Hans Christian Andersen (1805-2005): A Bicentennial Selection

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Hans Christian Andersen, Denmark's best-known author, had a long and diverse career in the world of letters. Most widely recognized for his collections of fairy tales, Andersen was also a novelist, a poet and travel writer, the author of musical works, and a creator of original, whimsical papercuts. His retellings of traditional Danish fairy tales and the many fairy tales he created have been read and reread by generations of young people around the world. From their first publication in the mid-nineteenth century to today, Andersen’s fairy tales have remained continuously in print in numerous languages.

Andersen was born in 1805 in Odense, Denmark, left school at age 11, and moved to Copenhagen at 14, where a series of patrons and friends encouraged his literary talent. His first book of children’s stories, Eventyr fortalte for Børn ("Tales Told for Children") was published in 1835. He died in Rolighed, Denmark in 1875.

This exhibit has been created for the bicentennial anniversary of Andersen’s birth and displays a representative collection of his writings held by the Department of Rare Books and Special Collections. The bulk of the books on display have been taken from the Historical Children’s Literature Collection and the Augusta Baker Collection of African-American Children’s Literature and Folklore.

Case 1 contains examples of some of the first English translations of Andersen’s writings. Cases 2-6 each look at one of his classic fairy tales and explore how nineteenth- and twentieth-century children’s book illustrators have reacted to and interpreted the text, often in widely different ways. Unless otherwise noted, all books in the exhibit are by Andersen; any exceptions are noted on the item label.

Case 1: Early Writings

The Improvisatore: or, Life in Italy.
– Andersen was a well-known Danish literary figure before he achieved wide fame for his fairy tales. The Improvisatore, an autobiographical novel, first
appeared in Danish in 1835 and was his first real success after several years of publishing poems, musical dramas, and travel sketches. The first edition of his fairy tales appeared that same year, solidifying his reputation as Denmark’s leading man of letters.

The Shoes of Fortune, and Other Tales.
- This volume is the earliest collection of Andersen’s fairy tales in USC’s collections. It was published soon after the first English translations of his work began to appear in 1846 and includes four illustrations by the German artist Otto Specktor, who illustrated many of the original Danish editions.

Andersen, Hans Christian (1805-1870) and Grandfather Drewsen.

Christine’s Picture Book.
- A facsimile edition of a scrapbook created by Danish court magistrate Adolph Drewsen in 1859 for his granddaughter Christine, with assistance from his friend Hans Christian Andersen. The book contains clippings from newspapers and magazines from several countries arranged into pictures and collages. Drewsen and Andersen wrote verse captions for many pages, and the book contains several examples of Andersen’s papercuts.

Hans Andersen’s Fairy Tales.
New York: James Miller, 1876. Original red stamped cloth.

The Mud-King’s Daughter and Other Stories.

Case 2: The Princess and the Pea

New York: Hurd and Houghton, 1876.

Stories from Hans Andersen.
With Illustrations by Edmund Dulac.

*Seven Tales by H. C. Andersen.*
Translated from the Danish by Eva Le Galliene.
Pictures by Maurice Sendak.

Eisen, Armand, ed.
*A Treasury of Children’s Literature.*

**Case 3: Thumbelina**

*Fairy Tales by Hans Christian Andersen.*
With Eighty Illustrations.

*Fairy Tales and Stories by Hans Christian Andersen.*
Translated by Dr. H. W. Dulcken. With Sixty Illustrations by A. W. Bayes.
London: George Routledge and Sons, 1900.

*Fairy Tales.*
– This set of 12 miniature volumes contains 9 of Andersen’s most popular tales, all housed in a miniature paperboard wardrobe cabinet.

*Thumbelina.*
Illustrated by Adrienne Adams.

*Thumbeline.*
Illustrated by Lissbeth Zwerger. Newly Translated from the Danish by Richard and Clare Winston.

**Case 4: The Emperor’s New Clothes**
The Emperor's New Clothes.
Translated and Illustrated by Erik Blegvad.
Augusta Baker Collection.

Baker, Augusta, ed.
Best Loved Fairy Tales Including Mother Goose Selections.
Augusta Baker Collection.
– This collection was edited by Baker when she was the Coordinator of Children's Services at the New York Public Library.

The Emperor's New Clothes.
Retold by Anne Rockwell from the Nineteenth-Century Translation by H. W. Dulcken. Pictures by Anne Rockwell.
Augusta Baker Collection.

The Emperor's New Clothes.
Retold by Riki Levinson. Illustrated by Robert Byrd.
Augusta Baker Collection.

The Emperor's New Clothes and Other Stories.

Case 5: The Little Mermaid

Tales and Fairy Stories, by Hans Christian Andersen.
Translated by Madame de Chatelain. Illustrated by Henry Warren.

Stories from Hans Andersen.
With Illustrations by Edmund Dulac.

The Little Mermaid.
Translated by M. R. James. Illustrated by Pamela Bianco.
Hans Andersen's Fairy Tales.
Augusta Baker Collection.

Augusta Baker Collection.

Case 6: The Ugly Duckling

The Ugly Duck and Other Tales by Hans Christian Andersen.
Illustrated.
New York: Allen Brothers, 1869.

Hans Andersen's Fairy Tales.
Translated by Valdemar Paulsen With Illustrations by Milo Winter.

The Ugly Duckling.
Racine, Wis.?: Whitman?, 1930.

Hans Andersen: His Classic Fairy Tales.
From the New Translation by Erik Haugaard.
Illustrated by Michael Foreman.
Augusta Baker Collection.

The Ugly Ducking.
English Text by Anne Stewart. Illustrated by Monika Laimgruber.
Augusta Baker Collection.

The Ugly Duckling.
As Told by Marianna Mayer. Illustrations by Thomas Locker.
Augusta Baker Collection.