

Adaptation as Reparation

Mel Brown

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Conference organised by the Centre for International Languages at the University of Burgundy and ILLUSTR4TIO



That Little Jackdaw: Adaptation as Reparation Mel Brown

'The Jackdaw of Rheims' is the tale of a jackdaw who attends a grand banquet, steals the Cardinal's precious ring, is cursed for his sins but is eventually absolved and sainted. The poem is part of 'The Ingoldsby Legends', written by Thomas Ingoldsby of Tappington Manor. However, not all is what it seems since they were actually written by clergyman Richard Harris Barham and first published in 1837, so even the so-called 'original' works were in fact parody and pastiche of medieval prose, myth and folklore.

Drawn to this tale of theft and redemption, artists, illustrators and composers have adapted the poem ever since and *This Little Jackdaw* (published by Pylon Press in 2019) is my own interpretation where the imagery is stripped back, with no reference to the Cardinal, his guests or the lavish display of the banquet. Instead, this is the Jackdaw's tale, and his alone. The use of marks, smudges and flourishes threaded throughout the book in one moment simply suggest a place to perch and in another become the violent and excessive curse delivered by the cardinal, thus distilling the narrative right back to its most basic "representative scenes, moments, and elements." (Newell 2017:64)

Through a recent exhibition at Plymouth College of Art I explored my process of working on the project, from first encounters with the poem as a child (through Antony Hedges' choral adaptation in the early 1980s) through to the final building of the Jackdaw's nest. The exhibition included initial drawings, early drafts of the book and also on display were prints from the Ernest M. Jessop illustrated edition from 1883.

In *Theory of Adaptation*, Linda Hutcheon talks of adaptation as 'an oscillation between a past image and a present one' (Hutcheon 2013:172) and the responsibility placed on adaptors to make the "substitute experience" as good as, although different from, the original one (Hutcheon 2013:120)

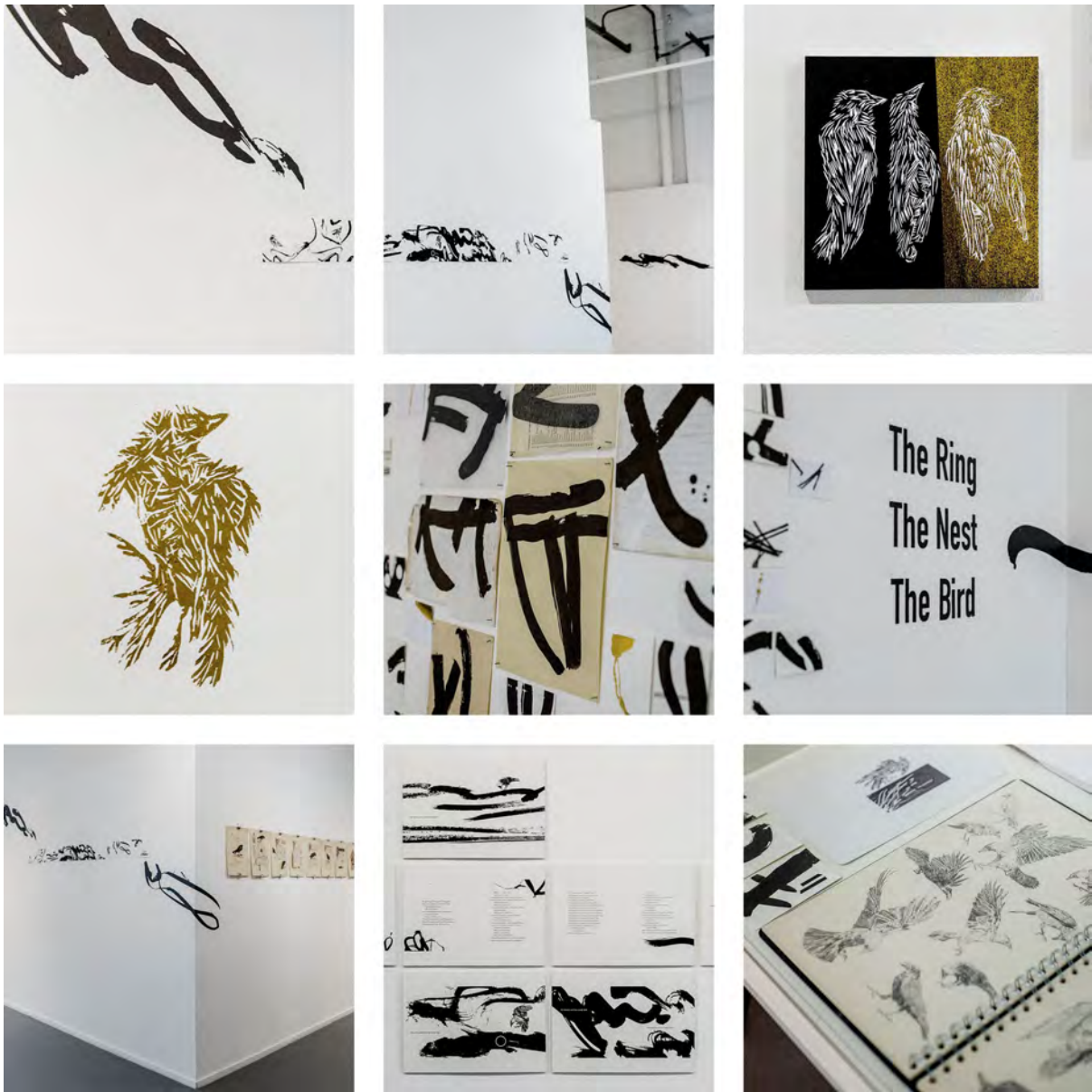
I want to explore these ideas further to understand the layering of parody and adaptation on adaptation, intertwined with personal memory and present experience. The circumstances of my recalling of the poem during a long period of recuperation after surgery in 2017 are vital to my own process of interpretation. The Jackdaw's fate becomes my own: a broken bird (my pre-op/post-op self) has a curse lifted (cancer removed and a scar healed).

That Little Jackdaw may well be my love letter to the NHS, however this adaptation can stand alone, my background narrative becoming unrelated to its reception. A text is illustrated, pages are printed and bound, and there you have it, here is a book. Audience, it's over to you.

Since me-educator and me-image-maker are one and the same, what interests me now as this project draws to a close, is developing undergraduate assignments that encourage our students to understand the complex layering of adaptations at play in their own illustrations, to explore how "stories evolve and mutate to fit new times and different places." (Hutcheon 2013:176)

References:

- Hutcheon, L. (2013) *The Theory of Adaptation* London: Routledge
Newell, K. (2017) *Expanding Adaptation Networks: From Illustration to Novelization* London: Palgrave



That Little Jackdaw, Mel Brown 2019, mixed media exhibition at Plymouth College of Art (Photography by Sarah Packer)

Mel Brown MA

Senior Lecturer & Assistant Head of School (School of Design + Communication), Plymouth College of Art

With a BA (Hons) Graphic Design and MA Visual Culture, I have been teaching both theory and practice for twenty years. As the former Programme leader for BA (Hons) Illustration at Plymouth College of Art, and now as Assistant Head of School, I am fortunate to work alongside the next generation of image-makers and visual communicators.

Current research interests explore play and the role of curiosity in creative learning and the potential for gamification in HE. With colleagues at Plymouth College of Art I have been developing the idea of an 'Illustration Pedagogy' and more recently I've worked with fellow researchers to help them to communicate their research visually.

As an image-maker I am obsessed with discarded books, abandoned photographs and seemingly random pieces of ephemera, playfully transforming the use, meaning and interpretation of the things I find.



That Little Jackdaw

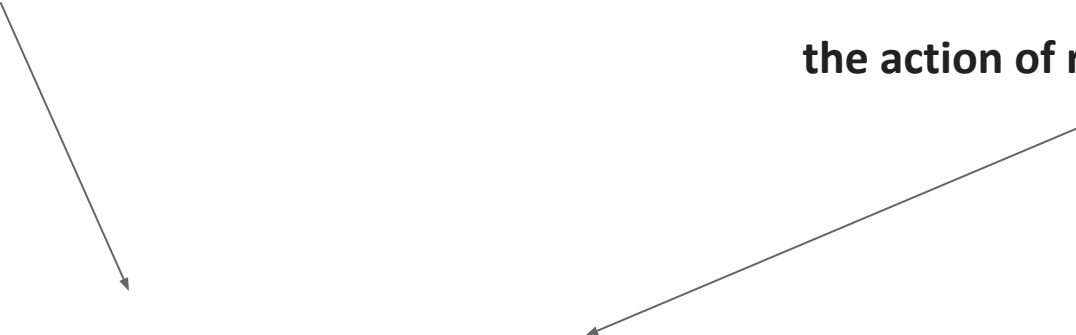
Adaptation as Reparation

Mel Brown | Senior Lecturer & Assistant Head of School (Design + Communication) | melbrown@pca.ac.uk

An “announced retelling of an original text”

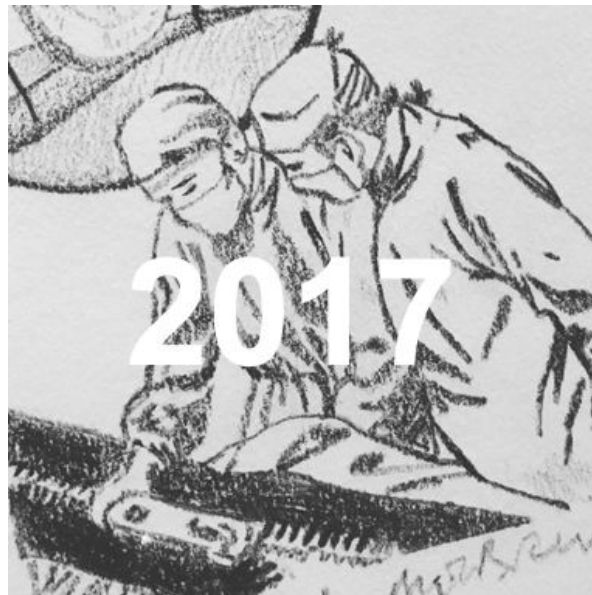
Bryant in Bruhn, J. et al (2013)

the action of repairing something

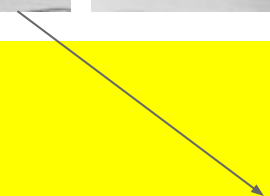


Adaptation as Reparation

‘Catalyst’



2017



2017



+



1980-ish

2017

Poem by Richard Harris Barham (1788-1845)

Music by **Anthony Hedges**

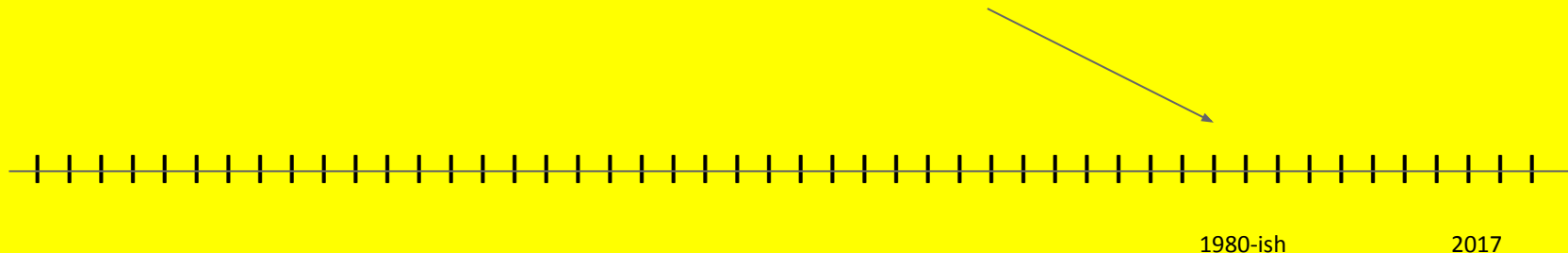
The musical score for 'The Rose Tree' is presented in a two-staff format, with a treble and bass clef. The key signature is one flat (B-flat), and the time signature is 2/4. The score is divided into measures, with measure numbers 12, 14, 16, 18, and 20 indicated at the beginning of their respective staves. The melody is primarily in the treble staff, while the bass staff provides a harmonic accompaniment. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings like 'mp' (mezzo-piano) and 'p' (piano). The piece concludes with a final measure marked with a double bar line.

© Anthony Hedges 1980

The Jackdaw of Rheims
 < < composition by Anthony Hedges, 1980

The Jackdaw of Rheims

The tale of a jackdaw who attends a grand banquet, steals the Cardinal's precious ring, is cursed for his sins but is ultimately absolved and sainted.



1980-ish

2017



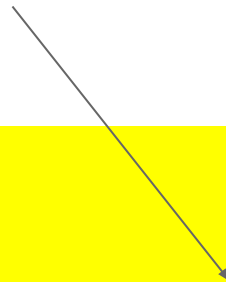
Till, when nobody's dreaming of any such thing,
That little Jackdaw hops off with the ring!



And the priests, with awe,
As such freaks they saw,
Said, "The Devil must be in that little Jackdaw!"



When, as words were too faint
His merits to paint,
The Conclave determin'd to make him a Saint;



1980-ish

2017

The Jackdaw of Rheims is the most famous of the poems & stories published in The Ingoldsby Legends written by Thomas Ingoldsby of Tappington Manor.



1980-ish

2017

The Jackdaw of Rheims is the most famous of the poems & stories published in The Ingoldsby Legends written by Thomas Ingoldsby of Tappington Manor.

However, not all is what it seems since they were *actually* written by 19th Century clergyman Richard Harris Barham and first published in 1837.

Even the so-called 'original' works were in fact parody and pastiche of medieval prose, myth and folklore.

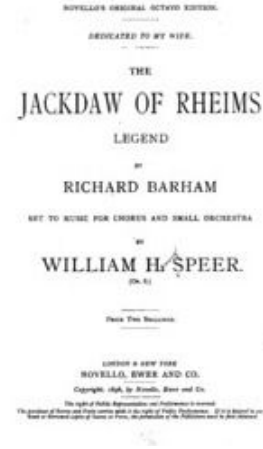


1837

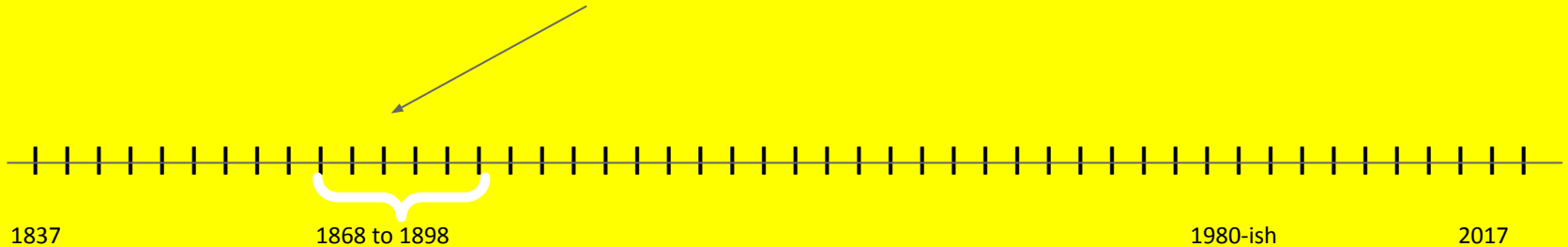
1980-ish

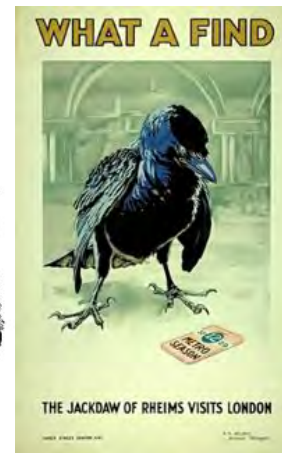
2017

Drawn to this tale of theft and redemption, artists, illustrators and composers have adapted the poem ever since

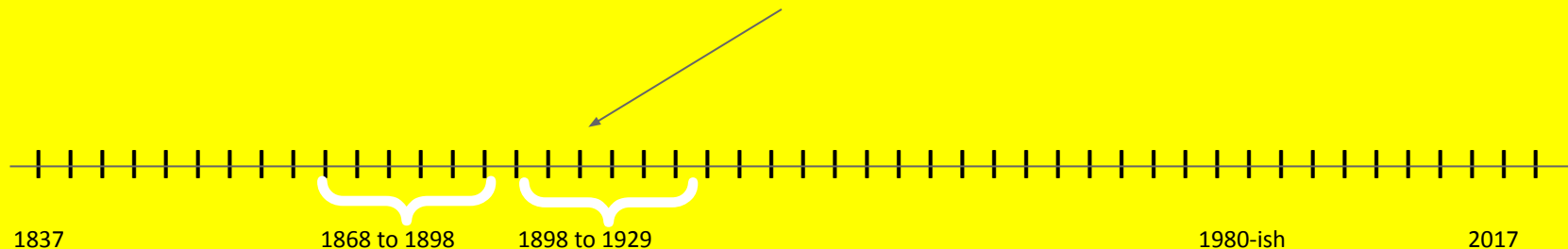


Briton Rivière (1868), Unknown (1870), Lucius Rossi (1870), Ernest Maurice Jessop (1884), William Speer (1896), Frank Hyde (1898)





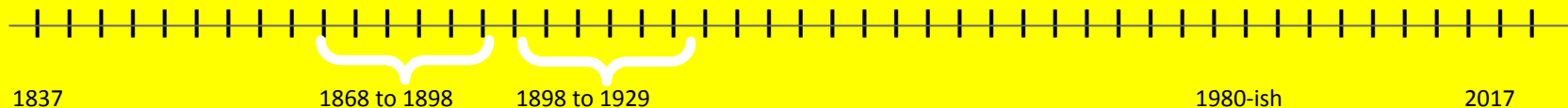
Arthur Rackham (1898), Royal Doulton (1906-1930), Hubert Bath (1909?), Charles Folkard (1914), George Wharton (1919), GHS (1929)

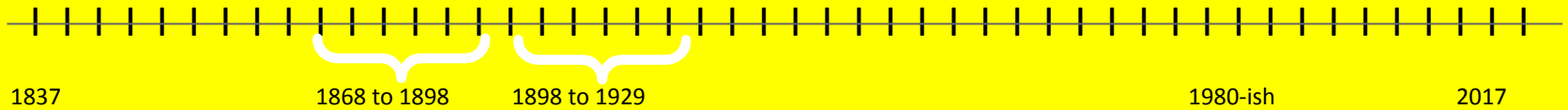


“That so many different gateways exist for a give work illuminates the range of interpretative lenses through which a work can be read” (Newell in Leitch 2017)

**“Multiple versions exist laterally,
not vertically” (Hutcheon 2013: xv)**

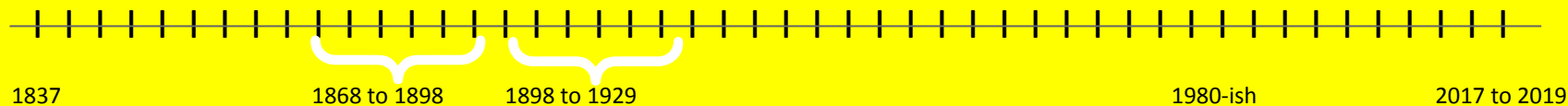
**“Earlier adaptations may, in fact, be just as important as contexts
for some adaptations as any original” (Hutcheon 2013: xv)**





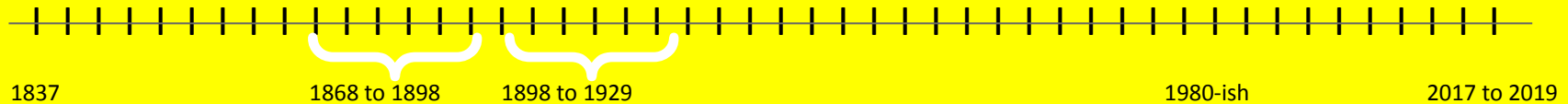
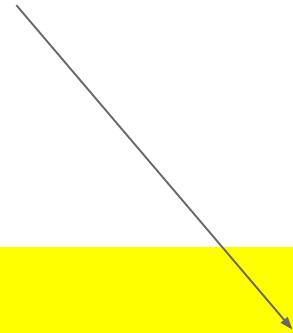


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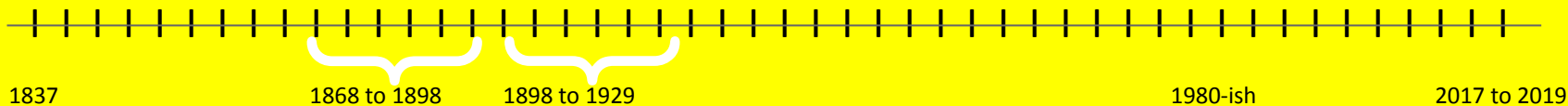
The use of marks, smudges and flourishes threaded throughout the book in one moment simply suggest a place to perch and in another become the violent and excessive curse delivered by the cardinal, thus distilling the narrative right back to its most basic “representative scenes, moments, and elements.”
(Newell 2017:64)

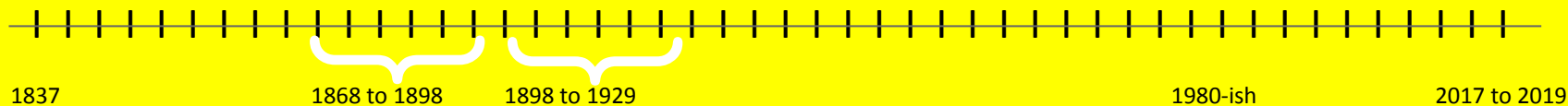




PLYMOUTH
COLLEGE
of ART

Exhibition 2019



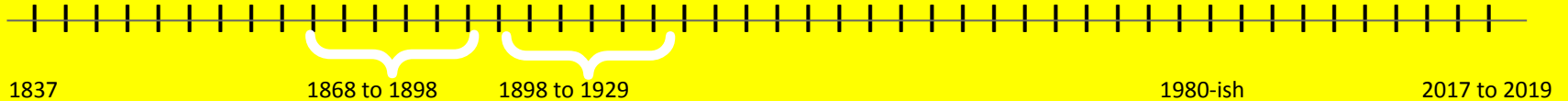


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Adaptation as Reparation



‘Catalyst’

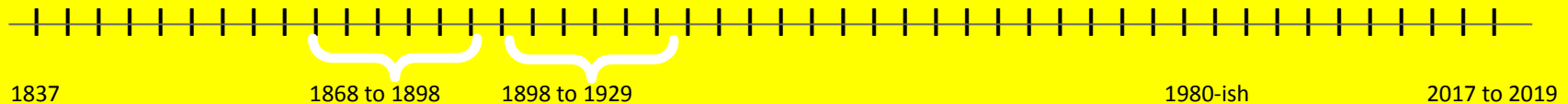
adaptation as “an oscillation between a past image and a present one” (Hutcheon 2013:172)

2017

This process has helped me to understand the layering of parody and adaptation on adaptation, intertwined with personal memory and present experience.

The circumstances of my recalling of the poem during a long period of recuperation after surgery in 2017 are vital to my own process of interpretation.

The story presented itself back to me – at a moment when it was necessary/needed





This was me

The Jackdaw's fate became my own: a broken bird (my pre-op/post-op self) had a curse lifted (cancer removed and a scar healed).

That Little Jackdaw may well be my love letter to the NHS, however this adaption can stand alone, my background narrative becoming unrelated to its reception.

A text is illustrated, pages are printed and bound, and there you have it, here is a book. Audience, it's over to you.



This is my scar (the mark of all 48 of those staples that held me together)

Perhaps it is the very responsibility of telling the same story in many different ways that provokes us to make the attempt
(Hutcheon 2004)

Prompt questions when adapting a text:

What is the history/legacy of this story?

- Have you uncovered it's origins?
- What (cross disciplinary) adaptations have existed before?
- Explore the present relevance of this story within culture/society

Since me-educator and me-image-maker are one and the same, what interests me now as my own project draws to a close, is developing undergraduate assignments that encourage our students to understand the complex layering of adaptations at play in their own illustrations, to explore how “stories evolve and mutate to fit new times and different places.” (Hutcheon 2013: 176)

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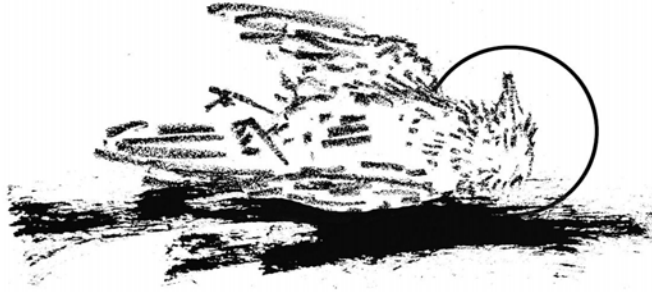
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What is your relationship to this story?

- When/Where/How have you encountered it before?
- Consider your present connection to this story - what *value* or *meaning* does it hold for you?
- Has your connection to this story evolved over time?

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That Little Jackdaw

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References:

- Bryant, J. 'Textual Identity and adaptive revision: Editing adaptation as a fluid text'
in Bruhn, J. et al (2013) *Adaptation Studies* London: Bloomsbury
- Hutcheon, L. with O'Flynn, S. (2013) *The Theory of Adaptation 2nd Edition*
London: Routledge
- Hutcheon, L. (2004) 'The Art of Adaptation'
in *Daedalus* Spring 2004
- Newell, K. (2017) *Expanding Adaptation Networks: From Illustration to Novelization* London: Palgrave
- Newell, K 'Adaptation and Illustration: a cross-disciplinary approach'
in Leitch, E (2017) *The Oxford Handbook of Adaptation Studies* Oxford: OUP
- Chicago School of Media Theory : Keywords
<https://lucian.uchicago.edu/blogs/mediatheory/keywords/adaptation/>

Atelier B (Room 03): Cinema

Chair: Sophie Aymes (Université de Bourgogne, France)

9:00 Aurélie Huz (Université de Lorraine, France)

« Illustration, animation, science-fiction : adaptations en/des images dans l'ensemble intermédiatique Gandahar »

9:20 Hélène Martinelli (ENS de Lyon, France)

« Le 'grand imagier' ou l'animation des illustrations chez Karel Zeman »

9:40 Pierre-Alexis Delhaye (Université Polytechnique Hauts de France, France) et Maxime Prevost (journaliste et enseignant)

« Que peut-on vraiment adapter des comics de super-héros ? De la fidélité à la planche »

10:00 David Pinho Barros (University of Porto, Portugal)

"Drawing from Ozu: An intermedial consideration on Jochen Gerner's, Bren Luke's and Adrian Tomine's illustrations based on film frames"

10:20 Questions

10:40 Coffee break / Pause-café

11:10 Plenary (Lecture Hall)

Kate Newell (Savannah College of Art and Design, United States):
"Illustration and Intermediality"

Chair: Kamilla Elliott (Lancaster University, United Kingdom)

12:10 Lunch / Déjeuner (buffet)

13:30 Plenary (Lecture Hall)

Dave McKean (artist, United Kingdom): "1 + 1 = 3"

Chair: Nathalie Collé (Université de Lorraine, France)

14:30 Coffee break / Pause-café

Afternoon session (Lecture Hall): The graphic novel

Chair: Brigitte Friant-Kessler (Université Polytechnique Hauts de France, France)

15:00 Yannick Bellenger-Morvan (Université de Reims, France)

« MirrorMask de Dave MacKean et Neil Gaiman (2005) : du film à l'album, de l'image au texte – quand le texte adapte et illustre l'image »

15:20 Guillaume Labrude (Université de Lorraine, France)

« De la pellicule au papier : la seconde vie de Django Unchained »

15:40 Carol Adlam (Nottingham Trent University, United Kingdom)

"Visual Red Herrings: Creating a Graphic Novel Adaptation of a Lost Russian-Empire Crime Novel"

16:00 Linda Scott (Falmouth University, United Kingdom)

"Dark Town: Reimagining dangerous tradition, group ritual and brutal betrayal"

16:20 Questions

17:00 Closing remarks / Clôture du colloque

COLLOQUE INTERNATIONAL

ILLUSTRATION

&

ADAPTATION

organisé par le
Centre InterLangues
Université de Bourgogne-
Franche Comté
et ILLUSTR4TIO

Conférences

plénières:

Kamilla Elliott

Kate Newell

Dave McKean

10-11 October / octobre 2019

Maison des Sciences de l'Homme (MSH)
6, Esplanade Erasme
21000 Dijon



Thursday 10 October / Jeudi 10 octobre

9:00 MSH Amphithéâtre / Lecture Hall: Registration / Accueil

10:00 Opening remarks / Ouverture

Parallel sessions / Ateliers parallèles

Atelier A (Lecture Hall): Afterlives (1)

Chair: Maxime Leroy (Université de Haute-Alsace, France)

10:30 Christina Ionescu (Mount Allison University, Canada)

"Textual Description and Narrative in Intermedial Crossover: The Illustration and Adaptation of Vivant Denon's *Point de lendemain*"

10:50 Robyn Phillips-Pendleton (University of Delaware, United States)

"The Role of Illustration in the Adaptations and Transmediations of the *Uncle Tom's Cabin* Narrative"

11:10 Sarah Kislingbury (Princeton University, United States)

"Framing the Gate: Laure Albin Guillot's Photographic Adaptation of *Le Grand Meaulnes*"

11:30 Ann Lewis (Birkbeck University of London, United Kingdom)

"Adapting Illustration for the Almanach: Text/Image Relations in Daniel-Nicolas Chodowiecki's Illustrations for Rousseau's *Julie, ou La Nouvelle Héloïse*"

11:50 Nikol Dziub (Université de Haute-Alsace, France)

« *Lolita* cover girl : entre illustrations et adaptations »

12:10 Questions

Atelier B (Room 03): Trans / (1)

Chair: Xavier Giudicelli (Université de Reims, France)

10:30 Fanny Geuzaine (Université catholique de Louvain, Belgique)

« C comme Horloge : l'illustration comme adaptation sémiotique et dévorante dans l'abécédaire *The Dangerous Alphabet* de Neil Gaiman et Gris Grimly »

10:50 Nicolas Labarre (Université Bordeaux-Montaigne, France)

"Adapting Clive Barker into comics: graphic style, graphic school and intermedial dynamics"

11:10 Michael Adeoye Aderemi (Federal University, Oye-Ekiti, Nigeria)

"Visual Illustrations on Stage: A Theatre Designer's Experiment with Prose-Drama Adaptations"

11:30 Julie LeBlanc (University of Toronto, Canada)

"Ekphrasis, Photographic Illustrations and Theatrical/Cinematic Adaptations. A Genetic Perspective on Annie Ernaux's Intermedial Autobiography/Photographic Production"

11:50 Questions

12:15 Lunch / Déjeuner (buffet)

(Forum) Brigitte Friant-Kessler :

'*Robinson Crusoe*'s Tercentenary / Tricentenaire de *Robinson Crusoe*, 1719-2019'

14:00 Plenary (Lecture Hall)

Kamilla Elliott (Lancaster University, United Kingdom): "Adaptation and Illustration"

Chair: Shannon Wells-Lassagne (Université de Bourgogne, France)

15:00 Coffee break / Pause-café

Parallel sessions / Ateliers parallèles

Atelier A (Lecture Hall): Afterlives (2)

Chair: Ann Lewis (Birkbeck University of London, United Kingdom)

15:30 Christine Collière-Whiteside (ESPE, Université de Bourgogne, France)

"Roald Dahl's Marvellous Illustrators"

15:50 Alix Cazalet-Boudigues (Université Jean Moulin-Lyon 3, France)

« Ut Poesis Photographia : Poésie et illustration photographique »

16:10 Thaïs Flores Nogueira Diniz (Federal University of Minas Gerais, Belo Horizonte, Brazil):

"Edgar Allan Poe and his Afterlives"

16:30 Jordan Scheubel (Université de Haute-Alsace, France)

« Les schémas de Samuel Beckett. Entre illustration et adaptation de l'«empêchement» »

16:50 Questions

Atelier B (Room 03): Trans / (2)

Chair: Christina Ionescu (Mount Allison University, Canada)

15:30 Camila Figueiredo (Federal University of Minas Gerais, Belo Horizonte, Brazil)

"The Transcultural Adaptation of *Le Petit Prince* to Brazilian cordel Literature"

15:50 Xavier Giudicelli (Université de Reims, France)

"Adapting, Translating, Illustrating: French *Ballads of Reading Gaol* in Word and Image"

16:10 Miriam Vieira and Camila Figueiredo (Federal University of Minas Gerais, Belo Horizonte, Brazil) "What if Perrault and the Grimms had been born in Brazil? The case of five (illustrated) adaptations"

16:30 Célia Guimarães Helene (Universidade Presbiteriana Mackenzie, Brazil)

"From Film to Book: A Study of Images and Illustrations in Peter Greenaway's *Prospero's Books*"

16:50 Questions

Dinner in town at 19:30 / dîner en ville à 19h30

Maison Millière, 10 rue de la Chouette, 21000 Dijon

Friday 11 October / Vendredi 11 octobre

Parallel sessions / Ateliers parallèles

Atelier A (Lecture Hall): Artists' practices

Chair: Gabriele Rippl (University of Bern, Switzerland)

9:00 Jean-Louis Claret (Université Aix-Marseille, France)

"Illustrating Shakespeare: From the Mental Stage to the Page"

9:20 Mel Brown (Plymouth College of Art, United Kingdom)

"Adaptation as Reparation"

9:40 Nick Dodds (Institute of the Arts / University of Cumbria, United Kingdom)

"From Prose to Panel: Negotiating authenticity and visual modality in the comic-book adaptation of a literary memoir"

10:00 Donna Leishman (Glasgow School of Art, United Kingdom)

"Adapt or Die: Folkloric in the Digital Age"

10:20 Questions