London in 1756¹⁴ and later in *The Young Misses Magazine* in 1761. English translations of subsequent collections of fairy tale sustained de Beaumont's didacticism, with *Mother*

Bunch's Fairy Tales, a 1773 collection based on D'Aulnoy's tales (although attributed to the English Mother Bunch) and dedicated to

The AMUSEMENT

Of all those LITTLE MASTERS and MISSES,

WHO,

By duty to their Parents and Obedience

to their Superiors,

Aim At Becoming

GREAT LORDS AND LADIES.

(*Mother Bunch's Fairy Tales 1773: frontispiece*)

The fictional Gammer Gurton's 1810 English collection of rhymes and stories continues in this spirit of moral injunction. It is presented as 'The Good Child's Reward' and is clearly conceived as a bribe for good behaviour. Gammer's 'Advice to All Good Children' is 'Come pretty Master – pretty Miss, Be good and gain a book like this' (*Gammer Gurton's Garland* 1810: 32).

By the mid-nineteenth century, new editions of Gammer Gurton's story books had lost the riddles and nursery rhymes of earlier versions, in favour of tales of an English nationalist bent. The 1845 edition is full of stories of the British monarchy and aristocracy; these tales owe much to Scott and to the chivalric romance, as in 'The Famous History of Guy, Earl of Warwick' and 'The Gallant History of Bevis of Southampton'. The folk tales, such as 'The True History of Robin Hood', are drawn from a distinctly English folklore and are claimed as historical fact. This shift in Gammer Gurton's stories coincides with a Victorian idea of 'folk tale' as a form that could be deployed to instruct children in moral behaviour and also in patriotic spirit. As Angela Carter has noted,

[T]he great impulse towards collecting oral material in the nineteenth century came out of the growth of nationalism and the concept of the nation-state with its own, exclusive culture; with its exclusive affinity to the people who dwelt therein. The word 'folklore' itself was not coined until 1846, when William J. Thomas invented the 'good Saxon compound' to replace imprecise and vague terms such as 'popular literature' and 'popular antiquities'. (Carter 1990: xv)

It is the Grimm Brothers whose commitment to fairy tale most clearly demonstrates a nationalist agenda, their academic collection of folklore being, as Carter puts it, explicitly a pursuit of 'the authentic German *Geist*' (Carter 1990: xv). Wilhelm and Jacob Grimm represented the first systematic attempt to collect European folk tales; although it is their fairy tales that were translated and remembered, their larger enterprise was to track an authentic German popular culture. This project meant that they were less pious (if more pedantic) than other collectors, as Lurie notes:

The great distinction of the Grimm brothers was that though they altered their tales, they did not pick and choose, they printed almost everything they heard ...

a mixed bag of jokes, fables, legends, comic anecdotes and ghost stories ... passed down orally through many generations but still full of the half-animal gods and familiar spirits of pre-Christian Europe, – the haunted wells and forests, the elves and witches, the ancient superstitions and rituals. (Lurie 1990: 26–7)

The Grimm Brothers converted these tales of comedy and superstition into a high German literary genre. Jack Zipes (2002) has painstakingly charted and contextualised the Grimm Brothers' pursuit of 'Naturpoesie' (as they characterised folk tale). The first published edition of their collected tales in 1812 clearly announced its scholarly intent and was issued with separate volumes of footnotes.¹⁵ While this edition stressed the authenticity of their sources, it went to considerable lengths to deny the considerable editing and revisions made by the Grimms. The collection was presented with a frontispiece portrait of the fictional Gammer Grethel, which Edgar Taylor (their English translator) claimed was drawn from life (Taylor 1888: vii). This invention of an 'honest Farmer's wife', who is emphatically of Germanic and Aryan stock, is an aspect of the Grimm's affirmation of an authentic Germanic folk culture.¹⁶

The Grimm's tales were first translated into English in 1823 as *German Popular Stories* (in an edition for children that was a selection taken from an already selected edition by the Grimm Brothers) by Edgar Taylor, who maintained a didactic moral tone and directly addressed his readers as 'young friends'. This first English edition was illustrated with a title page and eleven etchings by George Cruickshank, illustrations that were reproduced in new editions until at least 1902. Cruickshank's frontispiece featured a group in a bar listening as a bar stool reader reads aloud, an image that celebrates these stories as popular tales while also moralising against the dangers of drink.¹⁷ Taylor's preface presents the tales as derived from an authentic oral culture while also recognising the Grimm's substantial editing. He suggests that their omissions are for the protection of young people:

There were also many stories of great merit, and tending highly to the elucidation of ancient mythology, customs, and opinions, which the fastidiousness of modern taste, especially in works likely to attract the attention of youth, warned them to pass by. (Taylor 1888: vi)

Taylor's translations sustain the fiction of a single originator of the tales and build upon the Grimm's construction of an 'authentic' peasant source. The 1888 edition of *German Popular Stories* is subtitled 'As Told by Gammer Grethel' and reproduces her portrait (Taylor may here be claiming a kinship with the English Gammer). In yet another preface, Taylor even claims to have personally witnessed Gammer's storytelling sessions:

GAMMER GRETHEL

WHO SHE WAS AND WHAT SHE DID

Gammer Grethel was an honest, good-humoured farmer's wife, who, a while ago, lived far off in Germany.

She knew all the good stories that were told in that country; and every evening about Christmas time the boys and girls of the neighbourhood gathered round her to hear her tell them some of her budget of strange stories.

One Christmas, being in that part of the world, I joined the party; and begged her to let me write down what I heard, for the benefit of my young friends in England. (Taylor 1888: xii)

Taylor was the first of many subsequent English translators and editors of the Grimm's work. Cruickshank's illustrations to the 1823 edition had been central to the volume's success, and were repeatedly reproduced and imitated. The 1876 edition had illustrations 'from designs by George Cruickshank', and the 1888 offered wood engravings 'By Byfield' based on 'old designs by Geo. Cruickshank'. Cruickshank was not alone as a successful illustrator of the Grimm tales. In 1846, a new edition of Grimm's tales, *The Fairy Ring*, was illustrated by Richard Doyle, who would become a regular illustrator of popular fairy tales.¹⁸ By 1902, Taylor's translation was accompanied by illustrations by 'Cruickshank and Others', and in this edition Gammer has become the main focus of the title: *Gammer Grethel's Fairy Tales: From the Popular Stories of the Brothers Grimm*. This more popular edition omitted Taylor's academically inclined first Preface, but does include his account of 'Gammer Grethel, Who She Was and What She Did' unaltered from the first edition, and maintains the portrait of Gammer Grethel, here titled 'The True Portrait of Gammer Grethel'. This authenticating myth was sustained by the character of an old woman storyteller in a 1962 film (derided by Zipes as a 'god-awful, kitschy film') *The Wonderful World of the Brothers Grimm* (1962, dir. Harry Levin). The film promoted an opposition between the dry study of academic linguistics and the magic of fairy tale, characterising each position in the characters of Jakob and Wilhelm, setting them against one another in the narrative arc of the movie. Like the 1952 cinematic version of Hans Christian Andersen's life (*Hans Christian Andersen*, dir. Charles Vidor), the film presented the tales as the products of both creative genius and an authentic folk culture.

'Bohn's Library', a series promoted by a bookseller who issued worthy titles in affordable editions from 1841, published a cheap version of Taylor's translations of the Grimm Brothers for the 'Standard' library. In line with Bohn's ethos, this volume is addressed to those of a scholarly bent and to adults rather than to children. Taylor's Preface assures the reader of the folkloric significance of the tales and of the authenticity of his own translations. He adds extensive accompanying notes and includes a letter from Sir Walter Scott that endorses the edition. Less highbrow volumes of the stories, produced for an audience of children, were later published in cheap editions with accompanying illustrations, among them *Grimms' Goblins*: 'a collection of Fairy Tales and Goblin Lore Fairy books for boys and girls ... illustrated by a new process of

chromoxylography' was published as single tales in forty-two parts from 1875 onwards (Barry Ono Collection, British Library).

While the Grimm Brothers' collection of folk tale was a self-conscious academic enterprise that took pride in the authentic sourcing of German popular culture, Hans Christian Andersen has generally been seen as the original author of imaginative tales for children. Andersen was promoted across Europe and America as an originator of a new kind of fairy tale, and has been hailed as the 'inventor of children's literature'. Brian Alderson has argued that Andersen's writing distinguishes his work from folk tale: 'Andersen has wrested folk motifs from their traditional roots and adapted them to his unique storytelling manner. ... These elements in Andersen's handling of 'the tradition' are integral to his own version of the story in a way that does not occur with folk tale proper (Alderson 2005: xiii). Alison Lurie is another among the many critics to claim Andersen as an original writer:

Unlike the Grimms and Wirthner ... Andersen did not just write down the stories he heard as a child from his mother and Grandmother; he went on to compose new tales of his own and when he retold an existing story, he made dramatic changes. (Lurie 2003: 4)

There is, however, no way of knowing if those 'dramatic changes' were any more substantial than those made by the Grimm Brothers or by Perrault and his predecessors, or if his handling of the folk 'tradition' was any more distinctive. There is also no means of distinguishing between those tales that Andersen 'heard as a child' (and which thus would have their roots in folk tales from his home town, Odense), and those that were his own invention. French, English and German were languages in which the nineteenth-century bourgeoisie were keen to demonstrate their competence, but because Danish was much less read, Andersen's tales tended not to be recognised as having predecessors and influences. Danish folk tales, unlike those from France and Germany, went largely untranslated and untranscribed and so were neglected by folklorists¹⁹ (Sands and Massengale 1990); their traces in Andersen are less apparent than his French and German counterparts. Andersen was not innocent of literary genres either, and it is clear from his autobiography that he was widely read in romance literature; he was immersed as a boy in the tales of Hoffmann, *The Arabian Nights* and Walter Scott. In 1845 he met Jakob Grimm in Berlin. Andersen was a self-mythologiser, who romanticised his own life (as the title of his 1847 autobiography *My Life as a Fairy Tale* suggests) and was not averse to promoting himself as an inspired *naïf*.

Whatever their origins, Andersen's tales were subject to revisions as soon as they were translated. His first English translator, Mary Howitt, reworked them second hand from the German, and idealised and domesticated them for the English-speaking market, as did subsequent translators. Mrs H.B. Paull, introducing a 'new translation' for the affordable 'Chandos Classics' edition

in England, makes it clear that substantial editing and selection has gone into the volume:

A complete collection of the *Fairy Tales of Hans Christian Andersen* which are considered suitable for young people, carefully translated and revised, with all obscure passages rendered intelligible to the English reader. (Paull 1888: iii)

In a period before international copyright, Andersen had little control over his work, and pirated versions, adaptations and translations in English regularly appeared unlicensed in the British and American press.²⁰ Andersen's popularity in America was such that the edition of his autobiography in 1868 contained a 'Greeting to American Readers' (Andersen 1975: 411). Andersen's 'rags to riches' story had a particular resonance in America: it was turned into a musical, and in 1952 a Technicolor film spectacle, *Hans Christian Andersen* (dir. Vidor), in which a number of the stories were framed by a biographical narrative. Along with the publication of complete American editions of his work, variations of Andersen's tales regularly appeared across a range of American magazines and journals. 'The Little Match Girl', a story first written to accompany a magazine illustration of a street urchin, was subsequently published in a collection of tales, then pirated and adapted in popular versions of the tale, until the character became a free agent who was inserted into any number of variations of the story.

Andersen's stories were illustrated from their first translations; illustrations by the German Franz Pocci were used to accompany the volumes of the English text of Andersen's *Wonderful Stories for Children* in 1846, and later editions in 1847 and 1848. Also in 1846, 'The Little Mermaid' appeared in *Bentley's* magazine, with an accompanying illustration, and in 1847, Chapman & Hall (Dickens's publisher) published a volume of Andersen tales containing twenty drawings. As with translations, there was an international traffic in illustration at the time, with Danish illustrations used for German and English editions of Andersen, and full-page illustrations by Vilhelm Pedersen for the 1853 translated volume *Danish Fairy Tales*. As Alderson has demonstrated, Andersen's tales were a draw for magazine and book illustration throughout the nineteenth century:

Over thirty different illustrators can be counted on the title-pages of selections published in England up to 1900 ... and something like the same quantity can be found illustrating single stories as picture books ('The Ugly Duckling' predominating) or within periodicals. (Alderson 2005: xviii)

Andersen had explicitly directed his work towards child readers (while also making claims to status in adult literature): 'I had called my first volume "Stories told for Children" ... with the expressions in which I had myself related them, by word of mouth, to the little ones' (Andersen 1975: 204). The 'young reader' represented a new cultural phenomenon in the latter half of the nineteenth century and a new audience for illustrated fiction. New technologies

allowed for the mass production of coloured illustration, and these books could now be targeted at a children's market. The fairy tale neatly fitted publishers' requirements; it was a form appropriate to a younger audience (Perrault, *Le Prince de Beaumont* and the English translators of Grimm and Andersen had all ensured their moral probity), and eminently visual. Collected fairy tales drawn from Perrault, Andersen and the Grimms were published in the form of illustrated gift books, treasuries and in cheap editions. Among the most successful of these was 'The Toy Books' series of illustrated (in colour) titles – often of a single fairy tale, priced at 6d or 1s a volume, which were published from 1878. According to their publisher, 'they sold before I could get another edition printed' (quoted in Muir 1989: 168). The blocks for the Toy Books went into print runs of 100,000 and continued to be used until 1885, the stories and their illustrations published both as separate issues and in collected editions. The mass production of images of fairies and Fairylands established a set of conventions for the iconography of magical fairy tale spectacle.

While written versions of the tales of Perrault, the Grimm Brothers and Andersen vacillated between scholarly translations and popular plagiarism, standardised versions of familiar fairy tales were to be found regularly reproduced in the theatre, in pantomimes and extravaganzas. The spectacle of fairies and magical tricks also found their way into circus. The circus particularly relished the exotic connotations of *The Arabian Nights* tales, which provided opportunities for the display of elephants, tigers and horsemanship. It was through circus acts that fairy tales flourished as theatrical spectacle in America, as Helen Stoddart explains:

Just as the European hippodramas had an orientalist tendency to look to the eastern cultures for subject matter, as well as to fairy tale ... so too did the spectacles or 'specs', which opened and/or closed the three-ring circuses in the United States, reinvent and mix together the categories of history, myth and culture. (Stoddart 2000: 103)

Fairy tale scenarios also demanded the spectacular effects and transformations that were so central to pantomime extravaganzas and Harlequinades.²¹ These productions regularly lifted their plots from literary sources and mixed them with popular contemporary and traditional allusions. Harlequinades would take fairy tale stories and insert Harlequin and Columbine as protagonists, as in *Harlequin and Cinderella*, which appeared in 1807, or *Harlequin and Bluebeard* in 1811. Like Gammer Gurton's and Mother Bunch's story books, English pantomime and their accompanying Harlequinades were forms that depended on a wholesale borrowing of popular cultural references. They happily made use of tales derived from regional folklore, chivalric romance, fairy tale and classical mythologies. Folkloric characters with some basis in history (such as Dick Whittington and Robin Hood) would regularly cross paths with fairy tale heroes and heroines.

Harlequin Mother Goose; or, The Golden Egg (a borrowing of Perrault's *Mère l'Oie*) was staged in 1806 at Covent Garden. *Sleeping Beauty* was produced as a melodrama in 1806 and as a pantomime and Harlequinade at Covent Garden in 1822, and featured an appearance by 'Mother Bunch'. This staging of *Harlequin and the Ogress; or, the Sleeping Beauty in the Wood* gives an indication of the cheerful collisions of elements of story, character and settings that were to be found in nineteenth-century popular theatre. The production brought together elements of both literary and folk tale, myth and legend, and employed burlesque, Harlequinade and pantomime. A contemporary review describes the wild range of characters and stories brought together under the umbrella title of 'Harlequin and the Ogress':

The introductory story is taken from the well-known tale of 'The Sleeping Beauty' in 'Mother Bunch's Fairy Tales' which had before been 'Melodramatised' but had not hitherto been taken for the groundwork of a Harlequinade ... the three fatal sisters of Mother Bunch's Mythology are seen spinning and winding a ball of golden thread. ... The Prince Azoff, with his Squire Abnab, straying from a hunting party into the enchanted cedar grove, encounters the Fairy Blue-bell. ... The whole of the persons engaged in the scene now undergo the prescriptive Pantomimic changes and the ordinary succession of Harlequinade adventures, tricks, and transformations ensue. (*The Drama* 1822, quoted in Broadbent 1901: 174)

'Aladdin' was one of the earliest subjects of pantomime, performed in 1788 at Covent Garden; with 'Cinderella', it remains the most produced pantomime story. 'Aladdin' is a tale that allowed for Orientalist spectacle and which played into the contemporary fashion for chinoiserie. 'Chinese' pagodas were regular features of late eighteenth-century pleasure gardens and stately homes; the Prince of Wales had begun to build the Royal Pavilion in Brighton in 1787. The set for the Pollock's juvenile drama version has a backdrop reading 'Royal Bath' – a reference to the fashionable Regency Bath, but also to the public laundry, a standard feature of pantomime, in which the Dame is often a laundress.²² Like the Brighton Pavilion, the stylistic orientalism for illustrations and productions of *Aladdin and the Forty Thieves* was geographically vague. The first production featured a wildly eclectic range of 'exotic' sets and references (a tradition that continues in productions and representations of 'Aladdin'):

The costumes, we are told, were inspired by a variety of national dress – Chinese, Japanese and Persian – and that was to become the norm. Even today, the names of the characters, their costumes and even the settings are a strange mixture of Arab and Chinese. (Lathan 2004: 110)

The use of stories from *The Arabian Nights* in theatre productions represented a popular cooption of this most fashionable style, as George Speaight has explained: 'there was a crop of Oriental pieces that were immensely popular; *Aladdin*, *Bluebeard* and *The Forty Thieves* ... straight exciting Eastern spectacles' (Speaight 1946: 70). These 'Eastern spectacles'

were hugely successful as plays for toy theatres; *Aladdin: or, The Wonderful Lamp* first appeared for the toy theatre along with *Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves* published by Hodgson's Juvenile Drama in 1822. *Ali Baba* was issued by twenty-two different publishers (Fawdry 1980: 45). There is a geographical confusion about the location of the 'East' in these early versions, with the characters all given Arabic names, while Aladdin and his mother inhabit the 'suburbs of a Chinese City'. Abanezer is transported across continents by magic: 'Tis but one moment since we were in Africa, and now we are close to one of the greatest cities in China' (*Aladdin and the Wonderful Lamp* 1822: 4). Spectacle was much more important than geographical probability; an 1830 production of 'Aladdin' (which was regularly revived) offered a 'gorgeous Melo-Dramatic Tale of Enchantment' and featured horses and a tiger hunt.

While pantomime historians and folklorists have recurrently attempted to trace the 'origins' of *The Arabian Nights*, these stories were no more 'authentic' than the French and German folk tales written up by Perrault or the Grimm Brothers, and similarly were constantly subject to reworkings and translators' embellishments. R.J. Broadbent, writing in 1901, ponders the origin of the Aladdin story but can come to no conclusions:

In our common English version of 'Aladdin' in 'The Arabian Nights', which was taken from Galland's French version, it is doubtless an Eastern picture. It does not occur, however, in any known Arabian text. (Broadbent 1901: 197)

Antoine Galland was knowingly writing to the French tradition of *Féeries* and may well have invented his stories – there are, as Broadbent notes, no known Arabic manuscripts for the tales of Aladdin or Ali Baba. Galland claimed to have 'translated' the stories to produce a 'definitive' text in 1704 that was taken as the authentic version for over a century. English translations of Galland's texts added their own layers of reinterpretation to the stories, while claiming to be more 'authentic' than the French versions. Among the first English translators was Edward Lane, who claimed an orientalist knowledge and scholarship, which he argued made his 1838 version closer to an 'original' than previous versions. Lane nonetheless took it upon himself to expurgate any unsuitable eroticism from the tales. The introduction (itself appended with twenty-nine 'Academic notes') is scathing about Galland; the title page of Lane's three-volume 'new translation' announces the authority of the text – and its author's credentials:

The Thousand and One Nights
Commonly called, in England,
The Arabian Nights' Entertainments.
A New Translation from the Arabic, with copious notes
by Edward William Lane, author of 'The Modern Egyptians'. (Lane 1883)

Lane firmly expunged any suggestion of the 'vulgar' or the erotic from his *Arabian Nights*, and it was these translations that popularised the stories and

laid the basis for Aladdin, Sinbad and Ali Baba as characters in children's stories and in Victorian pantomime. Lane's versions were published with several hundred commissioned illustrations from forty different engravers and issued in monthly parts between 1838 and 1840.²³ Other translations and illustrated editions abounded and cheap abridged versions of the tales were repeatedly published. An unauthored 1847 version, printed in thirty-nine parts, was clearly an unauthorised copy of the Lane translation, its title emulating Lane's claim to geographical and historical accuracy: *'The Arabian Nights' Entertainments; Or, The Thousand and One Nights: Accurately Describing the Manners, Laws and Religion of the Eastern Nations'*. The explorer Richard Burton used his knowledge of languages to write an 'unexpurgated' version, which wrote back (or quite possibly wrote in) the eroticism that Lane had repudiated.

The orientalist exoticism (and sensuality) of *The Arabian Nights* was particularly attractive to Victorian poets and artists. Fairy tale became an established genre of Victorian painting; the period between 1840 and 1870 has been described as a 'Golden Age of Fairy Paintings' (Maas 1997: 11), a period that coincides with popular editions of the Grimm Brothers and with English translations of Andersen.

Tennyson's poem 'Recollections of *The Arabian Nights*' was published in a Moxon collection with Pre-Raphaelite illustrations in 1857. An 'artistic' edition of *The Arabian Nights* was published in 1865 and issued in weekly parts, each with large engravings from a range of artists including Millais and Tenniel. Gustave Doré provided illustrations for the 1868 English version of *Les Mille et Une Nuits* published in Paris in 1865. Doré also provided illustrations to *Fairy Tales: A Collection of Favourite Old Tales Told in Verse by Tom Hood* published in 1865 and for an edition of Perrault's *Fairy Tales*, originally published in France in 1862 and reprinted for English editions in 1865 and 1866. These were later used to illustrate a pantomime book published to accompany a Drury Lane production.

The magical spectacle of fairylands could shuttle between high art and burlesque. Dancing fairies were as comfortable in circus and pantomime as in the romanticism of the respectable ballet and opera. Rossini's 1817 opera *La Cenerentola*, based on 'Cinderella', established the convention of the Ugly Sisters, now essential characters in contemporary pantomime and ballet productions. In Harlequinades, the figure of Columbine was regularly played by a ballerina, and early ballet costume was close to Columbine's ankle-length skirts. 'Cinderella' was first translated into ballet in 1822, *Cendrillon*, which ran in repertory in Paris and London and opened the new Bolshoi Petrovsky Theatre in 1825. The introduction of the pointe shoe gave the dancer the illusion of weightlessness and flight, and the fairy was the most appropriate character to assume. Marie Taglioni gave the first entire performance *en pointe* in *La Sylphide* in 1832, and made the fairy ballet fashionable in London, Paris and St Petersburg. The romantic Gothic of ballets such as *Giselle* shared

Andersen's²⁴ preoccupation with the figure of a tragic sprite, while the Scots setting and legend of *La Sylphide* paid homage to Scott. The Russian Imperial Ballet turned the spectacle of fairy tale into an established balletic tradition; Petipa's *Sleeping Beauty* (1890) and *Cinderella* (1889) remain in the repertoire of ballet companies across the world. Petipa also took German folk tales written up by the Romantic E.T.A. Hoffmann and turned them into ballets, with *The Nutcracker* and *Coppélia*. *Coppélia* was one of the tales to be popularised through Offenbach's operetta, *The Tales of Hoffman*; Offenbach's music provides much of the soundtrack to the Fantasylands of the Disney parks.

The 'fairy ballet' was an integral element of nineteenth-century pantomime productions. The figure most responsible for Victorian theatrical extravaganzas was producer and translator John Robinson Planché, who made his name staging fairy tale spectacles. Planché was a major conduit for the transition of fairy tales into British popular culture. Both a scholar and a showman, he was once connected with P.T. Barnum (he promoted Barnum's client General Tom Thumb in England) and was also the author of plays, opera libretti and numerous translations of folk tales. Planché was also involved in book production; he was commissioned to produce a version of *Sleeping Beauty* to accompany illustrations by the Punch contributor Richard Doyle; *An Old Fairy Tale Told Anew in Pictures and Verse* was published in 1865. Planché's own translations of French fairy tales were published as collections, among them *Four and Twenty Fairy Tales, Selected from Those of Perrault and Countess D'Aulnoy's Fairy Tales*. He turned many of his translations into pantomime scenarios, including *Beauty and the Beast*, *The Nutcracker* and *Sleeping Beauty*. Planché died in 1880, by which time he had written over twenty-five pantomimes and 'fairy tale extravaganzas' for the London stage, many based on stories he had translated from d'Aulnoy. These were republished and performed throughout the century, and shaped the traditions for the contemporary pantomime.

The magical tricks and transformations of theatrical fairy tales had a life beyond the Christmas and Easter pantomime seasons. The conventionalised sets for pantomime productions required three basic scene changes: an opening domestic interior or street scene, a mysterious forest or cavern and a final spectacle of a transformation scene, which generally took the form of a palace. These became the stock theatre sets recycled for any production with a fairy tale theme (later to become the standardised scenery for early film sets). These three sets were the stock in trade for toy theatre sheets,²⁵ reprinted to fit a range of different fairy tale scenarios drawn from *The Arabian Nights*, Perrault, Grimm and Andersen. The settings and characters of fairy tale thus became entirely familiar and conventionalised in children's games. The genre and conventions of 'fairy tale' were by now firmly entrenched in the popular imagination and carried with them an expectation of magical spectacle and transformation.

By the late nineteenth century a sentimental awareness of childhood promoted forms of publishing specifically for children, and fairy tales, with their potential for illustration, fitted this new market. A canon of traditional tales and a standard set of fairy tale images were now so firmly established that a new genre of the invented 'fairy story' could emerge, a category of authored tales that do have an original author²⁶ but draw heavily on the traditions and form of fairy tale. As Lancelyn Green defines the distinction, 'several writers in England decided that there were enough translations and retellings of the fairy-tales of Perrault and Grimm and began inventing stories of their own: fairy-stories, which are not quite the same as fairy tales' (Green 1955: xiii). George MacDonald's *The Princess and the Goblin* (1872) and *At the Back of the North Wind* (1871) are typical of these 'fairy-stories', in their use of contemporary language while drawing on legend, ballads and traditional tales. *Peter Pan* and *Alice in Wonderland* also belong in this category; both texts were of long-standing interest to Disney, who finally acquired the rights to *Peter Pan* in 1939 and to Tenniel's drawings for the Alice books in 1946. Peter Pan and Alice now share the mythical status of fairy tale characters such as Cinderella and the Sleeping Beauty in Fantasyland, their authors erased as they become creatures of the Disney canon.

The 'never never land' of fairy tale, along with chivalric romance, provided a suitably nostalgic subject for Victorian illustration and painting, and neatly matched the Pre-Raphaelite aversion to modernity. Walter Crane (who had illustrated a collection of nursery rhymes entitled *The Baby's Opera* (1876)) was one of the artists commissioned to illustrate a series of sixpenny 'Toy Books'. Among the titles he illustrated were many that were already or would become the staple titles of children's collections: 'Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves', 'Cinderella', 'Puss in Boots', 'Little Red Riding Hood', 'Beauty and the Beast' and 'The Sleeping Beauty'. He also illustrated 'The Sleeping Beauty' for *Household Stories*, a collection of tales from Grimm and illustrations for Hawthorne's *Wonder Book* and *Tanglewood Tales*.

The introduction of colour printing technology led to a rush of illustrated magazines and cheap editions of illustrated versions of 'classic tales' for children. Folk and fairy tales, generally out of copyright and already expurgated by numerous editors and translators, were the most appropriate form for the mass production of a popular children's literature. By the late nineteenth century, fairy tale had become a specialised form of illustration, a field, because of its associations of childhood, that was, unusually, open to women artists. The great majority of women illustrators cited in a survey of illustrators are associated entirely with children's, and especially, fairy tale books (Reed and Reed 1984). Illustration was one form of professional work that was open to middle-class American women in this period, as Margaret E. Wagner explains:

Art, and particularly the art of illustration, became one area in which women were not only accepted but often acclaimed ... although they still faced implied or overt strictures on the subjects appropriate for women artists to depict. (Wagner 2000: 18)

Children's books, and especially fairy tale, were perfectly appropriate as a subject, and women artists such as Ethel Franklin Betts, Sarah Stilwell Weber and Jessie Wilcox Smith became familiar names in magazine and book illustration. These women artists provided illustrations for collections of fairy tales and for single stories in family and women's illustrated magazines in America. Throughout the 1880s and 1890s, Wilcox Smith illustrated versions of Grimm, collections of fairy and folk tale and provided fairy tale images for a range of journals including *Collier's Weekly*, *McClure's*, *Harper's Bazaar* and *Good Housekeeping*. Such illustrations were reproduced as calendar illustrations, and many were likely to have been framed as domestic decoration.

The most prominent American artist for fairy tale was Maxfield Parrish,²⁷ who has been described as 'the greatest creator of children's fantasy art ... the most successful and best-known illustrator of the early twentieth century' (Wagner 2000: 6). Parrish like Stevenson and Andersen, was fascinated with toy theatres as a child; his first commissions were illustrations for a version of *Mother Goose* (by L. Frank Baum, author of *The Wizard of Oz*) and *The Arabian Nights*. The publishing tycoon William Randolph Hearst commissioned a series of illustrations from Parrish around the theme of 'Once Upon a Time' in 1912, and these were used as front covers for *Hearst's Magazine*. These covers and other Parrish illustrations were also published as images for calendars and as colour prints sold for framing. The original paintings to a 1925 collection of nursery rhymes, *Knave of Hearts*, were sold to commercial buyers, who reproduced them as cheap prints, puzzles and posters. Parrish's vivid colours and strong shapes have a clear influence on the colouring and design of the landscapes and attractions of Fantasyland in the Disney parks.

Scribner's American edition of the 1903 *Arabian Nights*, published in 1909, featured illustrations by Maxfield Parrish. The introduction to the Scribner's edition, written by Kate Douglas Wiggin (author of *Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm*), gives fulsome expression to the location of these Orientalist geographies in a mythical fairy tale land:

The scene is Indian, Egyptian, Arabian, Persian, but Bagdad and Balsora, Grand Cairo, the silver Tigris, and the blooming gardens of Damascus, though they can be found indeed on the map, live much more truly in that enchanted realm that rises o'er the foam of perilous seas in fairy lands ... make yourself at home in the golden palaces, the gem-studded caves, the bewildering fountains, hear the plash of its gleaming cascades, unearth its magic lamps and talismans, behold its ensorcelled princes and princesses. (Kate Douglas Wiggin, quoted in Wagner 2000: 36)²⁸

Douglas Wiggin here lists almost every one of the signs that continue to evoke the landscape of the 'Oriental' in popular culture. The gateway between Fantasyland and Adventureland at the Disney sites features just such a confusion of Orientalist references; 'gem-studded' lamps and talismans are on sale in the bazaars and souk, which are themselves housed in golden palaces, furnished with fountains.

The illustrations to Andrew Lang's series of 'coloured' fairy tale collections also provided a template for 'fairy tale land'. H.J. Ford's images picked up on the iconography of the Victorian 'fairy paintings' and reworked them for several generations. Lang is an important figure in that he is an expression of a late nineteenth-century preoccupation with folklore and legend and is also writing at the moment that a mass culture is escalating, when the possibilities for illustration and cheap reproductions expanded tremendously. In England, the Folklore Society had been founded in 1878 and led to a revival of scholarly interest in the fairy tale. Lang was one of its founders; a 'Mythologist and Classical Scholar' (in the words of his admiring biographer: Green 1946: 68), he was responsible for establishing a canon of fairy tales for the twentieth century in his volumes of compilations, particularly from *The Blue Fairy Book* of 1889 to *The Lilac Fairy Book* in 1910. Lang's collections were part of a process by which the standard fairy tale stories became frozen into a 'traditional' set and represented as the established versions. As Lurie neatly explains,

For nearly two hundred years tales have been omitted and unacknowledged changes made in the original texts. The stories we know best today reflect the taste of the literary men who edited the first popular collections of fairy stories for children during the nineteenth century. ... By the late nineteenth century a canon had been established, and the dozen or so tales these editors had liked best were reprinted again and again. (Lurie 1990: 20–1)

Lang's fashionable and insistently scholastic²⁹ involvement with folk tale and legend was directed towards children in these collections; as he writes in the Preface to *The Blue Fairy Book*, '[t]he Tales in this volume are intended for children, who will like, it is hoped, the old stories that have pleased so many generations'. In fact, the 'old stories' did not go back through many generations at all, the collection being largely based on adaptations and translations of fairy and folk tale, most deriving from Perrault, Grimm and *The Arabian Nights*. Many of the stories were already firmly established as the standard tales of pantomime and children's books (among them 'Little Red Riding Hood', 'The Sleeping Beauty', 'Babes in the Wood', 'Cinderella', 'Aladdin', 'Beauty and the Beast', and 'Dick Whittington').

Lang is emphatically a scholar and an editor who scrupulously acknowledges his sources and translators in his introduction. He does recognise chapbooks as the written source for English folk tales but is as scathing about the crudity of their early versions as was his predecessor Benjamin Tabart. Like Tabart, Lang is concerned to rescue these stories from their own 'gross' popular character and to reclaim them for the respectable nineteenth century: 'The English tales are so scanty, and have been so flattened and stupefied, and crammed with gross rural jests, in the chap books, that we can only give a decent if a dull version' (Lang 1889: xxi). While Lang does concede that his own versions cannot be absolutely authentic, he continues to insist on a folkloric tradition: 'I doubt if

any of our tales are absolutely pure from literary handling, absolutely set down as they drop from the lips of tradition' (Lang 1889: xiv). Lang's Introduction nonetheless insists that some 'literary' handlings are more authentic than others. His assessment of the various versions of *The Arabian Nights* gets tangled between a recognition of their myriad rewritings and 'translations' and a belief in their 'originals':

The originals may be found by English readers in Sir Richard Burton's literal translation. As rendered there, the Märchen have been modified and amplified to suit Oriental literary taste, which has moments of cruelty and lust, as well as hours of florid tedium. For general readers the best Arabian Nights will always be, not Mr Lane's not Mr. John Payne's, not Sir Richard Burton's, but the old English translation of Galland's old adaptation ... the true and literary forms of the tales have thus dwindled down into something probably more like the Märchen which must have been their source. These processes have constantly been going on in the course of time. (Lang 1889: xv)

While Lang was reclaiming fairy tale for a literary folkloric tradition at the beginnings of the twentieth century, early film-makers were drawn to the genre's associations with extravaganza and pantomime. George Méliès had begun his career as a showman by performing as a stage magician, and the spectacular transformations of the fairy tale were central to his act. *Cinderella* was one of his first films in 1899, and he made a version of *Bluebeard* in 1901. Méliès's most commercially successful productions were a series of 'féeries', retellings of fairy stories. *The Kingdom of the Fairies*, in 1903 (based on a stage play originally produced in 1845), coupled a variant of *Sleeping Beauty* with cinematic transformation scenes. In 1905 Méliès produced a version of the 'Arabian Nights',³⁰ *Le Palais des mille et une Nuits*, populated by Méliès's regular dancing skeletons and dancers from the Folies Bergère. The Edison company kept a close watch on what Méliès was up to in cinema, and regularly pirated or reproduced his work. One of their earliest fictional films made use of fairy tale; the 1907 '*Teddy*' *Bears* combined the Goldilocks story with a topical reference to 'Teddy' Roosevelt's encounter with a bear cub. Andersen's 'The Little Match Girl' was another early subject for European and American cinema, filmed as the '*Little Match Seller*' in 1902 for the Williamson Kinematograph Company in England and as '*A Mid-Winter's Night Dream*' for the American Vitagraph in 1906. Mary Pickford appeared in an American silent film version of '*Cinderella*' in 1914.

Commercial fairgrounds had fast picked up on the spectacle and fantasy of the fairy tale – inevitably, as their market was close to that of pantomime. Coney Island made early use of the appeal of fairy tale for adults and children, and the exoticism and romance of *The Arabian Nights* were incorporated into the first designs for the site. The architect of Luna Park, Frederic Thompson, made abundant use of turrets, domes and minarets in his designs and promised visitors (in a sentiment that could have come from Walt Disney)

'Fairy Picture-Books – Toy-Lands elaborated by adult hands' (quoted in Cross and Walton 2005: 76). Another Coney Island site, Dreamland, opened in 1904 with a city named 'Lilliputia'; while this referenced *Gulliver's Travels*, it was landscaped in line with fairy tale illustrations. It has been described as 'a half-sized ersatz Nuremberg of the fifteenth century, complete with red-peaked roofs' (Cross and Walton 2005: 89). Like Fantasyland, Lilliputia was addressed to children; the Fantasyland site in all the Disney parks has a similarly scaled-down, vaguely 'European' village with red-tiled roofs, familiar from illustrations to children's books and also from the stylised versions of Germany, France and England to be seen at Epcot World Showcase.

Walt Disney's debt to European fairy tale collections and to their illustrators has been comprehensively mapped by Robin Allan (1999). Allan's research shows that Disney did indeed bring back volumes of illustrated fairy tales from his travels in England, France, Italy and Switzerland in 1935, and housed them as a library resource at the Disney Studios. While Allan claims European writers and painters as having shaped the imagination and imagery of Walt Disney and his films, it is difficult to demonstrate direct artistic and literary influences. It is rather important to recognise that by the time Walt Disney came upon these illustrations and stories they were already deeply embedded in European (and American) popular culture, through children's books, games and toys. Grimm, Perrault and Andersen had already demonstrated an appeal to the scholarly and the commercial, and all had had their work transposed into cinema.

The success of the Disney Empire was founded on Walt Disney's versions of fairy tales; Disney chose *Snow White and the Seven Dwarves* as the subject for the first full-length animation film in 1937. By the time of *Snow White* the studio had already made a number of animations based on folk and fairy tale, including *The Ugly Duckling*, *Babes in the Wood*, and *The Pied Piper* (the listings of planned Disney projects are dominated by fairy tale and nursery rhyme titles³¹). Disney's early animations, the 'Silly Symphonies', had taken on a similar range of stories to those of Gammer Gurton's collections, with animated American animals taking part in European fables and nursery rhymes. In 1938, European folk tale met American cinema face-on in Disney's *Mother Goose Goes to Hollywood*. These short films were also inflected, according to Allan, by '[i]llustrative art ... the popular picture books and magazines of nineteenth and early twentieth century engravings become increasingly a visual source ... for the Silly Symphonies' (Allan 1999: 25). *Rip Van Winkle* and *Alice in Wonderland* were among the titles considered by Disney for his first feature-length animation, but Walt Disney was not unaware of the significance of longer-standing folk tales. It is clear from the many accounts of the making of the film that he did research *Snow White* thoroughly; planning began as early as 1934. Disney ensured that the animators were sensitive to different versions and illustrations of the story, and employed European folklorists to lecture to the 'imagineers'. The Disney *Snow White* was largely based on the Grimm

version, but was already filtered through the play script of a successful 1912 stage production, written by Winthrop Ames (see Allan 1999: 38). This script was filmed as a spectacle in 1916 (dir. J. Searle Rowley) and, as in Méliès's fairy tale films, incorporated trick photography; Disney reportedly attended a free screening in Kansas City as a boy. The Disney version does depart from Grimm in excising two attempts by the Wicked Queen to kill Snow White – and rather than dancing to death in red-hot shoes, she falls off a precipice. These amendments aside, Disney did not dodge the frightening and Gothic elements of the tale; the Wicked Queen and Snow White's flight into the woods are notoriously scary.

By the time *Snow White* appeared, the Disney company was already well versed in the licensing and copyrighting of its images and was in a strong position to circulate and to promote its own versions of popular fairy tale, as Telotte explains:

Disney already had a complete merchandising campaign in place when *Snow White* opened, involving arrangements with over seventy companies for such goods as records, books, cutlery, toys and a range of clothing items including hats, dresses and underwear. (Telotte 2004: xii)

This licensing and the merchandising is significant when attached to a fairy tale such as 'Snow White', which has no discernible author, and so could not, as a tale, be copyrighted, although the images produced by Disney could. *Snow White* is the film that has acquired an iconic status in Disney history; its international success allowed for the production of more feature films and won Walt Disney an Oscar Special Award for 'a significant screen innovation'. Fairy tale stories stayed central to the Disney Studios' output, and their most famous icon, Mickey Mouse, appeared, like Harlequin, as the hero of a range of fairy tales. *Cinderella* was the next 'classic' fairy tale Disney feature film, in 1950, followed by the 1959 *Sleeping Beauty*. Neither of these productions were as carefully planned or researched as *Snow White*, but each took their cue from the Perrault versions of the stories and were firmly framed by imagery from European art and illustration. Disney would go on to acquire the rights to key authored fairy tales of the late nineteenth century – *Peter Pan* and *Alice in Wonderland* – and with those rights could copyright his own iconography and versions. The fairy tale genre was used to reinvigorate the flagging fortunes of the Disney company in the last decade of the twentieth century, with *Beauty and the Beast* in 1991 and *Aladdin* in 1992, and revitalised the Disney company's reputation for the 'classic' retelling of fairy tale.

Magic and fantasy answered to the need for cinema to counter the challenge of television with spectacle; fairy tale was thus deployed in the battle of Hollywood against the encroachment of television, and made full use of new technologies in film. The 1951 Powell and Pressburger film *The Tales of Hoffmann* told three of Hoffmann's stories in full Technicolor, with the

accompaniment of the Royal Philharmonic, lavish sets and a host of stars of opera and ballet. The 1964 Disney version of *Mary Poppins* (another ‘authored’ fairy story) employed animated fairy tale characters dancing alongside live-action human actors. In a clear claim for fairy tale as a genre that belonged to cinema, the first feature film in Cinerama chose *The Magical World of the Brothers Grimm* as its subject in 1962. The film was advertised as ‘motion picture history’:

[T]he first dramatic, story-telling motion picture to be filmed in the breath-taking realism of the Cinerama process for audiences everywhere ... what motion picture technique could do justice to such a world of fact and fancy?

Indeed the only answer was – CINERAMA. (Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer 1962: 3)

The genre of fairy tale is as intrinsic to the Disney parks as it was to their film productions, and it is a genre that bleeds across the designated lands; Peter Pan and Aladdin belong to both Fantasyland and Adventureland. The Disneyland Parades are dominated by fairy tale characters, and Tinkerbell signals the closure of the park each night. A fairy tale castle is the focal point of each park: Disney World features Cinderella’s Castle and Disneyland Paris, Sleeping Beauty’s. Inside the Florida castle, a mural of Italian glass mosaic depicts the Perrault version of ‘Cinderella’, while in Paris, pastiche tapestries tell the story of Sleeping Beauty, clearly signalling the status of these stories as ‘classic’ tales, a status that is confirmed by the copious references to European art and architecture. The association of fairy tales with France and particularly the figure of Perrault (who is commemorated in a plaque on the site of Fantasyland) is exploited to the full at Disneyland Paris: the water ride through Le Pays de Contes de Fées is titled in French, even in the English-language guidebooks, while Sleeping Beauty’s Castle is known as Le Chateau de la Belle au Bois Dormant.

‘Cinderella’, ‘Snow White’, ‘The Sleeping Beauty’, ‘The Little Mermaid’ and ‘Beauty and the Beast’ are the narratives that dominate the attractions at Fantasyland, folk tales that have been mediated through a series of transcribers, Perrault, Grimm and through the Disney animated cartoon versions of these tales. Fantasyland is described in Disney-speak as ‘a timeless land of entertainment’, but it draws its narratives from fairy tale and from ‘classic’ tales that are best known in their nineteenth-century tellings. It is in the realm of fairy tale that the Disney Corporation makes the most insistent claims of authenticity to European literary and aesthetic traditions, a claim endorsed by the 2006 *Il était une fois Walt Disney* exhibition held at the Galeries Nationales du Palais-Royal in Paris (based around Allan’s book). But through all these claims to the tradition and adherence to the ‘original’ texts, it is important to remember that there are no original texts to be honoured. Fairy tales belong to

a genuinely popular 'folk culture' – they have their roots in oral narratives and have been retold and rewritten ever since.

While the 'Disney version' may dominate the market in visual versions of the 'classic' fairy tale, Disney cannot claim ownership of these tales. Disney may own the literary rights to the fairy stories of *Peter Pan*, *Alice in Wonderland* and *Winnie the Pooh*, and is able to copyright its own iconography for familiar fairy tale characters, but the fairy tale continues to resonate and thrive in contemporary carnival. Despite Disney's notorious protection of its copyright, fairgrounds, fêtes and pantomimes continue to play with the imagery and characters of fairy tale, as popular cultural forms have always plagiarised and appropriated folk culture. The Disney Corporation's versions of 'Snow White' and 'Cinderella' are no more immune to that appropriation than the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century folklorists and illustrators whose stories and iconographies were raided for pantomime and spectacle. The 'Snow White' of contemporary pantomime now tends to look like the Disney version, as one pantomime historian explains:

[A]lmost every production is based not on the original but on the Disney film of 1937. And deviations from *this* 'original' – especially the costume of Snow White herself – are almost inconceivable. (Lathan 2004: 102)

Disney cannot be held entirely responsible for the sanitised versions of familiar fairy stories that now dominate in children's books and film. The 'gross morals' (in Tabart's phrase) and rough edges of the folk tale versions have always been edited and smoothed out for new audiences; any authentic version is long lost and forgotten.

From Gammer Gurton and Gammer Grethel, the editors of the fairy tale have insisted on their authenticity and invented a point of origin. Disney may acknowledge a debt to Perrault, but he erases the salon women who themselves invoked their nursemaids as the original tellers. The history of the publication and illustration of fairy tale is one of a consistent invention of origins, an insistence of authenticity that is academised throughout the nineteenth century. However, according to Linda Dégh,

We cannot speak of authenticity in our sense before the 1840s. The general public did not distinguish between oral narrator and tale writer and regarded published stories as common property free for anyone to change. Scholarly recording of oral tales from the folk, at the same time, meant notation of a skeleton content of stories judged to be genuine. Style editing along the lines of existing models then embellished the tales to reflect more of the style of the collector than of the raconteur. Texts the scholars regarded as folk-alien, non-authentic, corrupt, or retold from a book were omitted. Small wonder that most published collections reflect the wishful thinking of folklorists, not the real folk repertoire. (Dégh 1988: 5)

This 'scholarly recording' reached its height in the late nineteenth century; the work of Andrew Lang and the Folklore Society was central in defining

Figure 4.2 Excalibur Hotel complex, Las Vegas, 2008

a canon of acceptable ‘twice-told’ tales and did so at the precise moment of the mass production of children’s books. It is the editors, their retellings and collections who selected and embedded the ‘traditional’ tales, and each of those mediators, including Disney, is in search of an authentic original that does not exist.