

## Down The Rabbit Hole – A Narrative Adventure in Wonderland

“—White Rabbit! You are the White Rabbit!”

Gothic wallpaper, two crossways tables with glassed piles of riddles, a rectangular mirror and a large door furnished the dimly lit *study*, striking curiosity into tourists.

Wonderland has finally touched down on Melbourne. Partnering with Australian Centre of Moving Images, the exhibition tour is an enticing historical display of the sickly sweet tale of Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland*.

Falling through the rabbit hole (the staircase!) brought visitors to the *study*. On a table, folds of fine prussian blue paper peeked through a black archive box.

“Welcome. Before entering, please wait while I see your identities. Everyone gets different **character** to play as.” The assistant plucks one, presses it onto a rectangular glass until a **character** appears. That is where visitors retrieve their *Lost Map of Wonderland*, filled with unique instructions to venture areas with.

Tourists are then dropped into Wonderland. A tiny door requires them to 'shrink' to a crouch to be able to pass into a Hallway of Doors, reminiscing the iconic drink-me potion. Embellished by disarrayed doors and passages of varying size, each displays neatly arranged works from Carroll's earliest *Alice*. They range from brown shrivelled manuscripts, pencil-drawn concept artworks, to even a mini-theatre playing the first silent *Alice*. A portrait of a young girl inscribed 'Alice Liddell' framed in the Hallway, the girl is Carroll's inspiration for his 1865 *famous novel*.

But wait, don't be late visitors, if you want to catch the white rabbit, better find the right door out of those heaps soon.

Slow down! Don't miss the *Magical Lantern* show. Find a rectangular spot under a wooden bar, it will project your **character** animation that moment you put your map in. Once visitors enter the drape area known as The Pool of Tears, other early graphics of Alice swimming, serves themselves in a paned-circular table. Dripping tear drops can be heard as if Alice cries.

By a nearby banner, Alice is told to be adapted as a musical dream play by 1886 under the direction of Henry Saville Clarke and Carroll's authorship and surveillance.

The flooding tears then drive tourists to Wonderland's sea, where Alice gets into a vial. A series of costume designs, early storyboards, hand-made costumes and a magic mirror adorn the walls. Remember the earlier animation? Place the map to the rectangular spot under the mirror, and you will see early movie production of your Alice character.

Fusion of Historical and Narrative experience has washed-up the visitors to the shore, now finding their way to white rabbit's home . His pink, small, but tall hole-filled house stands as an inviting photograph opportunity for visitors to experience being Alice, turning huge and destroying the rabbit's house. When visitors avert their gaze, numerous puppets and clay figure models exhilarate their vision.

With the White Rabbit nowhere to be found, visitors are led to a passage, to ask the wise caterpillar for directions, only to be greeted by the question, 'Who are you?' , painted in neon-pink on the white wall. Then, Disney Alice appears with a short clip of her feud with caterpillar.

Ensure that you inspect a familiar-looking rectangular spot to attain the last piece of animation short on the back of your map.



Photo: Phoebe Powell

Once tourists pass through, an odd grey door stands on their right, into which the guard guides them. Within, gorgeous white tea sets, pudding, plates and garden-chairs await on a table. The instant the chairs are occupied, words disperse to reveal a woodland scene, complete with mushrooms and ticking pocket-watches. The tablecloth re-dresses itself, then cupcakes, desserts, and cakes started appearing magically on the plates. Ants trails the table ready to munch on the sweets. The incredible display continues with several changes as it recaps the Alice story.

After attending the Mad Tea Party, visitors are directed towards the Heart Castle's Garden and Croquet Ground. There, visitors meet the assistants playing as the card soldiers, and are requested to aid them to please the queen of hearts. You can take selfies, leaving your traces behind on the card soldiers's faces to paint the white roses red, inside a wide-screen motion picture. Fleeing from the queen's demand for your head, you finally found the white rabbit.

The guards tells you to assemble your very own wonderland figure of the white rabbit, and proceed to the next area.



Photo: Exel Prasadhana

The tour turns to Linda Woolverton's 2010 rendition. Fine-tailored dresses, Wigs, Mad Hatter's discounted-hat and attires in the film are worn by mannequins, and original screenplay, with the White Rabbit and Chesire Cat's maquette computer graphic designs are displayed.

In the last area, you are presented the wonderland's landscapes and various Alices in light boxes. It seems you, like Alice, have been sentenced to death by the queen's accusation of theft. Now, collect the evidences and escape to the real world, up the rabbit hole, and spread your tale.

**Reference List (MLA Style 8<sup>th</sup> Edition)**

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