

IMAGINARY VOYAGES



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The idea of travel sets our minds off in many directions: East, West, North, South...as well as Up and Down. Writers have speculated for centuries about interstellar travel. Others have imagined visiting mythical continents or journeying to the center of the Earth. The works on view in this exhibition were crafted by a variety of storytellers with a range of destinations. Some were pure fantasy, such as the works of Jules Verne and Mark Twain; others attempted to communicate information about newly discovered lands on Earth while adding fictional components about talking animals and exotic beasts. Other tales use invented extra-terrestrial societies as allegories to comment on politics and human behavior. All of these travel narratives offer humor and sociological commentary, so let's join Babar, Baron Munchausen, Hildebrand Bowman, and Professor Otto Lidenbrock as they explore outer and inner space.

This imaginary trip finds Mr. Baboulifiche and his servant Papavoine traveling to Earth's moon on a hot air balloon. Their visit is complicated by encounters with flying spiders and giant bats. Not much is known about the author, who described writing the tale for young readers during a series of winter evenings.

A. De Ville D'Avray

Voyage dans la lune avant 1900.

Paris: Librairie Furne, Jouvet & Cie., [1892]

This comic tale of a donkey who gets transported to Mars works as a satire on politics in France and Switzerland in the latter part of the 19th century. The style, printed lithographically, owes to the pioneering format created by Rudolph Töpffer, the father of the modern comic book.

Gabriel Liquier

Voyage d'un âne dans la planète Mars.

Genève: Lith. Excoffier, 1867

The Ship That Sailed to Mars is a fairy story, complete with magical creatures, a princess in distress, and one of the most opulent interplanetary crafts ever imagined. William Timlin, the architect and artist, created the story, and the publisher was reportedly so taken by his talent that the book was published in the unique facsimile format to show Timlin's drawings and calligraphy.

William M. Timlin

The Ship that Sailed to Mars: A Fantasy.

New York: Frederick A. Stokes Company, [1923]

The first edition of Mark Twain's last work published during his lifetime, *Extract from Captain Stormfield's Visit to Heaven*, features a caricature of Twain's friend, Captain Ned Wakeman. In typical Twain fashion, the writer upends traditional notions of the afterlife, with the main character having to adjust to the bureaucracy of Heaven.

Robert Esnault-Pelterie was one of the great minds of modern rocketry and astronautics, on par with Robert Goddard. His important work, *L'Astronautique*, from 1930, provided calculations for interplanetary travel, which he proposed could be powered by radium.

Mark Twain

Extract from Captain Stormfield's Visit to Heaven.

New York and London: Harper & Brothers, [1909]

Robert Esnault-Pelterie

L'Astronautique.

Paris: Imprimerie A. Lahure, 1930

Hans Christian Andersen's imagination took him many places, including on a trip to the moon, courtesy of a pair of magic boots in his tale from 1838. In one section of the story, a watchman puts on the *Lykkens Kalosker* and finds himself 250,000 miles from Earth. While the visit is brief, Andersen manages to slip in references to contemporary scientific conversations, citing Johann Mädler and Wilhelm Beer's "Mappa Selenographica" (1834) and Considerant and Brucker's hoax pamphlet expounding on a supposed celestial discovery by John Herschel.

Hans Christian Andersen

Andersen's Fairy Tales, illustrated by Elizabeth MacKinstry; with an introduction by Anne Carroll Moore.

New York: Coward-McCann, 1933

One of most bizarre tales related to a moon voyage is matched by the strange genesis of its creation. This book started life as *Faunillane, ou l'infante jaune* by the Comte de Tessin, a story of a young man assembling the body of his beloved from parts discovered while walking through a garden, but its second version became more widely known. The book's printer, faced with multiple unused copies of the illustrated plates, challenged writers he knew to fashion an alternate storyline. Charles DuClos wrote the successful overlay, rearranging the illustrations to fit his tale of Prince Acajou traveling to the moon to retrieve the severed head of the princess Zirphile and restore it to her body.

The Beinecke copy includes 84 engraved cutouts likely from 18th-century peep shows, which were stored in the volume for over 200 years.

Charles Pinot-Duclos

Acajou et Zirphile: conte.

A Minutie [i.e. Paris]: [Prault], M.DCC.XLIV [1744]

Two movable books for children show colorful moon voyages. Babar, the adventurous royal elephant, rode a rocket and walked in space just one year before the Apollo landing. Six decades earlier, Mr. Tramontane and Mr. Giggins took their souped-up automobile on a lunar trip, where they met a car-crazy and reckless population.

Laurent de Brunhoff

Babar's Moon Trip.

New York: Random House, 1968

J.R. Pepper

A Trip to the Moon: A Movable Picture Book.

Chicago: The L.W. Walter Company, [1910?]

An advertising card for a mechanical ride from the Pan-American Exposition of 1901 is paired with a landmark bit of science fiction.

“Orrin Lindsay’s” account of interplanetary travel is presented as the transcript of a lecture done in New Orleans in 1847, in which the author recounted his travels to the moon and to Mars. The pamphlet went largely unmentioned upon until the early 1930s when the editor Charles P. Mason cited it as perhaps the first “hard” science fiction story (i.e. concerned with scientific accuracy).

“Get off the earth” via the great airship route: the Aerial Navigation Co. has 30 airships flying daily from the Pan-American Exposition grounds on a trip to the moon: Pan-American Exposition, Buffalo, 1901.

[Buffalo?: Aerial Navigation Co.?, 1901?]

J.L. Riddell

Orrin Lindsay’s Plan of Aerial Navigation: With a narrative of his explorations in the higher regions of the atmosphere, and his wonderful voyage round the moon!

New Orleans: Rea’s Power Press Office, 1847

Two editions of the adventures of Baron Munchausen include accounts of his visits to the moon. This set of evolving tall tales, based on the exploits of the real-life Baron combined with earlier accounts of fabulous adventures, were first published in English by the German writer Rudolf Erich Raspe in 1786, then translated into several languages, going through many changes and expansions. On view are images of the eponymous Munchausen and inhabitants of the moon.

Gulliver Revived: containing singular travels, campaigns, voyages, and adventures, in Russia, Iceland, Turkey, Egypt, Gibraltar, up the Mediterranean, and on the Atlantic Ocean: also an account of a voyage in to the moon, with many extraordinary particulars relative to the cooking animal, in that planet, which are here called the human species by Baron Munchausen. The fourth edition, considerably enlarged.

[New York]: London, printed, New-York, re-printed for Samuel Campbell, 1787

Baron Munchausen's Narrative of his Marvellous Travels.

Gulliver Revived, or, The vice of lying properly exposed: containing singular travels, campaigns, voyages, and adventures in Russia...

London: C. and G. Kearsley, 1792-93 [v. 1, 1793]

A quartet of 17th-century imprints uses the motif of a society on the moon to explore scientific discoveries and satirize contemporary English politics. Francis Godwin's *The Man in the Moone* follows a Spaniard who flies a team of giant geese to the moon where he finds a Christian paradise. John Wilkin's *The Discovery of a World in the Moone* is a scientific-philosophical tract expounding on discoveries made with telescopes, asserting the possibility of space travel, following on Copernicus's 1620 volume that reshaped our modern understanding of the universe. Cyrano de Bergerac's proto-sci-fi novel involves a series of attempts to reach the moon. When he finally lands, Cyrano meets not only the expected odd-looking moon people, but also Domingo Gonsales, the hero of Francis Godwin's novel. Aphra Behn's farce, *The Emperor of the Moon*, does not venture out to the universe, but rather it brings a pair of suitors, masquerading as "moon men," to Naples to win the hands of two young ladies.

Francis Godwin

The Man in the Moone, or, A discourse of a voyage thither by Domingo Gonsales the speedy messenger.

London: Printed by John Norton, and are to be sold by Ioshua Kirton, and Thomas Warren, 1638

John Wilkins

The Discovery of a World in the Moone, or, A Discourse tending to prove, that tis' probable there may be another habitable world in that planet.

London: Printed by E. G. for M. Sparke and E. Forrest, 1638

Cyrano de Bergerac Sel-enarhia, or, The Government of the World in the Moon: A comical history done into English by Tho. St Serf, Gent.

London: Printed by J. Cottrel, and are to be sold by Hum. Robinson at the three Pigeons in Pauls Churchyard, 1659

Aphra Behn

The Emperor of the Moon: A Farce: As it is acted by Their Majesties servants, at the Queens theatre.

London, Printed by R. Holt, for Joseph Knight, and Francis Saunders, 1687

Two versions of an early moon voyage story by Francis Gentleman (a.k.a. Nicholas Lunatic) recount the discovery of the peoples of the lunar island of Noibla. While a portion of the novel is given to fantastical details, much of the narrative consists of barbed commentary on historical figures who ended up on the moon.

Francis Gentleman

A Trip to the Moon. Containing an account of the Island of Noibla. Its inhabitants, religious and political customs, &c. By Sir Humphrey Lunatic, bart. [pseud.]

London, Printed for S. Crowder [etc., etc.] 1765

Nicholas Lunatic, pseud.

Satiric Tales: Consisting of a Voyage to the Moon, All the Tailors, or, The Old Cloak, and The Fat Witch of London.

[London]: Printed by J. Dean for G. Hughes, and H.D. Symonds, 1808

Two 18th-century fictional accounts capitalized on key world events. Samuel Brunt's *Cacklogallina* from 1727 (sometimes attributed to Daniel Defoe or Jonathan Swift, but without validity) has a hero who is shipwrecked on an island populated by giant talking chickens who fly him to the moon (in echoes of Francis Godwin's *The Man in the Moone*). The satirical import of the story is in linking the financing of the moon expedition to the recent debacle of the South Sea Bubble.

Travels of Hildebrand Bowman is also of doubtful authorship, with the likeliest attribution being one Robert Home. This novel builds on the success of the printed account of Captain James Cook's global expedition by inventing locations in the South Pacific and their inhabitants – each community reflecting a stage of human civilization.

Samuel Brunt

A Voyage to Cacklogallinia: With a Description of the Religion, Policy, Customs and Manners of that Country.

London: Printed by J. Watson, 1727

Travels of Hildebrand Bowman, Esquire [pseud.] into Carno-virria, Taupiniera, Olfactaria, and Auditante, in New-Zealand; in the Island of Bonhomnica, and in the Powerful Kingdom of Luxo-volupto, on the Great Southern Continent, Written by himself.

London: Printed for W. Strahan [etc.], 1778

Up towards the stars was not the only option for early adventurers. In this pair of novels, the heroes tunneled into the Earth to discover hidden lands. The most famous subterranean story is undoubtedly Jules Verne's *Journey to the Center of the Earth*, which was influenced heavily by 19th-century geological discoveries. After descending into a volcano in Iceland, a trio of adventurers, led by Professor Otto Lidenbrock, encounter prehistoric animals and humanoids. Baron Ludvig Holberg's fantastic tale of inner-space travel, *A Journey to the World Under-ground*, preceded Verne by over 100 years, and, as with many of his 18th-century counterparts, his goal was focused on satire rather than pure entertainment. Holberg's hero, Niels Klim, passed through several societies beneath the Earth's crust, including the utopian land of Potu, whose egalitarian behavior greatly displeased the traveler.

Jules Verne

Stories of Adventure.

New York: Scribner, Armstrong & Co., 1874 (New York: John F. Trow & Son)

[Ludvig Holberg]

A Journey to the World Under-ground / by Nicholas Klimius [pseud.]; translated from the original.

London: T. Astley [etc.], 1742

Another pair of “fantastic voyages” uses observational models applied to newly discovered societies to comment on politics germane to the writers’ lives. Charles Sorel’s account of the Kingdom of Frisquemore is so focused on describing the landscape, peoples, and products that it might be taken for a prospectus for a global trading enterprise. Thomas Artus’s *Description de l’isle des Hermaphrodites* is much more emphatic in its intent. However, instead of being an examination of gender and the body, the narrative focuses on a sense of “hermaphrodite” in use in the 18th century, meaning a dualistic and conflicting nature – an unrestricted libertinism that threatened to corrupt society.

Charles Sorel

Relation de ce qui s’est passé dans la nouvelle découverte du Royaume de Frisquemore.

A Paris: Chez Lovis Billaine, au second pillar de la grand’salle du Palais, à la Palme, & au Grand Cesar, 1662

Thomas Artus

Description de l’isle des Hermaphrodites, nouvellement decouverte: Contenant les moeurs, les coutumes & les ordonances des habitans de cette isle, comme aussi le discours de Jacophile à Limne, avec quelques autres pieces curieuses: pour servir de supplement au Journal de Henri III.

A Cologne [i.e. Bruxelles]: Chez les heritiers de Herman Demen, [1724]

The stance of viewing outlandish behavior from afar was used by three 18th-century authors to criticize how Earthlings conducted themselves. Daniel Defoe's *The Consolidator*, which predated his *Robinson Crusoe* by almost two decades, has the author traveling to a technologically advanced China, which has a long-standing relationship with the Lunarians, whom he visits on the moon. George Lyttleton's *A New Journey to the World in the Moon* is a barely disguised harsh analysis of the government of Sir Robert Walpole in the first part of the 18th century, while François-Louis Suleau's *Voyage en l'air* performs a similar critique of Revolutionary era France.

Daniel Defoe

The Consolidator: or, Memoirs of Sundry Transactions from the World in the Moon. Translated from the Lunar Language, By the Author of The True-born English Man.

London: Printed by B. Bragg, 1705

George Lyttelton

A New Journey to the World in the Moon. Containing, I. A full description of the manner of the author's performing his journey; and his reasons why former lunarian travellers could not find their way thither: with an exact account of the different roads, for their future direction. II. The history of the several sovereigns, religion, politics, elections, &c. of the lunar world, for above an hundred years last past to the present time.

London: Publish'd by C. Corbett at Addison's Head over-against St. Dunstan's Church in Fleet-street, 1741

François-Louis Suleau

Voyage en l'air, par M. Suleau. Second réveil... Balonnapolis.

[Paris, 1791]