

MURDER HE WROTE

Edward Gorey and the Art of the Mystery

OUR 2018 EXHIBIT, which opened April 12th, is an investigation into Edward Gorey's relationship with the murder-mystery genre. It is a highly suspect relationship and one that seems to have colored and formed much of the tone and manner that one associates with Gorey's work: ironic, detached, restrained—and suddenly murderous.

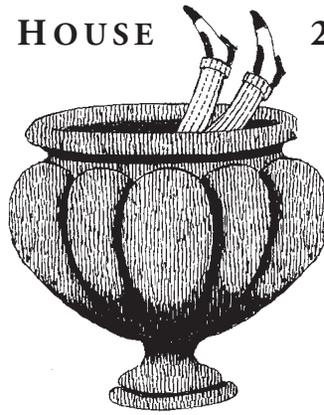
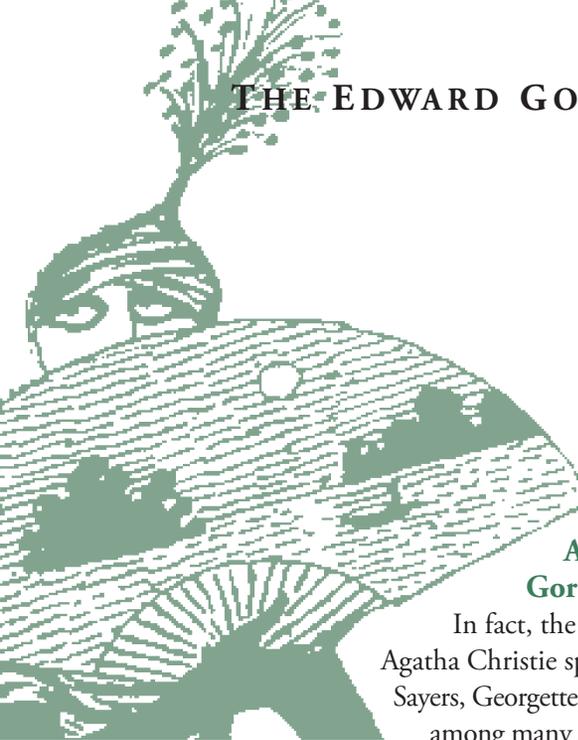
The House extends its profound gratitude to those of you who sponsored our 2017 exhibit *Edward Gorey's Cabinet of Curiosities* which was viewed (and we presume enjoyed) by over 10,000 visitors last year. Sponsors of our cases have their names attached to the case as a way to show that you care more than a lot of people. It makes you a patron of the arts and gives you and your family free admission to the House all year and, if all that makes you feel special—that's because you *are*. If you've visited the House and have a specific unlisted out-of-the-box item you want to sponsor—our scavenger hunt, our scavenger hunt pencils, our magnolia tree, our Halloween Art Contest album, or maybe our elephant coffeetable—then give us a call or send us an email.

A little overview of *Murder He Wrote* follows, and individual cases are then listed after that. You'll find that there is something for everyone: murder, detectives, suspects, weapons and, of course, red herrings. Whether you sponsor or not, we hope you get a chance to view the exhibit in person. Our small-but-mighty museum continues to be an international attraction for both admirers of Gorey and newcomers to his work. Our funding comes from sponsorships, memberships and visitors—we hope that you will fall into at least one of those categories.

Thank you.

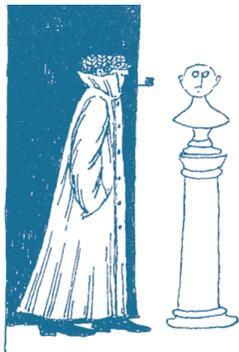
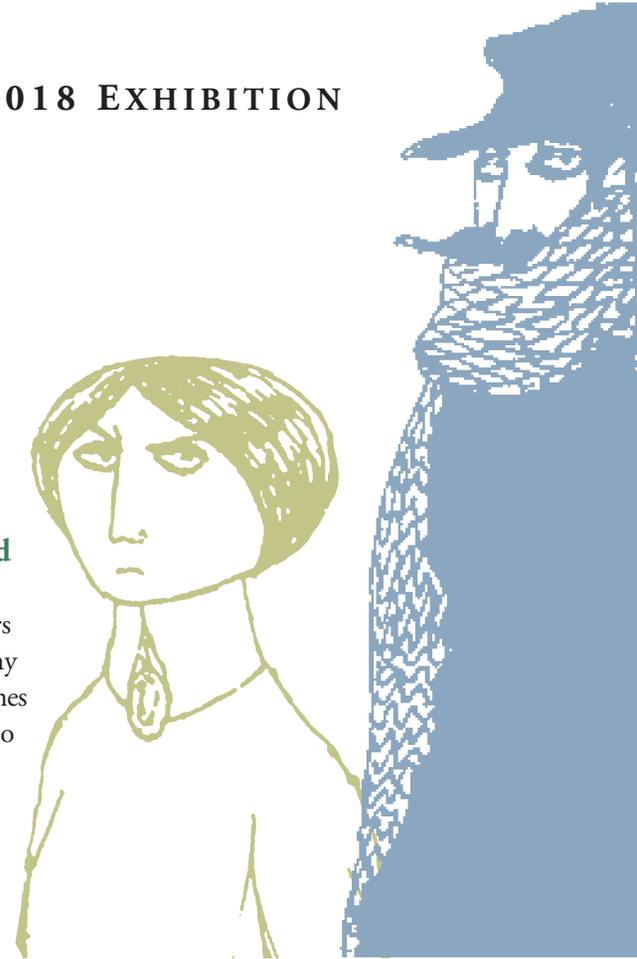
Gregory Hischak, *Curator* The Edward Gorey House
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As much as he loved cats, Edward Gorey loved a good mystery.

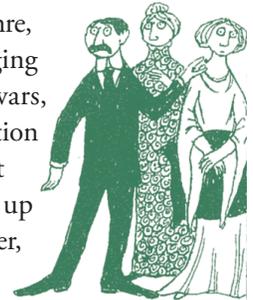
In fact, the murder-mystery genre and its writers Agatha Christie specifically, but also including Dorothy Sayers, Georgette Heyer, Josephine Tey and Michael Innes among many others—were the passion of a man who some might have considered rather passionless. The Edward Gorey House 2018 exhibit scrutinizes Gorey and his relationship to the murder mystery. As his father, Edward Leo Gorey, was once a Chicago newspaper crime reporter we might actually go so far as to say that crime writing *literally* ran through Gorey's blood.



Many of the visual devices and narrative styles that Gorey employs are drawn directly from the murder mystery genre: distinctly British, vaguely interwar, genteel, understated, and savage (in a genteel, understated way). ***Murder He Wrote*** presents Edward Gorey as the murder mystery author/artist whose

obscure and timeless world brims with suspicious characters, red herrings, questionable motives and highly inconclusive revelations. Artwork from *The Audrey-Gore Legacy*, *The Other Statue*, and *The Deadly Blotter* among other works reveal the components of an Edward Gorey Murder Mystery. It is a dreamlike world of both rigid social class and brutal anarchy where nothing much happens—until it does. Awash in false clues and mystery, it's a world that sounds very much like Gorey himself.

The appeal of the murder mystery genre, blossoming as it did in a rapidly changing society between the first and second wars, filled an inherent need for the restoration of an older order. As our 2018 exhibit demonstrates, Gorey constantly tears up the contract between author and reader, leaving us with false clues, broken promises, and red herrings.



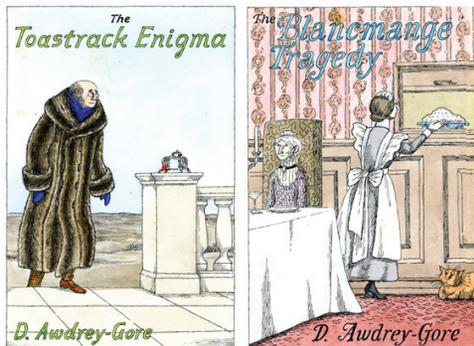
But in return, the rewards can be very satisfying and the bonds strong. Gorey is at his most engaging when he lets his reader fill in the blanks and draw conclusions. Now you—the Reader—are in cahoots *with* the Writer, and an active participant in the landscape he's drawn you into: a strangely beautiful, whimsical and yet dangerous place. In other words, welcome to the modern world. 🐟

The exhibit ***Murder He Wrote*** runs at the Edward Gorey House in Yarmouth Port, MA from April 12th through December 30, 2018. See [Planning Your Visit](#) for hours and more info.

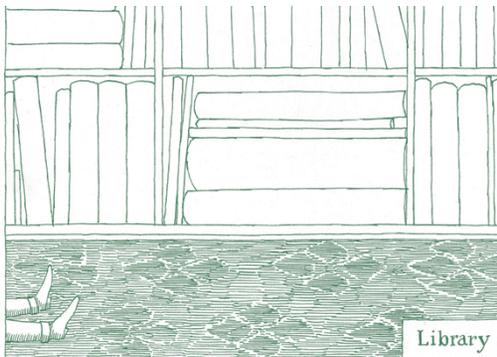
The Edward Gorey House gratefully acknowledges the following for their generous loan of materials and assistance for our 2018 exhibit: Andreas Brown and the Edward Gorey Charitable Trust, Thomas and Joann Michalak, Sam Spiegel, and our Edward Gorey House docents who annually digest our musings. Illustrations courtesy of the Edward Gorey Charitable Trust.

THE EDWARD GOREY HOUSE 2018 EXHIBITION

Murder He Wrote Case Sponsorships Available



THE AWDREY-GORE LEGACY



Case 1. Introduction to *Murder He Wrote* Sponsorship Available / \$750

An introduction to Gorey and his murder mystery world, from cradle to grave, as it were, with earliest drawings (age 8) to staged death scenes (*The Cut Direct*—yes, that's Edward with the knife in his heart). In addition to several murder mystery cover illustrations by Gorey and his copy of Christie's *The Listerdale Mystery*, we are introduced to the featured book of this exhibit: original cover art to Gorey's *The Awdrey-Gore Legacy* (1972). Also included are a dancing skeletons series, and other drawings unseen until now.

Case 2. Exhibit A: The Murder Sponsored by Andrew Magnusson

Not to dwell on the obvious unpleasantness but *someone* has to die to set the murder puzzle into motion and this case, featuring original artwork from *The Awdrey-Gore Legacy* and reproduced art from *The Other Statue*, *The Deadly Blotter* and *The Water Flowers*. This case sets up the structure of the exhibit, which is breaking down the somewhat rigid structure of a murder mystery into its various components and then throwing them out the window.

Case 3. Exhibit B: The Detective Sponsorship Available / \$500

Enter the Detective, the enigmatic outsider, no stranger to the dark side (as evident by the jar of *Cad's Relish* included here). It would be stating the obvious to say that Gorey related to the detective archetype (though he may have felt equally at home in being victim and suspect archetype as well). Drawings from *The Awdrey-Gore Legacy* introduce us to Det. Waredo Dyrge and his canine companion Deary Rewdgo and the 2nd featured book of this exhibit *The Other Statue* (1968), along with other detectives as rendered by Gorey and others.

Preamble to Case 4. Exhibit C: The Suspects Sponsorship Available / \$300

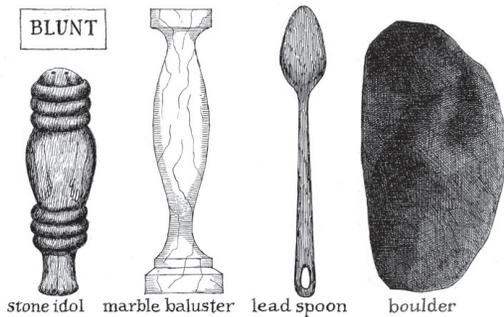
A small but action-packed case that introduces the suspects. That the perpetrator of the murder is to be found among a known roster of suspects is one of the sacred cows of the murder mystery and Gorey skewers it delightfully. Again *The Awdrey-Gore Legacy* and *The Other Statue* come through with wonderful artwork. Also included are several (printed) brochure covers to the Mohonk Mountain House Resort Murder Mystery Weekend. Gorey provided the cover illustrations for these events for a decade or so.



Case 4. Exhibit C: The Suspects Continued

Sponsorship Available / \$500

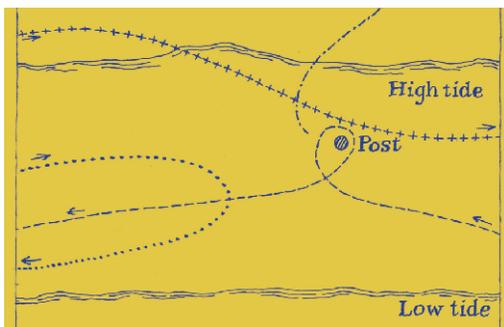
Additional suspects are presented here to prove a point: *every* Gorey character looks like a suspect, or at least *appears* suspect. In other words, everyone is a suspect, everyone is guilty of something. This case is loaded to the brim with original art from *The Awdrey-Gore Legacy* as well as three images from Gorey's unpublished *The Angel, the Automobilist & Eighteen Others* (early 1950s).



Case 5. Exhibit D: The Murder Weapon

Sponsored by Sari Bitticks

The truly refreshing thing about a murder mystery is its general absence of guns. In *The Awdrey-Gore Legacy* template murders are committed by a variety of sharp, blunt, poisonous or limp items. In fact, everything *but* a gun is a potential murder weapon—from biscuits to paper maché animals. Original artwork from *The Awdrey-Gore Legacy* is supplemented with a few dangerous objects from the Dogear Wryde Postcard series *Alms for Oblivion* (1978).



Case 6. Exhibit E: The Crucial Information

Sponsorship Available / \$500

Of the wealth of information a mystery writer provides for solving a crime, much of it will prove superfluous. In Gorey's mystery, *all* of it might be superfluous. Here we are inundated with detail and minutia from *The Awdrey-Gore Legacy*, *The Water Flowers*, *The Unstrung Harp* and some pages from *Notable British Trials*—a series that Gorey collected and, obviously, filched freely from.



Case 7. Exhibit F: The Miss Underfold Detour

Sponsored by Thomas & Jo-Ann Michalak

A look at a sidestory within *The Other Statue* concerning the scowling governess of Lispering Manor—Miss Underfold. Her name itself suggests concealment and deceit. This case is a roadmap of sorts through her actions within *The Other Statue* (presented here with reproduced artwork)—an *indirect* roadmap to say the least—but an excellent example of Gorey leading us, in the most literal sense, down a garden path.



Case 8. Exhibit G: The Red Herring

Sponsored by Shelley & Todd Rodman

The Red Herring: seemingly plausible information that later proves to be mostly useless, if not downright deceiving. Reproduced art from *Alms for Oblivion*, *The Other Statue*, *The Helpless Doornob* and from Mohonk Mountain House Mystery brochures all bring us to a startling discovery: quite possibly the entire oeuvre of Gorey's work is, in fact, a collection of red herrings. Maybe Gorey's leading us astray is just his way of making us find our *own* way home. "By indirections shall we find directions out," Agatha Christie says.



Case 9. Exhibit H: Revelations and Such Sponsorship Available / \$600

This case is both *The Reveal* and *The Betrayal* because by now we've discovered that we've been *duped*. With original artwork and lettering from *The Awdrey-Gore Legacy* (including backcover art), alibis are blown and suspects gathered for the final solution to the puzzle: which is that there is no solution. Life is, if nothing else, a hallway of clues and mysteries that propel us forward. If we're left unclear here who the murderer actually is, well, we're not entirely sure who the *victim* was either. What is actually revealed in the end is Gorey's relationship to his reader—his continual demands on his reader to connect his fragmented narrative. You are, by definition, guilty.



Backroom Case. PBS Mystery! Sponsored by Alyson Shaw & Jessica S. Bumpous

For our 2018 exhibit, *Murder He Wrote*, our large backroom case has been devoted entirely to *PBS Mystery!* with several animation cels, preliminary drawings, and assembled promotional items. While Gorey didn't get rich off of the animated intros to the long-running series, he did receive national recognition and the ensuing seasonal collateral work kept him well-employed as an illustrator.



Permanent Case 3. Gorey's *Dracula* Sponsorship Available / \$500

Edward Gorey's 1977 production of *Dracula* on Broadway is an important transition both in Gorey's life and in the flow of our annual exhibits, with things always going a bit wacky as we enter the Second Gallery. *Dracula* includes original pen and ink drawings as well as opening night invitations, photographs, assorted Playbills, original moiré Dracula wallpaper, toy theatre, and Gorey's Tony Award for Best Costume Design.



Second Gallery Walls *The Awdrey-Gore Postcards* Sponsored by Glen Emil / Goreyography

The Awdrey-Gore Legacy ends, inexplicably as it begins with a series of unsent postcards—front and back—that have been mysteriously doctored so that actual locations remain a mystery. Of course, Gorey drew all of them and they are lovely pieces of art. Included with the front and back art are black and white versions of the hand-colored fronts that were never published.



Drawer Display. The Mysterious Disappearance and Reappearance of Agatha Christie Sponsorship Available / \$250

A brief overview of Christie's sensational disappearance in 1926 and the worldwide tabloid fodder it created. A mental breakdown, a publicity stunt, a marital problem that escalated wildly out of control—it is a Stranger-Than-Fiction factoid that Gorey couldn't resist borrowing at the beginning of *The Awdrey-Gore Legacy*.



Small Permanent Case 1. Potato Mashers Assembled Sponsorship Available / \$250

Assembled for our Cabinet of Curiosities exhibit in 2017, these beautiful items and their grouping as such can be spied in Kevin McDermott's book *Elephant House*. Not merely interesting in and of themselves, Gorey's arrangement brings something both oddly *urban* as well as *tribal* to them. Go figure.



Cabinet 1. Gorey's Childhood Sponsorship Available / \$250

Part of the House's permanent exhibit—young Gorey memorabilia: his Chicago childhood with his first drawing *The Sausage Train* (at 18 months no less) plus photos, early drawings, as well as items from Gorey's collection of toys and postcards, artifacts like his infant spoon and fork (his mom really *did* keep everything), his birth certificate (yes, American), and Gorey's first official "Book" along with "Supplement".



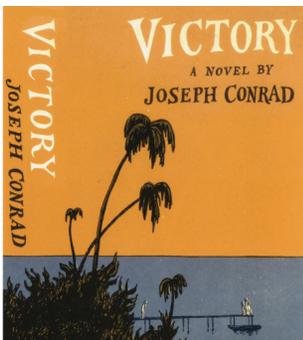
Small Permanent Case 2. Teen Gorey Sponsorship Available / \$250

A free-standing case of Gorey's middle school and high school memorabilia: travel journals and developmental artwork, a ticket stub and splintered piece of wood from the Sonja Henie Ice Show in Miami which ended in a free-for-all riot, a yearbook image of *Ted* on the Francis Parker School Social Committee, as well as some rather unflattering reports sent home concerning his academic efforts.



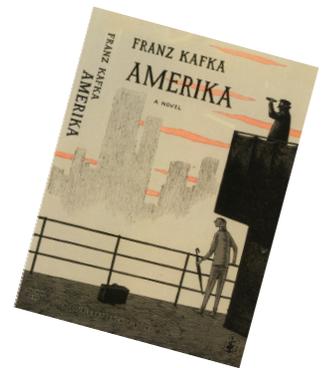
Cabinet 2. Gorey's Jewelry Sponsored by Malcolm & Karen Whyte

Part of the permanent exhibit—a collection of Gorey's rings, pendants, and assorted hardware. Much of Gorey's jewelry, like the art objects he collected, were found objects: weights, or random metal bits that got attached to a string. Some are quite small and some quite massive. All of them made a noise when Gorey entered a room, all of them removed when he sat down at his drawing table



Cabinet 3. Doubleday Anchor Sponsorship Available / \$250

In 1953 Gorey moved to New York City to take a job with Doubleday Anchor. He was tasked with creating the covers for their new line of paperback literary classics and essays. Over the next six years Gorey illustrated over 50 titles for them. His innate ability to distill a book into a quickly graspable cover design quickly gained him notice in the design world of New York, which would remain his home for the next 35 years.



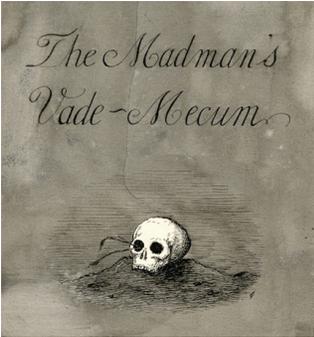
Cabinet 4. Frogs (Rana Temporaria) Sponsored by Deborah Grumet

Edward had hundreds of frog items—small pieces that could rest on a finger to large stone frogs that you'd easily trip over (and do). Maybe it was their ambiguous shape (like his elephants and rocks) that sparked an infatuation with a creature that appeared frequently in his handmade dolls and less frequently in his actual drawings.



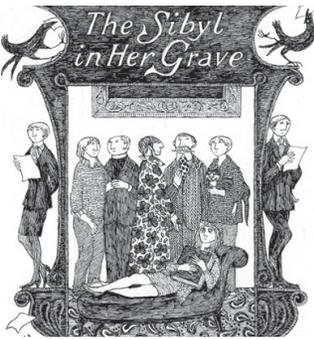
Cabinet 5. Les Passementaries Horribles \$250 **Sponsorship Available / \$250**

Gorey's *Les Passementaries Horribles* (*The Horrible Tassels*) is a very rare and prized example of Gorey utilizing his vast collections for a specific illustration project. The tassels were found in a cigarbox in the House shortly after Gorey's death—each tassel matching up to a page in the book and lovingly rendered with great accuracy.



Cabinet 6. The Madman's Vade Mecum \$250 **Sponsorship Available / \$250**

Featuring a never-before-seen undated illustration *The Madman's Vade Mecum* (a vade mecum being a small pocket-sized handbook). Also are covers from Gorey's collection of *Fan To Mas*, a lurid Italian crime periodical from the early 1960s. The covers (not by Gorey) seem to have directly informed two of Gorey's drawings, from *FMRA* and *The Other Statue* (copies of which are included for comparison). Our *mummy's hand* makes its appearance here in this cabinet as well.



Cabinet 7. The Sibyl in Her Grave **Sponsorship Available / \$250**

Original cover art to Sarah Caudwell's *The Sibyl in her Grave*, one of Gorey's last illustration projects published in 2000. The art is accompanied by a printed copy of the book as well as copies of other mysteries featuring Gorey covers, including *The D. Case*, *Let's Kill Uncle*, and the anthology of mystery plays *Sweet Revenge*.



Cabinet 8. Bibliophile **Sponsorship Available / \$250**

Of the 25,000 plus books that lived in this house, these are what remain—a small sampling of Gorey's library that eventually went off to San Diego State University. An inventory of the collection is searchable online. These particular books here, primarily murder mysteries, were left behind due to their worn condition but still offer an interesting window into Gorey's varied literary interests.



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or call us at 508-362-3909 and ask about current availability
of individual cases.**



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