

Arden

T H E A T R E C O .

SUPPLEMENTARY STUDY GUIDE
for

Lookingglass Alice

Arden Theatre Company presents
LOOKINGGLASS THEATRE COMPANY's Lookingglass Alice
In association with ACTORS GYMNASIUM
Adapted and Directed by DAVID CATLIN
On the F. Otto Haas Stage
May 10 - June 10, 2007

Additional copies of this study guide are available online at www.ardentheatre.org.

THEATRE

An Educational Tool

Theatre has the power as an educational tool to offer students a view into time periods, personal psyches and social contexts that they would not otherwise have the chance to experience. The theatre is a place of observation and reflection where students are able to actively immerse themselves into their education. When approached with an open mind and respect, theatre presents an opportunity for all of us to learn and grow.

It is our goal to give students and teachers an educational window into the world of theatre with the hope of encouraging a beneficial experience for everyone. Topics covered within the study guide:

- Information on the Lookingglass Theatre Company
- Historical background on the author
- Synopsis of *Alice and Wonderland* and *Through the Looking-Glass*
- Discussion questions

**Don't miss the first show of our
2007/2008 Season!**

for more information log on to www.ardentheatre.org

ASSASSINS

By Stephen Sondheim and John Weidman

Directed by Terrence J. Nolen

On the F. Otto Haas Stage

September 13 through October 14

Performance Policies and Procedures

WHEN TO ARRIVE AT THE THEATRE We recommend you arrive at the theatre at least 30 minutes prior to the performance to allow time for seating. This is a professional theatre production and will start at the scheduled time.

BUS DROP OFF AND PARKING Buses may load and unload on 2nd Street in front of the theatre. Enclosed is information regarding bus parking.

SEAT ASSIGNMENTS (10am matinees only) Due to the number of students attending each student matinee performance, we will not print tickets. Schools will be seated as a group. We ask that chaperones come prepared with a count of the number of students seeing the performance that day. For reasons of safety, efficiency and courtesy, we request that students do not trade seats. We also request that chaperones and teachers do not sit together but sit evenly distributed throughout the students within your block.

LATECOMERS Latecomers will be seated at the discretion of the House Management staff. Students or chaperones that leave during the performance may not be able to rejoin their group due to accessibility.

BACKPACKS, CAMERAS, AND WALKMANS Backpacks, cameras, and walkmans are strictly prohibited in the theatre. We request that these items be left at school or on the bus, as the Arden has no storage facility available.

FOOD, DRINK, CANDY, AND GUM There is absolutely **no** food, drink, candy, or gum allowed in the theatre. Please leave snacks and lunches on the bus. Students will be asked to leave the theatre to remove any food items or the items will be taken and not returned. We do not have the facilities for groups to eat lunch before or after the performance.

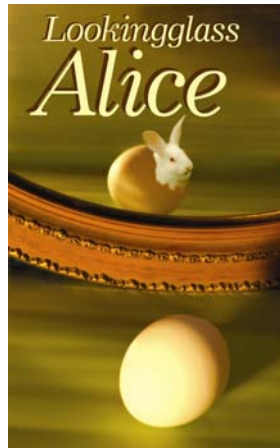
AUDIENCE ETIQUETTE Student performances can be the most demanding and rewarding audiences an acting ensemble can face. A theatre performance requires audience behavior different from that in a movie theater. Please review theatre etiquette with your students before attending the performance. If any student is being so disruptive as to interfere with the performers or other audience members, the chaperone will be asked to remove that student.

- A theatre performance is a time to think inwardly, not to share your thoughts aloud. Talking during the performance can be very disruptive. Please be respectful. Also turn off any watches, cell phones or anything that might make noise during the performance.
- No food, drink, candy, or gum is permitted inside the theatre.
- Theatre is a community experience. Let the performers know you enjoy the show by applauding and laughing at appropriate times.

Lookingglass Theatre Company's
Lookingglass Alice

By Lewis Carroll

Adapted and Directed by David Catlin
In Association with Actors Gymnasium



CAST

White Knight and others:

Larry DiStasi

Cheshire Cat and others:

Anthony Fleming III

Mad Hatter and others:

Doug Hara

Red Queen and others:

Jesse J. Perez

Alice:

Lauren Hirte

Understudies:

Marc Halsey and Rani Waterman

DIRECTION:

DIRECTOR

David Catlin

STAGE MANAGER

Sara Gmitter

CIRCUS CHOREOGRAPHY

Sylvia Hernandez- DiStasi

ASST to the STAGE MANAGER

Steven Gravelle

DESIGNERS:

SCENIC DESIGNER

Daniel Ostling

COSTUME DESIGNER

Mara Blumenfeld

LIGHTING DESIGNER

Chris Binder

SOUND DESIGNER

Andre Pluess, Ben Sussman, Ray Nardelli

CIRCUS RIGGING DESIGNER

Scott Osgood

lookingglass

Lookingglass Theatre Company is home to a multi-disciplined collective of theatre artists who create original, story-centered work. The Lookingglass theatrical aesthetic is most often ensemble-based, notably physical, highly visual, richly aural, and metaphoric. Lookingglass has staged 48 world premieres and garnered numerous awards in its mission to change, charge, and empower audiences and artists alike. The Lookingglass Theatre Company renovated Chicago's landmark Water Tower Water Works with the significant support of the City of Chicago and State of Illinois. The theater's inaugural production, an adaptation of Stud Terkel's *Race*, adapted by Ensemble members David Schwimmer and Joy Gregory, opened the new space in June 2003.



Lookingglass Theatre Company's Mission Statement

“Oh my, how curious everything is!” --- Alice

When Alice walked through the looking glass, she walked into a world beyond imagination. She walked into a world more involving and intoxicating than any movie or circus, more thrilling than a high-speed chase, more frightening than a child's nightmare, and more beautiful than a thunderstorm on a hot summer night. She awoke with a new sense of herself in the world and her own power within it.

Reflected in Lewis Carroll's achievement is the mission of the Lookingglass Theatre Company. Through theatre, which invites, even demands, interaction with its audience, our goal is to fire the imagination with love, to celebrate the human capacity to taste and smell, weep and laugh, create and destroy, and wake up where we first fell --- changed, charged and empowered.

The Lookingglass Theatre Company combines a physical and improvisational rehearsal process centered on ensemble with training in theatre, dance, music, and the circus arts. We seek to redefine the limits of theatrical experience and to make theatre exhilarating, inspirational, and accessible to all.

<http://www.lookingglasstheatre.org/theatre/mission.html>

About the Author:



Charles Lutwidge Dodgson (January 27, 1832 – January 14, 1898), better known by the pen name **Lewis Carroll**, was an English author, mathematician, logician, Anglican clergyman, and photographer.

His most famous writings are *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and its sequel *Through the Looking-Glass* as well as the poems "The Hunting of the Snark" and "Jabberwocky", all considered to be within the genre of literary nonsense.

His facility at word play, logic, and fantasy has delighted audiences ranging from children to the literary elite. But beyond this, his work has become embedded deeply in modern culture. He has directly influenced many artists.

There are societies dedicated to the enjoyment and promotion of his works and the investigation of his life

in many parts of the world including North America, Japan, the United Kingdom, and New Zealand.

From a young age, Dodgson wrote poetry and short stories, sending them to various magazines and enjoying moderate success. Between 1854 and 1856, his work appeared in the national publications, *The Comic Times* and *The Train*, as well as smaller magazines like the *Whitby Gazette* and the *Oxford Critic*. Most of this output was humorous, sometimes satirical, but his standards and ambitions were exacting. "I do not think I have yet written anything worthy of real publication (in which I do not include the *Whitby Gazette* or the *Oxonian Advertiser*), but I do not despair of doing so some day", he wrote in July 1855. In 1856 he published his first piece of work under the name that would make him famous. A very predictable little romantic poem called "Solitude" appeared in *The Train* under the authorship of 'Lewis Carroll'. This pseudonym was a play on his real name; *Lewis* was the anglicized form of *Ludovicus*, which was the Latin for *Lutwidge*, and *Carroll* being an anglicised version of *Carolus*, the Latin for *Charles*.

In the same year, 1856, a new Dean, Henry Liddell, arrived at Christ Church, bringing with him his young family, all of whom would figure largely in Dodgson's life, and greatly influence his writing career, over the following years. Dodgson became close friends with Liddell's wife, Lorina, and their children, particularly the three sisters: Lorina, Edith and Alice Liddell. Although Dodgson himself later denied his "little heroine" was based on any real child, he is widely assumed to have derived his own "Alice" from Alice Liddell. However, there is an acrostic poem at the end of *Through the Looking Glass* which supports this view. Reading downward, taking the first letter of each line, spells out Alice's name in full. The poem has no title in *Through the Looking Glass* but is usually referred to by its first line, "A Boat Beneath a Sunny Sky."



Photo of Alice Liddell, 1858

Though information is scarce (Dodgson's diaries for the years 1858-1862 are missing), it does seem clear that his friendship with the family was an important part of his life in the late 1850s, and he grew into the habit of taking the children (first the boy, Harry, and later the three girls) on rowing trips to nearby Nuneham or Godstow.

It was on one such expedition, on July 4, 1862, that Dodgson invented the outline of the story that eventually became his first and largest commercial success. Having told the story and been begged by Alice Liddell to write it down, Dodgson eventually (after much delay) presented her with a handwritten, illustrated manuscript entitled *Alice's Adventures Under Ground* in November 1864.

Before this, the family of friend and mentor George MacDonald read Dodgson's incomplete manuscript and the enthusiasm of the MacDonald children encouraged Dodgson to seek publication. In 1863, he had taken the unfinished manuscript to Macmillan the publisher, who liked it immediately. After the possible alternative titles *Alice Among the Fairies* and *Alice's Golden Hour* were rejected, the work was finally published as *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* in 1865 under the Lewis Carroll pen name which Dodgson had first used some nine years earlier. The illustrations this time were by Sir John Tenniel; Dodgson evidently thought that a published book would need the skills of a professional artist. The first edition copy of *Alice's Adventures Under Ground*, now highly sought after by literary collectors, changed hands to a private collector on January 26, 2006. It was sold at Christie's for GBP4,800 by the Duke of Gloucester, its previous owner, to pay for his father's death duties.

The overwhelming commercial success of the first Alice book changed Dodgson's life in many ways. The fame of his alter ego 'Lewis Carroll' soon spread around the world. He was inundated with fan mail and with sometimes unwanted attention. He also began earning quite substantial sums of money. However, he didn't use this income as a means of abandoning his seemingly disliked post at Christ Church.

In 1872, a sequel — *Through the Looking-Glass* — was published. Its somewhat darker mood possibly reflects the changes in Dodgson's life. His father had recently died (1868), plunging him into a depression that would last some years.

In 1876, Dodgson produced his last great work, "The Hunting of the Snark" a fantastic 'nonsense' poem, exploring the adventures of a bizarre crew of variously inadequate beings, and one beaver, who set off to find the eponymous creature. The painter Dante Gabriel Rossetti reputedly became convinced the poem was about him.

Over the remaining twenty years of his life, throughout his growing wealth and fame, his existence remained little changed. He continued to teach at Christ Church until 1881, and remained in residence there until his death. His last novel, the two-volume *Sylvie and Bruno*, was published in 1889 and 1893 respectively. Its extraordinary convolutions and apparent confusion baffled most readers and it achieved little success. He died at his sister's home in Guildford on January 14, 1898 of pneumonia following influenza. He was not quite sixty-six years old. He is buried in Guildford at the Mount Cemetery.

Works by Lewis Carroll:

- *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*
- *Through the Looking-Glass, and What Alice Found There* (includes Jabberwocky)
- *The Hunting of the Snark*
- *Rhyme? And Reason?* (also published as "Phantasmagoria")
- *A Tangled Tale*
- *Alice's Adventures Under Ground*
- *Sylvie and Bruno*
- *Sylvie and Bruno Concluded*
- *Three Sunsets and Other Poems*
- *Pillow Problems*
- *The Game of Logic*
- *Symbolic Logic*
- *What the Tortoise Said to Achilles*

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lewis_Carroll#Trivia

Plot Summaries:

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland

A girl named Alice is bored while on a picnic with her older sister, who is reading aloud. Alice takes interest in a passing white rabbit that is dressed in a waistcoat and muttering "Oh dear! Oh dear! I shall be too late!" She follows the rabbit down a rabbit hole, then finds herself falling down into a dreamlike world. As she continues to try to follow the rabbit, she has several adventures. She grows to gigantic size and then shrinks to a fraction of her original height, meets a group of small animals



swimming in a sea of her own (previously shed) tears, and gets trapped in the rabbit's house when she enlarges herself again. After meeting the Duchess, she carries away a baby which changes into a pig, then meets the Cheshire cat, which disappears, leaving only its smile behind. She joins the Mad Hatter and the March Hare at a never-ending tea party, goes to the seashore and meets a Gryphon and a Mock Turtle, and finally attends the trial of the Knave of Hearts, who has been accused of stealing tarts. Just as Alice defies the Queen of Hearts, the dream ends and Alice wakes up at the picnic with her sister.



Through the Looking-Glass

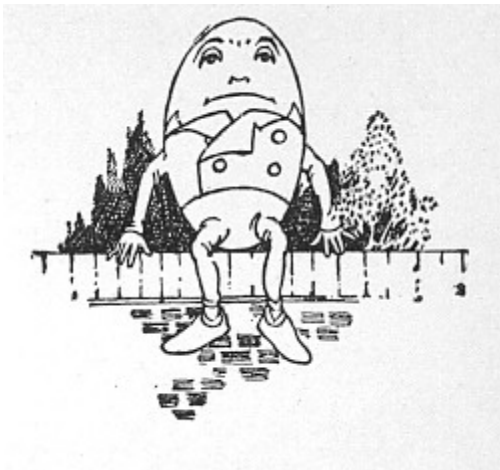
Alice ponders what the world is like on the other side of a mirror, and to her surprise, is able to pass through to experience the alternate world. She discovers a book with looking-glass poetry, "Jabberwocky," which she can read only by holding it up to a mirror. Upon leaving the house, she enters a garden, where the flowers speak to her and mistake her for a flower. There, Alice also meets the Red Queen, who offers a throne to Alice if she just moves to the eighth rank in a chess match. Alice is placed as the White Queen's pawn, and begins the game by taking a train to the fourth rank, since pawns in chess can move two spaces on the first move.

She then meets Tweedledum and Tweedledee, of whom she knows from the famous nursery rhyme. After reciting to her the long poem "The Walrus and the Carpenter," the two proceed to act out the events of their own poem. Alice continues on to meet the White Queen, who is very absent-minded and later transforms into a sheep.



The following chapter details her meeting with Humpty Dumpty, who explains to her the meaning of "Jabberwocky," before his inevitable fall from the wall.

This is followed by an encounter with the Lion and the Unicorn, who again proceed to act out a nursery rhyme. She is then rescued from the Red Knight by the White Knight, who many consider to be a representation of Lewis Carroll himself.



At this point, she reaches the eighth rank and becomes a queen, and by capturing the Red Queen, puts the Red King (who has remained stationary throughout the book) into checkmate. She then awakes from her dream (if it was a dream), and blames her black kitten (the white kitten was wholly innocent) for the mischief caused by the story. The two kittens are the children of Dinah, Alice's cat in the first book.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alice%27s_Adventures_in_Wonderland

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Through_the_Looking-Glass

Questions for Discussion

- 1) What moment from the production do you most remember? Why did that moment make such an impression on you?

- 2) What was the most effective design element (set, costumes, light, sound) in this production? Why?

- 3) One major theme of this production is adapting to an adult world that sometimes seems nonsensical. How does Alice overcome the nonsensical elements of Wonderland? How does this translate to your everyday life?

- 4) Alice meets many strange and new creatures in Wonderland. Which character is your favorite? Which character do you most identify with?

- 5) This 90 minute production of is an adaptation of two very well known children's books. What parts of the adaptation did you enjoy? Were there parts of the story you missed?

- 6) What do you think the moral of the story is? What other lessons did you learn from this production?