

Stout Centre forum

Medicaments

Kyleigh is reading *Devils, Drugs & Doctors*.
She has photographs of fetishes, shrunken
heads and skulls. A golden speculum,
amputation set, scarificator, canopic
jars. The leg of the Marquis of
Anglesey; how to open the skull
19th century style.

She builds an enamelled medicine
cabinet, fills it with cures for demonic/
drug possession. Breath of Young Women or
Breath of Duck, read the 8th
Psalm three times over. Juno Drops and Anti-
Fat, how to restore hair
before a full moon. Hamlin's
Wizard Oil, a recipe
to ensure conception: syrup of stinking
orach, piths of three ox-backs... three pints
of good ale. Rub, gargle, drink, or bathe.
Let nothing disquiet you, at least be very cheerful.



"For Everything There is a Nostrum". Exhibit by Kyleigh Adrian, 1995.

Arum

She smells the bruise of purple flowers
sometime after rain (irises,
violets, agapanthus, each one
broken, delicately, beneath the skin);
surely she traces
an imprecise
memory, pulling inward
to the womb, holding tight
a layer of skin— her death
petal, a yellow tongued quality of bone.

ALISON WONG

The Roundalay

(... an extract from *Finn's Quest, a children's novel*)

EIRLYS HUNTER

... A steep staircase led them to an attic which was crammed full of once-precious objects. There was a whirr of wings and a pigeon flew in through a hole in the roof and perched on a bed rail to watch them as they rummaged. A trunk full of brocades and silks fell to dust in Finn's hands and Gala disturbed a colony of mice nesting in old King Bendigan's court records. A whole orchestra of musical instruments lay in a heap, eaten away by rust and woodworm, and a stack of portraits of sad looking men rested against a pile of moth-eaten carpets.

Finn found the roundalay hidden under a canvas sail. It was a model of a town, shaped like a cone, nearly as tall as he was, narrowing to a single roof with four chimney pots at the top. The streets which wound between the houses were the slots for the marbles to race down. There was a bakery, a blacksmith's, an inn, a church, a school, grand houses and little cottages, gardens, fountained courtyards and a fairground. It was perfect.

Gala pulled a knob on the base and a small felt-lined drawer slid open to reveal two marbles. They dropped them into two of the chimney pots. There was a clatter and the marbles popped out of two doorways and rolled round and down through the town. The bells in the church chimed twice; the ponies on the fairground roundabout bobbed up and down. Some people paraded out of one door, crossed the road and went in at another. Two men met on a street corner and bowed to each other. Water poured out of a jug and into a goblet all by itself on a table outside the inn, and a trumpeter put his trumpet to his mouth as the marbles rolled past. Near the bottom there was a field. As the marbles went by, cows and sheep raised their heads from the painted grass, as if to look at them, and three miniature red hens bent to peck.

"Hens!" shouted Finn and Gala together as the marbles dropped back into their drawer through a slot at the bottom.

"If it means taking it apart to find the crown, I can't bear it," said Gala fiercely. "I don't suppose it seems so special to you, as you live in a place where stories fly into houses and people fly through the air. But I think this is magical."