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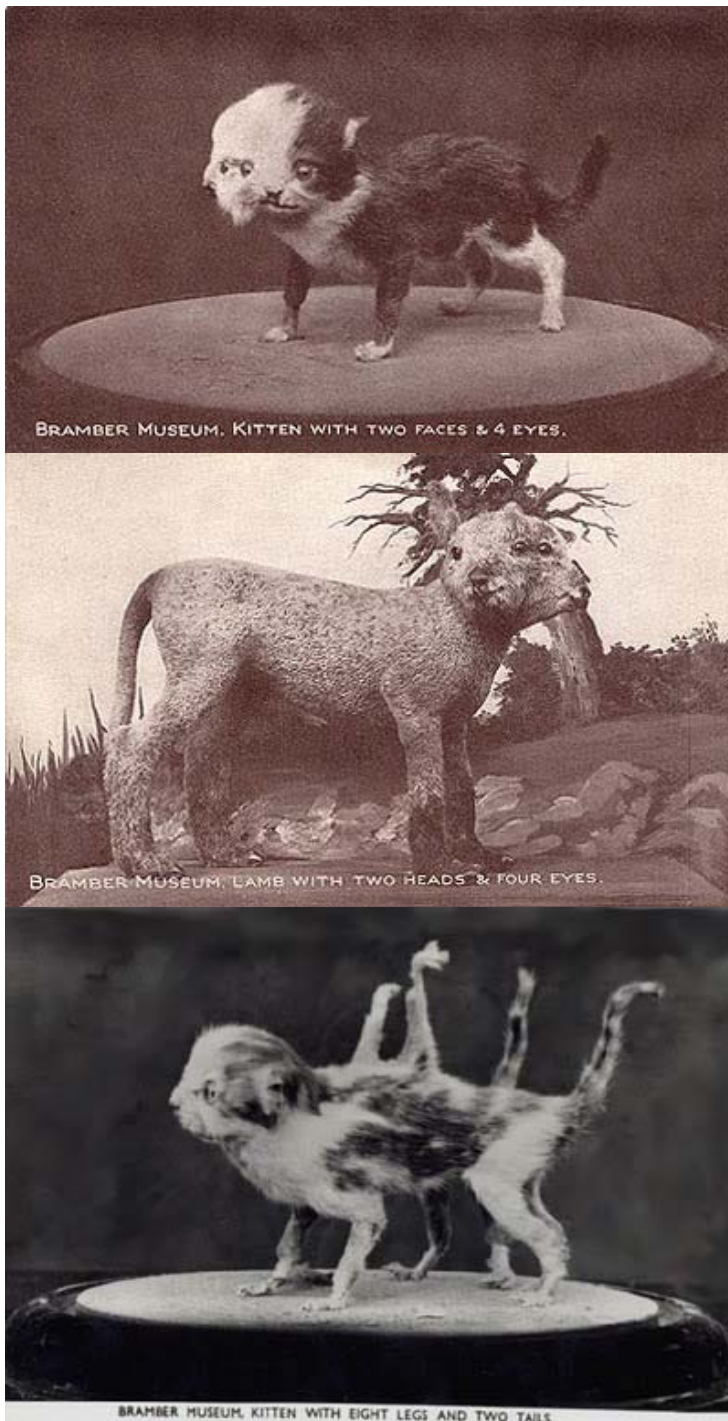
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"Genius or Grotesquery? The Arrestingly Strange World of Walter Potter," The Museum of Everything, Exhibition # 3

October 14, 2010 — admin |





The wild and eerie Victorian world of Walter Potter, where baby rabbits go to school and weep over their blotted copybooks, and where Bullington Club-style squirrels puff on cigars as toads play leapfrog and rat police raid a drinking den, is being reassembled in London, seven years after his creatures were sold and scattered across the world.

The displays are being assembled at the reopened Museum of Everything, a pop-up museum in a former Victorian dairy, and later recording studio, in Primrose Hill, London...

Whilst in London last week, I had the very good fortune to attend a preview of The Museum of Everything's "Exhibition #3," a carnivalesque spree exploring all things collectory, side-show, circus, grotto, and taxidermological. One of the exhibitions more impressive achievements—and the reason I was there in the first place—was the attempt to re-stage Victorian anthropomorphic

taxidermist Walter Potter's Victorian museum of curiosities, a noble feat achieved by borrowing an assortment of Potter's charming pieces from the assortment of lucky private collectors—including Damien Hirst, Sir Peter Blake, and Pat Morris—who acquired them after the museum was controversially divided at auction in 2003.

Today's Guardian has run what I hope will be only the first of many ecstatic pieces on this wonderful exhibition, and on the Potter portion in particular, entitled "[Genius or grotesquery? The arrestingly strange world of Walter Potter.](#)"

My friend Pat Morris—who spoke on Walter Potter at our recent [Congress for Curious People](#)—loaned several of his own Potter pieces to the exhibition, most notably "The Death of Cock Robin, a truly epic tableaux depicting the funeral procession of the fabled Cock Robin as recounted in the well-known [Englist nursery rhyme "Who Killed Cock Robin.](#)" This spectacular piece, as the Guardian describes, includes "more than 100 birds including a weeping robin widow and an owl gravedigger who has tumbled some tiny bones out of the soil while preparing space for the dead robin." For a visual (but please note: this image simply does not do the piece justice!), see third image down.

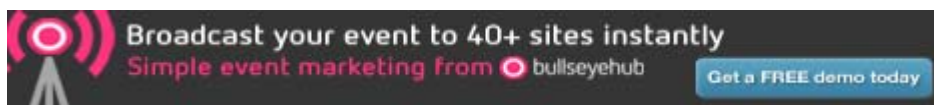
Besides being a collector of great proportion, Mr. Morris is also the author of the only extant book on Mr. Potter and his work, the lavishly illustrated and encyclopedic [Walter Potter and His Museum of Curious Taxidermy](#), which you can buy in hardback or paperback by clicking [here](#) or [here](#), respectively. You can also find out more about Potter, his work and his history by visiting the Ravishing Beast website by clicking [here](#). You can read the full "Genius or grotesquery?" article on the Guardian website by clicking [here](#). To find out more about this exhibition—which will be on at least till Christmas—and the very curious Museum of Everything, click [here](#).

Thanks to friend, friend-of-the-blog, and [many time Observatory lecturer John Troyer](#) for alerting me to this article!

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