

HAUNTED GARDEN

by Simo Sakari Aaltonen

1st April 2019

Welcome to the official newsletter of the HAUNTED GARDEN – the world introduced in the first volume of my series of illustrated coffee table books YOU NEVER KNOW WHAT YOU’LL SEE IN THE HAUNTED GARDEN. Vol. 1 is now available on Amazon in paperback and coming most likely this week as an ebook.

The newsletter will be a weekly digest collecting the daily H. G. social media posts from the previous week, in addition to covering all new developments related to the series, other works set in this world, the official store on Redbubble, any upcoming events, etc.

The newsletter will be minimalistic – short and sweet – as well as unspammy. And only occasionally uncanny.

The print version of VOL. 1 is a large 68-page colour paperback (8.5" x 11") and the ebook reproduces every spread so that every detail may be seen in high resolution.

–Simo, Reykjavík



YOU NEVER KNOW WHAT YOU’LL SEE IN THE HAUNTED GARDEN, VOL. 1

Seen above is the wraparound cover for the first volume in the series and here is the Amazon product description:

“The first in a series of eerie, beautiful coffee table books suitable for all ages. Rex the former game actor introduces us to the Haunted Garden through 30 full-spread wordless illustrations. These are books for leafing through, gazing at, and perhaps dreaming with, well suited for keeping on a living room table or a nightstand.”

And this is what I say about the start of this journey and whole new stage of my life on my Amazon author page:

“Creating something beautiful and imaginative for young people and the young at heart has long been one of my most cherished dreams.

I feel there can be few greater things a person can do than give a child something that may spark their imagination and create the kind of

joy and wonder I remember from my own childhood when I pored over my favourite books. I still return to them and they thrill me as much as ever.

Works such as Lewis Carroll's Alice books (late 19th century), the most beloved Finnish fairy tale novel MESTARITONTUN SEIKKAILUT (a really beautifully illustrated book from 1919 whose title translates as 'The Adventures of the Master Elf'), and Malcolm Bird's THE WITCH'S HANDBOOK (1988)."

I hope my first book, later volumes in the series, and items featuring this world and these characters will find their way one way or another into the lives of many children and others young at heart and give them something special and memorable."

FROM THE AETHER (last week's social media updates)



I thought I'd make occasional shares of items in the Redbubble store related to the book series. This is one of my favourites, a stark, bold design for a hardcover journal, with the view from the two windows in Rex's house in Iceland, as seen in his intro for VOL. 1. All in shades of black, white, and grey, with the front cover teasing the back cover, revealing as it does only the beam of light from the lighthouse and the front of Rex's car.

Rex, who appears as host for YOU NEVER KNOW WHAT YOU'LL SEE IN THE HAUNTED GARDEN series, in a publicity still taken in the Garden itself in Iceland. He was a game actor in the old days and appeared in many games before retiring for many years. With my encouragement he's now making a comeback.



Everything in the books is drawn to this level of detail. So even though an item may be seen from a distance for reasons of visual composition – such as this well-worn classic microphone in Rex's house in the outro for Vol. 1, where it's only one element of that two-page spread showing a stage-like wide view of the room – it might as easily have been (and sooner or later may be) seen close up. Having the level of detail already there lends a sense of reality and lets me play with composition with infinite flexibility, much like a film director or photographer setting up shots. And because I create everything in the app Concepts, which is vector-based, any zoom level is possible without blurring. This and other close-ups will eventually appear on collectible postcards and other items in the store.

FADE OUT.

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