



“Gothic Networks”
Webs, Traps, and Global Trends

Co-hosted online by Curtin University, Australia
24 – 25 January 2023





Day One: Tuesday 24th January – Co-hosted online by Curtin University

The following sessions will be held virtually via Zoom, and in Australian Western Standard Timings (AWST: UTC/GMT +8 hours)

Format: 15-minute presentations in succession, followed by 15 minutes of collective questions and discussion.

Each session will include parallel panels, hosted virtually in different streams with a comfort break in between.

9.40am – 9.45am: Acknowledgement of Country (Stream 1)

9.45 – 9.55am: Welcome and Conference Opening (Stream 1)

Professor Lorna Piatti-Farnell (GANZA President) and Curtin University Co-Host

9.55am – 10.00am: Set up/Comfort Break

10.00am – 11.00am: Session One

Panel 1a (Stream 1)

Chair: Gwyneth Peaty

- Cheng-Ting Chang (Sophia University, Japan) – Death and Monsters in Two Japanese Picturebooks: *Ugikukku no Kodomotachi* and *Haka no Nakaniha Nanimonai*
- Saffron Nyx (University of Queensland, Australia) – Ghostly Subversions of Queer Narratives in Japanese Girls’ Literature
- Sophia Staite (University of Tasmania, Australia) – The Grotesque Decade, Under the Midnight Sun

Panel 1b (Stream 2)

Chair: Ashleigh Prosser

- Jennifer Loring (Union Institute & University, US) – “Uncanny, Monstrous, and Sublime”: EcoGothic Transformations in Horror Video Games
- Tof Eklund (Auckland University of Technology, New Zealand) – Caught in her Web: Matriarchal Spider Queens from Ungoliant to Nameless
- Kirstin Mills (Macquarie University, Australia) – Digital Dickens: Adapting Ghost Stories for Digital Mobile Devices

11.00am – 11.15am: Comfort Break

11.15am – 12.15pm: Session Two

Panel 2a (Stream 1)

Chair: Nancy Johnson-Hunt

- Grace Slaven (Curtin University, Australia) – Lucretia My Reflection: Female Gothic Bodies of the *Batavia* Shipwreck
- Gwyneth Peaty (Curtin University, Australia) – The Neo-Gothic Gargoyle in Jurassic Mythology: Historical Trappings/Evolutions
- Erin Mercer (Massey University, New Zealand) – Pictures that Change: Entrapment and Escape in Stephen King's *Rose Madder*

Panel 2b (Stream 2)

Chair: Justin Matthews

- Meltem Dagçi (Anatolian University, Turkey) – Women, Bodies and Gothic Feminism in Özlem Ertan's *Full Moon Ritual*
- Naomi von Senff (University of New England, Australia) – Jäger's Teufel (Hunter's Devil): The Hunter Ensnared by the Devil - Duality and Dichotomy of Moral and Religious Crimes in Carl Maria von Weber's *Der Freischütz*
- Kay Hearn (Edith Cowan University, Australia) – Trains, Trees, the Devils Music and the Blues Man

12.15pm – 1.00pm: Lunch Break

1.00pm – 2.00pm: Session Three

Panel 3a (Stream 1)

Chair: Blair Speakman

- Antonio Alcala (Tecnologico de Monterey, Mexico) – Gothic Evil and Extreme Metal in the Twenty-First Century: The Image of Satan in the Lyrics of the Band, Behemoth
- David Kumler (Washington University, US) – Occult Networks and Specters of the Common in Thomas Pynchon's *The Crying of Lot 49*
- Ruth Barratt-Peacock (Friedrich Schiller University, Germany) – An Uncanny Claire du Lune: Interrogating the Role of Piano Music in Rendering the Gothic Onscreen

Panel 3b (Stream 2)

Chair: Ashleigh Prosser

- Rosemarie Miller (University of Worcester, UK) – Haunted by Tigers: Exploring the Legacy of Capitalism in Two Contemporary Australasian Novels.
- Maureen DeLeo (NUI Galway, Ireland) – 'You'd think a pity to see the creature': The Networks Within Patrick Pearse's '*An Dearg Daol*'

2.00pm – 2.15pm: Comfort Break

2.15pm – 3.15pm: Session Four

Panel 4a (Stream 1)

Chair: Gwyneth Peaty

- Mattia Petricola (University of L'Aquila, Italy) – On Video-spectrality: Haunted Screens and/as Gothic Technologies from Nam June Paik to *The Ring*
- Amy Bride (University of Manchester, UK) – 'Faith Alone Can Overturn the Universe': Patterns of Gothic Religious Reversal in *Warhammer 40K*
- Sara-Patricia Wasson (Lancaster University, UK) – Torn Wings and Exorcism: Chronic Pain and Gothic Representation

Panel 4b (Stream 2)

Chair: Erin Mercer

- Hannah Lauren Murray (University of Liverpool, UK) – Austral Ancestors in Ernest Favenc's Tropics
- Joana Rita Ramalho (University College of London, UK) – Lugubrious Farce and Twisted Crime: The (d)Evolution of the Clown in Popular Culture
- Claudia Sterbini (Edinburgh University, UK) – 'This Bleached Nocturnal Thing': Sexual Evolutions and the Pathologization of Asexuality in H. G. Wells' *The Time Machine*

3.15pm – 3.30pm: Comfort Break

3.30pm – 4.30pm: Session Five

Panel 5a (Stream 1)

Chair: Nancy Johnson-Hunt

- Blair Speakman (Auckland University of Technology, New Zealand) – The Blossom Mystery House: The Haunted Home and Ghostly Possession in *Riverdale* (2017-)
- Heidi Backes (Missouri State University, United States) – The War at Home: The Haunted House as Battlefield in Ana María Matute's *Family Demons* (2014)
- Brontë Schiltz (Independent Scholar, UK) – "It Is In Our House Now": *Twin Peaks'* Televisual Terrors

Panel 5b (Stream 2)

Chair: Justin Matthews

- Derek Johnston (Queen's University, Ireland) – Gothicising *Picnic at Hanging Rock*
- Aparajita Hazra (Diamond Harbour University, India) – Ghosts from the Past: Memory and Trauma as Art Horror in Keith Thomas's *The Vigil*
- Barbara Braid (University of Szczecin, Poland) – Theme Parks as Gothic Heterochronia in *Antebellum*

4.30pm – 4.35pm: Comfort Break

4.35pm – 4.40pm: Day One Closing (Stream 1)

Day Two: Wednesday 25th January - Co-hosted online by Curtin University

The following sessions will be held virtually via Zoom, and in Australian Western Standard Timings (AWST: UTC/GMT +8 hours)

Format: 15-minute presentations in succession, followed by 15 minutes of collective questions and discussion.

Each session will include parallel panels, hosted virtually in different streams with a comfort break in between.

9.15am - 9.20am: Acknowledgement of Country

9.20am - 9.25am: Welcome Conference Opening Day Two (Stream 1)

Professor Lorna Piatti-Farnell (GANZA President) and Curtin University Co-Host

9.25am - 9.30am: Comfort Break/Set Up

9.30am - 10.30am: Session 6 Keynote (Stream 1)

- Karen Macfarlane (Mt Saint University, Canada) - Hello from the Other Side: Technology, Communication and Paranormal Reality Shows

10.30am - 10.45am: Comfort Break

10.45am - 11.45am: Session Seven

Panel 7a (Stream 1)

Chair: Blair Speakman

- Enrique Ajuria Ibarra (Universidad de las Américas Puebla, UDLAP, Mexico) - Collective Memories and Intertextualities: Spectral Fungal Networks in Silvia Moreno-García's *Mexican Gothic* (2020)
- Jason Haslam (Dalhousie University, Canada) - Twice-Told Tales: Networks of Allusions and Alien Abductions in Contemporary American Gothic
- Nancy Johnson-Hunt and Lorna Piatti-Farnell (Auckland University of Technology, New Zealand) - Magic on the Margins: The Villainous Networks of Dr Facilier as a Queer and Racialized Character in Disney's *The Princess and the Frog* (2009)

Panel 7b (Stream 2)

Chair: Justin Matthews

- Emma Baird (Curtin University, Australia) - Just a Phase? The Enduring Global Networks of Goth Identity
- Kristin Leeds (University of Tasmania, Australia) - Hateful Selves And Criminal Minds: The Subversion of Gender Norms in the Crime Fiction Work of Japanese Author, Kirino Natsuo

- Sarah Pearce and Claire Albrecht (Independent Scholars) - 'All Fear the Friday Sunset': Two Women, Lord Byron, and the Water...

11.45am - 12.00pm: Comfort Break

12.00pm- 1.00pm: Session Eight

Panel 8a (Stream 1)

Chair: Nancy Johnson-Hunt

- Allesandro Cabiati (Ca' Foscari University of Venice, Italy and Brown University, US) - Gothic Terror and Female Deviance in Nineteenth-Century Adaptations of 'Bluebeard'
- Samira Aziz (Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand) - "The Truths of Fiction Reside in Metaphor; But Metaphor is Here Generated by History:" Telling it Slant in Joyce Carol Oates' *The Accursed*

Panel 8b (Stream 2)

Chair: Justin Matthews

- Ashleigh Prosser (Murdoch University, Australia) - The Monstrosity of Choice: Networks of Metatextual Haunting in *The Wanderer: Frankenstein's Creature* (2019)
- Matthew Thompson (Independent Scholar) - Blood in the Time of COVID: Vampiric Societies, Morality and Pandemics in *Shadows of New York*
- Gargi Bendre (D.G. Ruparel College, India) - When Species Meet: A Post Humanist Study of the Relationship Between the Human and Non-Human in Film and Fiction.

1.00pm- 1.45pm: Lunch Break

1.45pm- 2.45pm: Session Nine

Panel 9a (Stream 1)

Chair: Gwyneth Peaty

- Angelique Nairn and Lorna Piatti-Farnell (Auckland University of Technology, New Zealand) - A Most Violent Rural Network: Comic Turns and Monstrous Animals in *Black Sheep* (2006)
- Holly Randell-Moon (Sturt University, Australia)- Settler Colonial Gothic Trappings in '*Belief: The Possession of Janet Moses*' (2015)
- Celeste McAlpin-Levitt (University of Santa Barbara, US) - The Biopolitical Hillbilly in the Global Rural Gothic

Panel 9b (Stream 2)

Chair: Ashleigh Prosser

- Megen de Bruin-Molé (University of Southampton, UK) - Haunted TikTok: Entertainment in Gothic Times
- Chera Kee (Wayne State University, US) - The Ghost in the Machine: Distortions, Fissures, and Gaps in Ghost Hunting Reality TV
- Erika Kvistad (University of South-Eastern Norway) - "Approximately Six Hundred Million Square Miles of Randomly Segmented Empty Rooms": Auto-Generated Haunted Spaces in the Digital Gothic

2.45pm – 3.00pm: Comfort Break

3.00pm- 4.00pm: Session Ten

Panel 10a (Stream 1)

Chair: Gwyneth Peaty

- Leonie Rowland (Manchester Metropolitan University, UK) - 'She Gets You Through the Phone': Criminal Commodities and Communications Technologies in the Techno-Animism of *One Missed Call* (2003) and *Ju-On: Origins* (2020) [pre-recorded]
- Janette Leaf (University of London, UK) - Plague Network as Punishment in Guy Boothby's *Pharos the Egyptian*
- Bridget Marshall (University of Massachusetts Lowell, US) - Teaching the Gothic in a Gothic World

Panel 10b (Stream 2)

Chair: Erin Mercer

- Amanda Rutherford (Auckland University of Technology, New Zealand) - Gothic Landscapes of Pandemic
- Sarah Baker (Auckland University of Technology, New Zealand) - Horrors of a Gothic Hospital

4.00pm – 4.10pm: Comfort Break

4.10pm – 4.20pm: Day Two Closing and Publication Opportunities (Stream 1)

Professor Lorna Piatti-Farnell (GANZA President) and Curtin University Co-Host

Abstracts



Keynote Speaker

Dr Karen Macfarlane

Mount Saint Vincent University, Canada

Hello from the Other Side: Technology, Communication and Paranormal Reality Shows

From spirit photographs to the contemporary EMF meter, the belief that technology can bridge the gap between the worlds of the living and the dead has shaped public performances of communication with the deceased. In fact, technologies have been long understood to be capable of seeing, hearing, and sensing what the human eye and ear cannot. In this talk, I examine the ways in which performances of technological prowess are deployed as a spectacle of surveillance and control in contemporary television and web series that focus on discovering and resolving hauntings. In the majority of episodes in these series, the investigators do not, in fact, restore the home to the family. Instead, they teach the haunted homeowners that there are, and will always be, other claims to the place. I argue that ghost hunting technologies in paranormal reality series, then, reaffirm neoliberalism's transformation of the homeowner into the borrower, a position that exists in a precarious relation to claims on the house. As the focus of the investigations, the house draws attention to the fact that haunting in the neoliberal age stands in a complex relation to the concept of the family home: signalling other, spectral, prior claims; a reminder that every possession is a dispossession.

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Dr Karen Macfarlane is Associate Professor in the Department of English at Mount Saint Vincent University in Halifax Nova Scotia, Canada. Her research focuses on monsters in popular culture at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries and on neoliberalism and haunted houses and on the concept of the creepy. Her most recent publication "Creepy Little Girl" is forthcoming in the next issue of *Gothic Studies* in March 2023. She has published on self-aware zombies, zombies and the internet, reanimated mummies, and *American Horror Story*.

Session One

Panel 1a

Cheng-Ting Chang

Sophia University, Japan

Death and Monsters in Two Japanese Picturebooks: *Ūgīkukku no Kodomotachi* and *Haka no Nakaniha Nanimonai*

The introduction of the anthology, *The Gothic in Children's Literature: Haunting the Borders* (2007) highlights that although adult Gothic has received much critical attention, attention has hardly been paid to Gothic themes in children's literature, even if it seems to be mainstream nowadays. This collection is regarded as filling a void in children's literature criticism. In her edited *New Directions in Children's Gothic: Debatable Lands* (2017), Anna Jackson further points out that the children's Gothic is no longer marginal; its power has not just remained but increased in the twenty-first century.

Nonetheless, picturebooks which tend to be viewed as books for younger readers, seem to be not focused in both collections, and Japanese texts are less known than their English counterparts. Therefore, this presentation will explore two contemporary Japanese picturebooks about death that include a "monster" and might be seen as gruesome: *Ūgīkukku no Kodomotachi* (*Ūgīkukku's Children*, written by Yuuji Sakamoto and illustrated by Shuichi Hayashida, 2019) and *Haka no Nakaniha Nanimonai* (*Nothing in the Grave*, written and illustrated by Hiroshi Sato, 2019). The former is a story about a girl and a monster. The monster lives in the hospital's boiler room and eats children's souls. The latter story features a man who is disgusted with himself, goes into the grave, and becomes monstrous.

I will apply multimodal analysis and narrative theory to explore the theme of death and the monster characters. This presentation aims to uncover how death is represented in contemporary Japanese picturebooks that might be considered gothic.

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Cheng-Ting Chang has an MPhil in Critical Approaches to Children's Literature from the University of Cambridge (2016). She is currently a PhD student in Cultural Interaction at Sophia University, Tokyo, Japan. Before returning to her studies, she worked as an editor and translator in Grimm Press, a Taiwanese publishing house specialising in picturebooks. Her research focuses on children's literature, culture, and picturebook studies. This includes crossover picturebooks in different cultures, translation of children's literature, and children's literature in Japan and Taiwan.

Saffron Nyx

University of Queensland, Australia

Ghostly Subversions of Queer Narratives in Japanese Girls' Literature

Matsuda Aoko's *Where The Wild Ladies Are* (2016) is a series of short stories that retell or modernise classic ghost stories and famous apparitions. Many of these stories are also feminist, focusing on female ghost stories like Oshichi and Okiku. One of my thesis chapters focuses on the short story 'Quite A Catch', which depicts a queer relationship between a ghost from the Edo period (1607-1867) and a woman in the modern era. Although girls' literature has often provided readers with a secluded safe environment to explore alternative gender expression or sexualities, these depictions of queerness tend to be

underpinned by death, suicide, separation, and inevitable conformity to heteronormativity. Although *Where The Wild Ladies Are* is not a piece of girls' literature, 'Quite A Catch' features typical conventions of girls' literature such as flowers, nostalgia, tragedy, and seclusion. These features have generally connoted transience for girlhood and queer relationships in girls' literature. However, the women and their relationship in this text persists beyond these features or events, being characterised as autonomous and resilient. This is partially enabled by the gothic and supernatural aspects of the text, as the ghost character continues to exist after she is murdered. Moreover, her life in the Edo period, and her eventual existence in the modern era legitimises the historic existence of queerness. This text exemplifies a contemporary shift for depictions of queer women in Japanese literature and demonstrates both the potential of subversive retellings of dominant narratives, and the role of ghosts or the supernatural to explore themes of queerness.

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Saffron Nyx is currently completing their honours in Japanese at the University of Queensland, and planning to graduate in November. I completed my Bachelor of Arts in 2021, with an extended major in advanced Japanese and a minor in linguistics. Although I am interested in linguistics, I found myself drawn to Japanese literature in my postgraduate study. My thesis focuses on depictions of queer relationships between girls or women in Japanese girls' literature, with a focus on tragedy, flowers, and transience.

Sophia Staite

University of Tasmania, Australia

The Grotesque Decade, Under the Midnight Sun

This paper considers Higashino Keigo's 1999 novel *Journey Under the Midnight Sun* (*Byakuyakō*) and its 2006 television adaptation in the context of a conceptualisation of the 1990s as a uniquely gothic period in Japan's cultural history. *Journey Under the Midnight Sun* is story of murder, rape, and despair that follows two traumatised children into adulthood. The original novel and its television adaptation each place the story within a different time period. The novel opens in 1973 and tells its story against the backdrop of Japan's economic miracle and concludes in the years of the bubble economy bursting. The television drama shifts this timeline forward, opening in 1991 and concluding its narrative in 2005, taking place across Japan's 'lost decade' period of economic stagnation.

In the novel the two central characters are represented entirely by the narration of others, allowing the reader no insight into their thoughts or internal motivations. In the television drama, however, the story is told from a first-person perspective with voice-over exposition of thoughts and feelings. Drawing thematically on entrapment and escape, hauntings and monstrosity, this paper argues that the alterations made during the transmedia adaptation from page to screen reflect broader changes to how trauma and the monstrous have been understood and represented in Japanese popular culture.

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Sophia Staite is a PhD Candidate at the University of Tasmania, Australia. Her thesis examines the transcultural adaptation of Japanese television franchise Kamen Rider. Her research interests include children's television, contemporary Japanese culture, and gender.

Panel 1b

Jennifer Loring

Union Institute & University, Ohio, United States

“Uncanny, Monstrous, and Sublime”: EcoGothic Transformations in Horror Video Games

The ecoGothic, analyzed through an ecofeminist lens, offers a critical opportunity for scholars to examine the impact of the environmental crisis in popular culture as well as the reasons why this “villainous” nature is still so frequently depicted as female. Female monsters that have become hybridized in some way with nature—whether through flora, fauna, fungi, or by means of contagion which they then spread to others—are central to the ecoGothic narrative, the latter two examples particularly common in horror video games such as the Resident Evil series (1996-present). In other ecoGothic games such as Blair Witch (2019), the monstrous-feminine manipulates nature itself in order to traumatize the male protagonists. This paper investigates how anxieties surrounding both gender and ecology intersect in the ecoGothic, and seeks the ways in which these female characters’ transgression of categories interrogate the artificial dichotomy between humanity and nature. While these narratives may ultimately reconstitute a phallogocentric social order entrenched in ecophobia, reading them through an ecofeminist lens allows a radical reimagining of their monstrous-feminine characters, and nature itself, as agentic beings willing to challenge destructive male impulses. It is this challenge that empowers both women and nature by redefining both.

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Jennifer Loring (She/They) is a PhD student in the Interdisciplinary Studies – Humanities and Culture program at Union Institute & University. She completed her Master of Fine Arts degree in Writing Popular Fiction at Seton Hill University and holds a Bachelor of Arts in Studio Art from Mercyhurst University. Jenn is a member of the National Women’s Studies Association (NWSA) and the International Gothic Association (IGA). Her research interests include the ecoGothic in horror video games, Gothic fairy tales, Japanese horror, the performance identities of Lady Gaga, and the relationship between black metal and cosmic horror.

Tof Eklund

Auckland University of Technology, New Zealand

Caught in her Web: Matriarchal Spider Queens from Ungoliant to Nameless

Gary Gygax is credited with creating the Drow, evil “dark elves,” for the original Dungeons & Dragons (D&D) Monster Manual (1977). As a near-perfect embodiment of their “Chaotic Evil” alignment, they were everything Gygax was not: black-skinned, subterranean, wickedly intelligent, and marked by a mix of Orientalist and BDSM styles and cultural stereotypes. “Worst” of all, they were matriarchal: a brutally violent and treacherous society ruled with an iron fist by “matron mothers” and Priestesses of the Spider Goddess Lolth. As a projection of cis-straight white male fears of powerful women, Lolth and the Drow are so on-the-nose as to be laughable. Despite this, they have become iconic and lasting Fantasy tropes, central to D&D for over forty years, inspiring scores of roleplaying (RPG) modules, video games, novels and more. Lolth’s Drow are arguably the only matriarchal society widely known in the late 20th and early 21st centuries, and inarguably the most familiar matriarchy in Fantasy and gaming circles, eclipsing and overwriting real matriarchal and

matrilineal cultures like the Mosuo and the Haudebosaunee. This talk looks at the spider queen matriarch as a narcissistic projection of cis-straight white patriarchal power and in terms of arguable attempts to reclaim and recouperate her, from J.R.R. Tolkien's Ungoliant (1955*) to Nameless, the protagonist of light novel, manga, and anime series So I'm a Spider, so What? (2015-present).

*Ungoliant was first mentioned in Tolkien's Return of the King, but it was only with the publication of The Silmarillion in 1977 that her story appeared in print.

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Tof Eklund (they/them) is a Lecturer in the School of Language and Culture. Their interests lie at the intersection of the theoretical, the subcultural, the digital, and the creative, including video games, analogue games, comic books, graphic novels, zines, and emerging media. They are presently working on a study of queer indie games and a tabletop RPG about occult activists resisting the death throes of American exceptionalism.

Kirstin Mills

Macquarie University, Australia

Digital Dickens: Adapting Ghost Stories for Digital Mobile Devices

This paper identifies a new literary form – what I call the Digital Book Application, which is an augmented reading experience designed for digital mobile devices – as a particularly haunting addition to the network of contemporary modes that seek to adapt the traditional ghost story. While ghost stories told through contemporary forms like film, television and the internet are familiar, critics are yet to examine the Digital Book Application as a unique format for telling ghost stories. This paper redresses this critical gap by taking as its case study the “iDickens” Digital Book Application, which adapts several classic nineteenth-century ghost stories by Charles Dickens. It argues that not only do ghost stories help define this new form by virtue of being uniquely suited to its particular format and features, including its interactivity and use of graphics, sound and haptics, but also that this new form provides deeper insight and immersion into the haunting experience of reading classic ghost stories, where it evokes fear through a multidimensional proximity to the imagined supernatural world. In these applications, digital and textual elements combine in different ways to enhance the original experience of reading Dickensian ghost tales, deepening Dickens’s characteristic humour and horror while also producing a distinctly new reading experience and fresh interpretations. This paper posits that the ghost story experienced via the Digital Book Application is a new Gothic reading experience made possible by digital technology, but one that also paradoxically returns to a very traditional experience of encountering Gothic and ghostly tales.

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Kirstin A. Mills is Lecturer and Director of the Master of Research in the Faculty of Arts at Macquarie University, Sydney, Australia. Her research focuses on Gothic and supernatural literature of the long nineteenth century and its adaptations in contemporary digital and visual media. Her work especially considers the intersections between space, dreams and nightmare, the sciences of the mind, and scientific and folkloric understandings of the supernatural. She has published widely on these areas and is currently completing her monograph on digital adaptations of nineteenth-century Gothic literature and culture.

Session Two

Panel 2a

Grace Slaven

Curtin University, Australia

'Lucretia My Reflection: Female Gothic Bodies of the *Batavia* Shipwreck.'

My current doctoral project investigates how a feminist narrative of the 1629 *Batavia* shipwreck and mutiny can be reimagined through an examination of the monstrous-feminine within contemporary art. Through practice-led research, I aim to subvert constructed boundaries pertaining to aesthetic ideals and monstrosity of the female body, merging it with the Australian Gothic coastline and waters of the Abrolhos Islands. As a result, the female shipwreck survivors' experiences are foregrounded in an otherwise male-dominated narrative. My proposed paper will evidence this through a focused discussion on *Batavia* upper-class passenger, Lucretia Jansz.

Jansz is often attributed to the mutineers' lust and greed. She experienced sexual assault aboard the *Batavia* – a coordinated attack by the mutineers under the leadership of under-merchant, Jeronimus Cornelisz. Two weeks later, the *Batavia* impaled itself on the Morning Reef at the Houtman Abrolhos. The frequency in which Lucretia's assault is followed by the shipwrecking in retellings of the *Batavia* is notable, as though these events are intrinsically linked. Documentation of Jansz's experiences provides insight into the victimisation and objectification of women on Beacon Island. It also indicates a 'witch hunt' of sorts, implying Jansz's potential complicity in the mutineers' butchery, owing to her forced cohabitation with Cornelisz on Beacon Island.

This talk will explore depictions of Lucretia Jansz in *Batavia* shipwreck narratives. It will also consider how an intervention by way of the monstrous-feminine in contemporary art, can liberate the voices of the shipwreck's female survivors and interrogate historical narratives through an Australian Female Gothic lens.

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Grace Slaven is an artist, teacher, and emerging academic based in Fremantle, Western Australia. She is interested in the historic link between femininity and nature and draws inspiration from anything feminine with an edge. Grace's artwork has been featured in numerous group exhibitions around Perth including two RAW Perth exhibitions, and solo exhibitions *La Natura* (2015), and *Flesh and Forest* (2021). Currently, her writing is being published in the upcoming third issue of the Scottish based publication, *The Debutante*. Grace's practice-led research focusses on unearthing female narratives that transcend history from the beautiful and sublime, to the gothic and monstrous.

Gwyneth Peaty

Curtin University, Australia

The Neo-Gothic Gargoyle in Jurassic Mythology: Historical Trappings/Evolutions

One of the most evocative sequences in *Jurassic World: Fallen Kingdom* (2018) comes near the end as the deadly Indoraptor chases Maisie Lockwood (Isabella Sermon) through the mansion she calls home. Knocking down family portraits and smashing into walls, the powerful creature hunts the fleeing girl through dark corridors that once represented safety.

As this sequence illustrates, *Fallen Kingdom* presents its subject matter in unabashedly gothic terms. Indeed, the Gothic genre is wholly embraced within this film, which deploys a series of familiar historical conventions. Building on existing studies of the Jurassic Park and Jurassic World trilogies, this paper examines what is special about *Fallen Kingdom's* Indoraptor and how its design incorporates a medley of gothic figures, from the vampire to the psychiatric patient. I explore how this particular monster blends traditional gargoyle iconography (based on Gothic architecture) with contemporary biomedical discourse to create a form of contemporary neo-gothic gargoyle.

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Gwyneth Peaty is a Research Fellow in the Centre for Culture and Technology (CCAT) at Curtin University, Western Australia. Her research focuses on representations of monstrosity, Gothic horror, disability, technology, and the body in popular culture and media. She is currently writing a monograph about gargoyles for the University of Wales Press (UWP) Gothic Literary Studies book series.

Erin Mercer

Massey University, New Zealand

"Pictures that Change: Entrapment and Escape in Stephen King's *Rose Madder*"

In a brief preface to the story "The Road Virus Heads North" in *Everything's Eventual* (2002), Stephen King admits to liking "stories about pictures that change." The appeal of narratives about static images that are paradoxically dynamic lies in their ability to provoke fear stemming from the blurring of boundaries between the animate and the inanimate. As Freud notes in his essay "The Uncanny" (1919), "it is in the highest degree uncanny when an inanimate object – a picture or a doll – comes to life". King exploits this uncanniness in the novel *Rose Madder* (1995), which features an animated painting discovered by Rosie Daniels (aka Rose McClendon), a victim of domestic abuse on the run from her husband. The "picture that changes" is a classical scene featuring a blonde woman in a red chiton who serves as inspiration for Rosie as she recovers from trauma, gains employment and begins dating. When Rosie's husband Norman succeeds in tracking her down, the painting literally becomes what it has previously only symbolized: escape. Rosie steps into the world of the painting, suggesting a connection between internal consciousness and the physical world that exceeds scientific rationalism. Via the trope of a picture that changes, King suggests that reality cannot be explained in terms of the rational and reveals the ultimate horror of the self as Norman, suburban husband and officer of the law, morphs into a monster as the painting overpowers reality to violently eradicate the violent.

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Erin Mercer is Programme Coordinator and Senior Lecturer in English at Massey University. She is the author of *Telling the Real Story: Genre and New Zealand Literature* (2018) and *Repression and Realism in Postwar American Literature* (2011). She is currently writing a book on the work of Stephen King.

Panel 2b

Meltem Dağcı

Anatolian University, Turkey

Women, Bodies and Gothic Feminism in Özlem Ertan's *Full Moon Ritual*

The inspiration for Özlem Ertan's novel, *The Full Moon Ritual*, is the Goddess Hecate, who has a great role in the history of ancient Anatolia and Istanbul. It is written from a different perspective on Hecate, the goddess of the moon, witchcraft and the underworld. The "marginalized" women of antiquity also took their places in the *Full Moon Ritual* with their stories. Medusa with snake hair, who was cursed even though she was innocent, Medea who did things she never wanted to cope with the pain of being ignored, Lamia, whose children were brutally murdered, Lilith, Adam's first wife, and others. The main characters of the novel are women and the problems of being a woman played an important role. It is a gothic novel that brings together mythology, ancient women's stories, and today's women who are subjected to violence, rape and alienation, and stands out with its uncanny and frightening atmosphere. In the *Full Moon Ritual*, you will follow the intersecting stories of three women in Greek mythology, the Pagan history of Istanbul, by following the goddesses and witness the process of discovering the deity inside a young girl. The purpose of this study, the main issues of being a woman will be discussed within the framework of gothic feminism through the female bodies/identity of the main female characters in the novel.

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Meltem Dağcı graduated from Anadolu University, Department of Turkish Language and Literature. In recent years, she has been interested in stories and novels in the genre of science fiction and fantasy. There is currently a sci-fi story file. Her stories, book articles and interviews have been published in various magazines and newspapers. She has been on the team of the Edebiyat Nöbeti Magazine for six years. She has been continuing her conversations with the Writer's Room in Edebiyat Haber for about two years.

Naomi von Senff

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Jäger's Teufel (Hunter's Devil): The Hunter Ensnared by the Devil - Duality and Dichotomy of Moral and Religious Crimes in Carl Maria von Weber's *Der Freischütz*

Set in medieval Germany at a time of religious upheaval and belief in witchcraft, entrapment and contracts are two major themes in Carl Maria von Weber's *Der Freischütz*. While the opera is largely viewed as the catalyst for proto-nationalism, and a unified German language along with early examples of leitmotif, *Der Freischütz* is the quintessential contract opera, and details the dichotomy between the application of punishment by the State, and leniency and forgiveness by the Church. Built on Faustian legends, and with an original story and libretto written by lawyers (Apel, Laun, and Kind), Weber's *Der Freischütz* creates a haunted space, filled with creatures of the night, black magic, summoning the devil from within a magical circle, a cursed hunter ensnared by a false friend, and the trading of an innocent soul for an additional three years of life on a contract. The hero Max is ransomed to the devil Samiel, by Kasper to extend a contracted period, with a bride as the ultimate prize, leading to the different types of punishment meted out by Prince and Hermit.

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Naomi von Senff is an operatic soprano, currently singing with River City Voices. By day, she works for the Coroners Court and is completing her thesis at University of New England on *Der Freischütz*. Her research interests include Pop Culture, Gothic and Vampire studies, Egyptology, and music. B.Crim/B.Laws, B.Mus, Hon Opera, B.A. Hon, B.A. Humanities, Associate Diploma Music; Assistant Coroner NSW. Studied Italian and Opera at the Mozarteum Salzburg.

Kay Hearn

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Trains, Trees, the Devils Music and the Blues Man

Southern trees bear a strange fruit

Blood on the leaves and blood at the root

Black bodies swinging in the southern breeze

Strange fruit hanging from the poplar trees

Trains, Trees, the Devils Music and the Blues Man

With its roots in work songs and Gospel music, the Blues was often called the Devils music and epitomized the music of the 'bad n*****' as the lyrics traded on sex and the Devil. These tropes of good and evil, holy and unholy are part of the construction of the Southern Gothic and these tropes are found in the lyrics of the blues but are also a part of the construction of Black masculinity that the myth of the Blues Man is built upon on those tropes. The Blues Man played in juke joints in the South where there was gambling, drinking and moonshine in a ramshackle building on the outskirts of a town. The original Blues Man, Robert Johnson, is reputed to have gone to the crossroads or a cemetery somewhere in Mississippi, and sold his soul to devil in order to be a master guitarist, similar to Faust's pact with the Devil, though the ideas about what constitute the devil stem from Christianity and African traditions. Johnson's persona is built upon this myth of African American masculinity that is framed as an outsider, driven by sex, the Devil and music. This paper explores the ways in which the myth of the Blues Man is constructed in relation to the Southern Gothic.

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Kay Hearn is the Major Coordinator for Historical and Political Studies at Edith Cowan University. Her research covers a range of issues in popular culture, including the intersection between popular culture and politics and music and national identity.

Session Three

Panel 3a

Antonio Alcalá

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Gothic Evil and Extreme Metal in the Twenty-First Century: The Image of Satan in the Lyrics of the Band, Behemoth

From the existence of the two moments that mark the boundaries of life, birth and death, the human experience is surrounded by multiple binomials. As a result, from its origins in the monotheistic Hebrew and Christian traditions, Western civilization has tended to conceptualize the world in binary opposites resulting in an interaction of otherness where one concept bases most of its definition in being what its contrary is not. On such scenario, the order required for the creation of life needs the existence of a previous chaos. If there is a unique God responsible for the existence and continuity of life under certain norms that are to be respected, there is also an everlasting evil side with opposing interests. Such evil, called Satan, has become an extreme Gothic *doppelgänger* permanently plotting against the intentions of its counterpart. He is considered in our culture as the ultimate source of evil,

always contrary to the normativity of action emanated from Christianity. However, aside from civilization and its impositions, human nature is more than a binomial; it is a plurality of lines that cannot be restricted to a couple of extreme opposites represented by good and evil. Thus, the purpose of this paper is to explore an alternative interpretation of Satan, the extreme Gothic double, as a reference for a call to a balanced and individualized return to human nature in the lyrics of the last two albums of the Extreme Metal band, Behemoth (*The Satanist* 2014 and *I Loved You at Your Darkest* 2018). Through the evocation of Satan, they question the arbitrariness of social norms that confine human behavior inside the dual movement between good and evil.

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Antonio Alcala is founder of the *International Gothic Literature Congress*, and chair of the Humanities and Education School at Tecnológico de Monterrey, Santa Fe in Mexico City. He has co-edited special journal issues on Nautical Gothic (*Gothic Studies*) and the legacy of H.P. Lovecraft in the twenty-first century (*Aeternum*). He also co-edited the critical collections *Doubles and Hybrids in Latin American Gothic* and *Lovecraft in the 21st Century Dead, But Still Dreaming*. He is currently preparing a monographic study on Nautical Horror. He has published articles and book chapters on creators such as H. P. Lovecraft, Algernon Blackwood, D. T. Neal, J. R. R. Tolkien, Ivan Albright, Carlos Fuentes and Juan Rulfo as well as the connection between the Gothic tradition and the lyrics of Underground Metal music bands.

David Kumler

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Occult Networks and Specters of the Common in Thomas Pynchon's *The Crying of Lot 49*

In his article "Popular Secrecy and Occultural Studies," Jack Bratich challenges the often widespread faith—particularly on the left—in publicity and truth-telling as "a strategy to expose, and ultimately neutralize, power's machinations." To the contrary, Bratich suggests that oppositional political movements might pursue secrecy as a strategy in the form of "an insurgent secrecy, a minor secrecy, or a public secrecy." Rejecting the assumption that secrecy exists only to avoid detection, Bratich argues that secrecy can also exert a positive force, suggesting that "[s]ecrecy is thus not an absence, but an occulted presence." This paper examines the role of secret networks, underground commons, and occult conspiracies within oppositional imaginaries, specifically emphasizing the function of the secret as occulted presence.

To this end, I take up Thomas Pynchon's *The Crying of Lot 49*, which involves the discovery of a secret postal network called Tristero. I suggest that we might read Tristero as what Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri call a "specter of the common." The encounter with Tristero, after all, is not unlike an encounter with a ghost, in that both encounters produce what Tzvetan Todorov calls the fantastic: a particular type of uncertainty marked by the realization that if the thing encountered is real, then the world is not what one previously believed it to be. In this sense, Tristero is not simply a secret network: It is a ghostly presence, evidence of another possible world beyond the privatizing logics of capitalism.

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David Kumler teaches American literature and cultural studies at the University of Washington. His research focuses on occult horror, racial capitalism, and political radicalism, and his most recent work can be found in *Aeternum: The Journal of Contemporary Gothic Studies*.

Ruth Barratt-Peacock

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An Uncanny Claire du Lune: Interrogating the Role of Piano Music in Rendering the Gothic Onscreen

This paper brings together a seemingly unlikely web of texts, connected by their use of Claude Debussy's piano music. It entangles the films *Tokyo Sonata* (2008) and *All About Lily Chou Chou* (2001) with their evocative takes on the modern condition in Japan with South Korean series *Move to Heaven* (2021) to re-think the role that interiority plays in producing the Gothic precisely at the disjunct of world and self. These texts all use Claude Debussy's music performatively to represent the interiority of the emotional self. In each, the music is the only classical music used, either diegetically or nondiegetically, holding a privileged semiotic function in the psycho-social landscape these texts explore. The characters under examination are all portrayed in a state of emotional mismatch (albeit it for very different reasons) between their internal selves and their societal contexts. It is the contrast between the inner world of the protagonists, expressed through Debussy, and their external interactions that renders the depiction of the modern condition as fundamentally Gothic in these texts. In this paper, I argue that the pointed use of classical piano music creates a Gothic lens within the text itself. While respecting the psychoanalytic roots of the Gothic, the readings are made with recourse to early Romantic epistemological philosophy and Melodrama for their engagement with the relationship between music and linguistically bounded subjecthood.

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Ruth Barratt-Peacock is an Australia literary studies scholar and musicologist currently writing on Western classical music as a spatial practice in Anglophone and East Asian literature and film. Her recent work includes: *Concrete Horizons: Romantic Irony in the Poetry of David Malouf and Samuel Wagan Watson* (Peter Lang, 2020); "Heavy Metal Made for Children?: Interrogating the Adult / Child Divide in Heavysaurus' Heavy Metal Humour" (*Metal Studies* 8:2, 2022); "Gothic Trajectories of Childhood: Play as Third Space, Affective Dissonance, and the Melodrama of Kamen Rider Kiva" (*Aeternum* 9:1, 2022 with Sophia Staite), and "Aspirational Cosmopolitanism in Japanese Classical Music Anime: Adapting Romantic Legacies in Forest of Piano" (*The East Asian Journal of Popular Culture* 8:1, 2022).

Panel 3b

Rosemarie Miller

University of Worcester, United Kingdom

Haunted by Tigers: Exploring the Legacy of Capitalism in Two Contemporary Australasian Novels.

The paper examines the Gothic trope of the Tasmanian tiger, or Thylacine, as a metaphor for the ways in which people are haunted by the uncomfortable reality of human-made extinctions. Driven by the hegemonic discourse of capitalism, such extinctions continue, showing how little history influences contemporary decision-making. For example, Sean Maxwell's study of the Great Dividing Range concludes that unless strategic conservation and restoration take place, the land will be 'climactically unsuitable' for 26 species by 2085, with 11 of those species found nowhere else on earth (2019:1). Irrevocable losses occur even in the context of scientific evidence revealing the risks posed to biodiversity. Despite the uncomfortable truths posed by human activity affecting the ecosystem, there is a reluctance

to accept them. Sightings of the enigmatic thylacine continued beyond the supposed last of the species dying in captivity in 1936. Barry W. Brook's investigation concludes that 'extinction may have been as recent as the late 1980s to early 2000s' (2021:1). Amalyah Hart's feature in *Cosmos* describes how \$5 million will support a project at the University of Melbourne to clone a Thylacine (2022). Two examples of contemporary novels that feature the search for the thylacine and raise important contemporary questions concerning extinction and the human desire to play God, are Sonya Hartnett's *Stripes of the Sidestep Wolf* and Julia Leigh's *The Hunter*. Derrida's *Spectres de Marx* and ideas of visibility and invisibility inform the analyses of the texts, which uncover the cultural influences and intersections that affect individual choices and decisions.

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Rosemarie Miller is a researcher in the field of children's literature and an Associate Lecturer at the University of Worcester, UK. In 2021 she completed a Wellcome funded project in qualitative research at the University of Birmingham. She gained her doctorate 'The Australian Gothic Through the Novels of Sonya Hartnett' in 2018. Her article "Lost Children in a Gothic Landscape," was published by Routledge in 2017. She was awarded a conference grant to present at the 2014 Australasian Children's Literature Association for Research (ACLAR) biennial conference. Other research interests include politics and social class in children's literature and posthumanism.

Maureen DeLeo

NUI Galway, Ireland

'You'd think a pity to see the creature': The Networks Within Patrick Pearse's 'An Dearg Daol'

Philip O'Leary notes that 'a strong note of melancholy runs through' the short stories of the Irish writer and educator Patrick Pearse and that 'this sadness [is] due to conscious human evil'. In 'An Dearg Daol (The Black Chafer)' (1907), the titular female character is an ever present source of anxiety and mystery. She is removed physically from her community, outside of their network, though she exists within it still because of their ever present fear of her. When she suddenly appears to save a little girl from drowning, she only asks in return that the girl visit her. Presumably, however, these one on one visitations begin to have a physically draining affect on the child, so much so that she passes after a month's time.

An Dearg Daol occupies the community network through the retelling of this story and through its imagination because she is not a physical part of it. Her unnamed, unspecified sin leads to her condemnation and ostracisation and they can only speculate as to what offence was committed. As to the cause of the girl's death, that, too, is unclear. The woman's paradoxical presence and absence is one that permeates and infects the collective. This is also something that originates from within; they banish her, consciously committing an act of evil against a woman who they know nothing about and follow this order to do so blindly. Pearse's short story presents a complex web of enigma, the centre of which is the woman known only as An Dearg Daol.

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Maureen DeLeo is a third year PhD student in the School of English and Creative Arts at NUI Galway. Her thesis examines the role of women in Patrick Pearse's literary canon. She has previously published on Yeats and the Tarot in 'The Wild Swans at Coole' (*The Explicator*) and on Sinclair Lewis' 1922 novel, *Babbitt* (*Modernist Studies Ireland*).

Session Four

Panel 4a

Mattia Petricola

University of L'Aquila, Italy

On Video-spectrality: Haunted Screens and/as Gothic Technologies from Nam June Paik to *The Ring*

In current media studies, ghosts and specters are often thought of less as supernatural entities than as metaphorical devices for investigating late-modern and contemporary media (from photography to virtual reality) as liminal technologies operating in-between visibility and invisibility, presence and absence, materiality and immateriality. This paper aims to reclaim the gothic nature of the specters that haunt our mediascape by focusing on the medium of video in both its analog and digital forms. Unearthing the spectral nature of video and its relation to the Gothic seems particularly relevant when considering not only the omnipresence of video in today's mediascape, but also the fact that, in terms of cultural history, video was (and still is) considered more 'faithful to reality' than any other medium – which is why video is, among other things, the medium of surveillance 2.

In order to define the notion of video-spectrality, trace it back to the gothic tropes related to ghosts and haunting, and provide an overview of the aesthetic effects that video-specters can generate, this paper will focus on three very different works: Nam June Paik's video-sculpture *TV Buddha* (1976), Bill Viola's video installation *Ocean Without a Shore* (2007), and F. Javier Gutiérrez's *Rings* (2017) – the most recent film in the American *The Ring* franchise. By examining these works in the light of Jeffrey Sconce's notions of "haunted media" and "electronic elsewhere", I will show how *TV Buddha* interrogates the very nature of the television image and its spectral uncanniness; how *Ocean Without a Shore* turns the "electronic elsewhere" of video into a liminal space in which the dead can briefly come back to life; and how Gutiérrez's *Rings* transformed its franchise by migrating the iconic haunted video at the franchise's core from VHS to the Internet.

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Mattia Petricola (he/him) is Postdoc Research Fellow in Comparative Literature at the University of L'Aquila (Italy). His research interests sit at the crossroads of thanatology, fantastic fiction, and intermedial studies. He has published articles on Philip K. Dick, Peter Greenaway, Bill Viola, and the intermedial reception of Dante's *Divine Comedy*. He co-authored forthcoming essays for *A Cultural History of Death* (Bloomsbury) and *The Palgrave Handbook of Intermediality*. He is currently working on a monograph entitled *The Penultimate End: A Theory and History of the Residual Undead, 1845-2020*.

Amy Bride

University of Manchester, United Kingdom

'Faith Alone Can Overturn the Universe': Patterns of Gothic Religious Reversal in Warhammer 40K'

Tabletop wargame phenomena Warhammer 40K is fundamentally reliant on networks of armies, species, and cults, each with their own rules, mythologies, and histories. The fact that a number of factions included in the 40K franchise are inherently gothic is itself,

perhaps, not necessary surprising, given both the vastness of the game and the multidisciplinary reach of the gothic itself. More interestingly, the adaptation of classic gothic monstrosity, including vampirism, zombiism, and lycanthropy, within 40K, speaks directly to the cyclical nature of gothic repression and return, reviving the folkloric origins of these monstrosities and imposing them onto a science fiction setting, thus implying an ongoing and repetitive relationship between the past and the future. Moreover, the manner in which religion is framed within these gothic fictions is striking when read comparatively against the gothic's roots in Judeo-Christian concepts of evil, and is therefore also worthy of further attention. Patterns of belief and disbelief that occur naturally throughout human history are made extreme within the 40K universe, and subsequently shown to extend, exaggerate, and eventually overturn the characterization of religion as a sanctuary from evil that is common within classic gothic literature. As such, the paper will argue that Warhammer 40K is not only built upon a system of networks but, specifically, a system of gothic networks in which gothic monsters fight for, with, and alongside religious powers, and have become aligned with the church to such an extent that the traditional positioning of good vs evil becomes reversed.

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Amy Bride is a Lecturer in American Studies at University of Manchester. Her first monograph, entitled 'Financial Gothic: Monstrous Capitalism in American Gothic Fiction' examines the intersection of race and finance in American gothic monster fiction of the Long Twentieth Century and is forthcoming with University of Wales Press. Her other publications include articles on the work of Bret Easton Ellis as Late-Capitalist Hyper-Gothic. Her other research interests include technogothic, body horror, and cinema of the 1980s and 90s.

Sara-Patricia Wasson

Lancaster University, United Kingdom

Torn Wings and Exorcism: Chronic Pain and Gothic Representation

This paper contends that Gothic studies can bring a valuable alternative slant to critical medical humanities of chronic pain. Chronic pain affects nearly 28 million people in the UK and 20% of the global adult population. Yet people enduring chronic pain often report feeling invisible. They may endure a representational crisis, struggling to communicate their experience amid stigma. Part of this marginalisation stems from the way that certain kinds of patient stories are easier to hear than others. In particular, late neoliberal expectations of patienthood often requires 'resilience', and links moral worth to the ability to perform self-sufficiency and confidence in the face of health challenges.

This paper explores creative works that rise to this representational challenge by using Gothic tropes, specifically a preoccupation with confined space, supernatural bodily transformation, isolation, and ambiguity. The writing is taken from *Translating Pain*, an anthology of short-form work hosted at Lancaster University and funded by the UK AHRC. The anthology features works of prose, poetry or sequential art, between 5 -150 words in length, written from the perspective of a person living with pain, a carer, a healthcare practitioner, or other witness. The writing does critical work in articulating the crisis of chronic illness within contemporary systems of care. The anthology can connect people within and against the experience of erasure, without moving too quickly to culturally-sanctioned closures of optimism or individual overcoming.

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Sara Wasson is Reader in Gothic Studies at Lancaster University. She is the author of *Transplantation Gothic: Tissue Transfer in Literature, Film and Medicine* (2020) and *Urban Gothic of the Second World War* (2010). Both books won the Allan Lloyd Smith Memorial Prize of the International Gothic Association. With Emily Alder, she co-edited *Gothic Science Fiction, 1980-2010* (2011), editor of a special issue of *Gothic Studies* exploring Medical Gothic (2015), and primary investigator of the UK AHRC-funded project *Translating Chronic Pain*. Her articles have appeared in *The Journal of Popular Culture*, *Medical Humanities*, *Gothic Studies*, and other publications.

Panel 4b

Hannah Murray

University of Liverpool, United Kingdom

Austral Ancestors in Ernest Favenc's Tropics

This paper interrogates the prevalence of dead, dying and supernatural white men in the work of Australian gothic writer Ernest Favenc (1845-1908). Being murdered, left for dead, or succumbing to the environment, Favenc's station men and explorers fill up the Queensland bush as ghosts, corpses and skeletons. This paper argues that these figures serve a dual purpose in late nineteenth-century fiction: they both articulate and exorcise anxieties of settler whiteness.

Favenc employs these dead and haunting figures to voice settler fears of economic and social failure in the colonies. At the same time, Favenc draws on the work of Washington Irving, who creates Dutch-American ghosts to replace Indigenous figures and legitimise European settlement of the United States. By imprinting white remains, graves and ghosts onto the landscape, Favenc—like Irving—creates sets of settler ancestors (from seventeenth-century Dutch pirates to nineteenth-century swagmen) for current and future Australians. In continually writing settler haunting, Favenc sanctifies the land and inscribes legacy and authority in the settler-colonial project.

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Hannah Murray is Lecturer in American Literature at University of Liverpool and currently lives in Melbourne. Her first book *Liminal Whiteness in Early US Fiction* (Edinburgh, 2021) examines fluid and precarious whiteness in American fiction 1798-1857 and other publications include chapters in *The Oxford Handbook of Charles Brockden Brown* and articles in *The Irish Journal of Gothic and Horror Studies* and *The Nathaniel Hawthorne Review*. She is currently working on a comparative literary history of nineteenth-century American and Australian speculative writing.

Joana Rita Ramalho

University College London, United Kingdom

Lugubrious Farce and Twisted Crime: The (d)Evolution of the Clown in Popular Culture

Hailed as 'gentle and benign' (Bouissac 1990) yet also feared as deviant lunatics, clowns have always led a paradoxical existence. These iconic symbols of popular entertainment have been around for millennia and, somewhere along the way, their image as melancholy merry-makers, infused with what Chaplin once called 'touches of sentiment' (Towsen 1976), was superseded by the 'psycho clown' archetype. McAndrew and Koehnke (2016) reveal that 'clown' is considered the creepiest of all occupations, because of our inability to identify

the person under the mask and predict their behaviour. Indeed, clowns are recurrently depicted as madmen (e.g. 'Hop-Frog', 1849), unsuspected murderers (e.g. *Spies*, 1928), or remorseless serial killers (e.g. *It*, 1986). In films such as *He Who Gets Slapped* (1924) and *Laugh, Clown, Laugh* (1928), the derisive laughter of the onscreen audience and the malevolent laugh of the evil clown serve, I will argue, a specific purpose: to expose and critique our societies' vices and follies, while pointing an accusatory finger at the audience for their complicity in shameless mockery and murderous mayhem.

My paper will contextualise the clown's evil turn, bringing into dialogue myriad intertextual and intermedial iterations of clowning. Unravelling a multi-layered network of complementary and often contradictory depictions of this trope, it will explore how comedy, melodrama, Gothic, and horror meet and meld. While the focus will be on cinematic clowns, I will also consider examples from opera, animation, literature, comics, and television series. My aim is to problematise the representation of the clown persona in popular fiction, asking what the (d)evolution of this figure tells us about ourselves and why there is no such thing as innocent laughter.

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Joana Rita Ramalho is Lecturer (Teaching) in Film Studies, Comparative Literature, and Portuguese at University College London, where she teaches Gothic literature, musical satire, Spanish cinema, and Portuguese. She has published on topics as varied as sexsationalist feminism in postmillennial Gothic musicals, haptic motifs and sensory contagion in terror cinema, thing theory and creepy dolls in gothic and horror films, radical humour in the repertoire of the British punk cabaret trio The Tiger Lillies, portraits in 1940s Romantic Gothic melodramas, and the queer failure and mock heroism of King Ludwig II of Bavaria. She is currently working on a monograph, *Memory and the Gothic Aesthetic in Film: Routes of Remembering*.

Claudia Sterbini

Edinburgh University, United Kingdom

'This Bleached Nocturnal Thing': Sexual Evolutions and the Pathologization of Asexuality in H. G. Wells' *The Time Machine*

In *fin de siècle* Britain, surgical and anatomical studies of anerotically patients prompted a widespread concern with the non-reproductive and impenetrable genitalia of the frigid individual. Nineteenth-century gothic was essential to popularising such concern and constructed a pathologized stigma of asexual individuals through the presentation of diseased, othered asexual monsters.

Throughout H. G. Wells' writing, asexual monsters are featured prominently, as this author warns his readers against a dangerous evolutionary pattern which will lead to an epidemic of frigidity. This is particularly evident in *The Time Machine*, where asexuality is envisioned as the pathology leading to the creation of the monstrous Morlocks. In their portrayal, rationality is coupled with sexual coldness to construct the quintessential result of frigidity: the transformation of humanity into something so abject that it goes against all human values.

Therefore, the Morlock's diseased, phallic body concretises the age's concern with blighted genitalia and physical manifestations of sexual degeneration. Simultaneously, their cannibalistic hunger and heightened intelligence threaten the healthy sexual body of the Eloi, always at risk of being engulfed, of being contaminated by the 'deviant' Morlocks.

With this text, Wells challenges the confines between humans and Morlocks, providing the Victorian reader with a cathartic narrativization of the medical studies on the diseased and yet powerful anerotic body.

By analysing the Morlocks' portrayal as situated at the crossing of science and fiction, my paper will prompt for a reconsideration of medical labels, relocating contemporary stigmas regarding asexuality within literary-medical relations and disclosing their constructed, narrative origin.

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Claudia Sterbini is a PhD student at Edinburgh University. Her project, funded by AHRC through SGSAH, explores the construction of pathological asexuality in Victorian fiction. She is a board member on the academic journal *Romance, Revolution and Reform* and on the referee panel of the publication *The Wellsian*. She has presented widely on the gothic, asexuality and the medical humanities.

Session Five

Panel 5a

Blair Speakman

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The Blossom Mystery House: The Haunted Home and Ghostly Possession in Riverdale (2017-)

One of the Gothic's central motifs, the haunted home often functions as a site to visualise anxieties around family inheritance, murder, supernatural elements, and an entrapped female object of desire (Punter, 2012; Yang & Healey, 2016). A television adaptation of *Archie Comics* (1939-), *Riverdale* (2017-) frequently employs the use of "highly stereotyped characters and plots...often derived from Gothic literary fiction" (Wheatley, 2006, p. 3). This can especially be seen with the Blossom family estate, Thornhill, which is described as "a house of secrets and mysteries" and the "most haunted place in Riverdale" (Anderson & DeWille, 2021). Although Thornhill is grand and luxurious, it is home to corpses, possessed dolls, and spirits which haunt the heir to the Blossom estate, Cheryl (Madeleine Petsch). While hauntings can take several forms, "they frequently assume the features of ghosts...that rise from within the antiquated space [...] to manifest unresolved crimes...that can no longer be successfully buried from view" (Kindinger, 2017, p. 60). After discovering that her ancestor, Abigail Blossom, was accused of being a witch and burned at the stake outside Thornhill, Cheryl recites a curse from Abigail's journal, unwittingly conjuring her ancestor's spirit. An enraged Abigail possesses Cheryl's body to enact revenge and correct the wrongs of the past. This conference paper will discuss how Thornhill is home to more than just its living inhabitants as it is a space haunted by traces of the past, and where ghosts return to reveal long since forgotten atrocities and crimes.

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Blair Speakman is a popular culture scholar who is particularly fascinated with the representation of adolescence and time in contemporary Gothic-Horror television series. This interest led Blair to start his Doctorate of Philosophy at Auckland University of Technology (AUT) in July 2017, focusing on adolescent characters in contemporary Gothic television shows. Blair is highly involved in University extra-curricular activities, including being a member of the Popular Culture Research Centre.

Heidi Backes

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The War at Home: The Haunted House as Battlefield in Ana María Matute's *Family Demons* (2014)

Ana María Matute, considered one of 20th-century Spain's most important authors, is known for her narratives portraying silence, absence, and the loss of childhood innocence. In her last novel, *Family Demons* (left unfinished at the time of her death in 2014), the Spanish Civil War is central to the plot: Eva, the teenage protagonist, has grown up under the overbearing watch of her father, a retired colonel who supports Franco's Nationalist troops as they advance through the center of the country. As the war progresses in the background, the house itself is constantly under siege by a different force: that of "Madre," the colonel's dead mother, whose portrait (now removed to the attic) looms over the family and whose presence after death seems even more overpowering than when she was alive. Madre permeates the house, infiltrating every corner and waging war on those within it, converting the house into a symbolic female body and locus of terror that posits female spectral monstrosity against the militant corporeal masculinity of the Colonel and his undying nostalgia for the war in Morocco. The fact that the novel is unfinished and was published posthumously lends it an even greater phantasmagoric quality; given the themes of the text at hand, it seems quite appropriate that an author who lived in an illusionary world of silences and ghostly apparitions would, in the end, become one of those spectral presences in her own, final novel.

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Heidi Backes is an Associate Professor of Spanish at Missouri State University (USA), where she teaches classes on Spanish Peninsular literature and culture. She specializes in contemporary Spanish fiction, focusing her latest research on the neo-Gothic movement in Spain. She has most recently presented at IGA 2022, Dark Economies 2021, Gothic Spaces 2019, GANZA 2019, has published articles and book chapters on Carlos Ruiz Zafón, Adelaida García Morales, Benito Pérez Galdós and more. She is currently writing a book on haunting in contemporary Spanish Gothic fiction for the University of Wales Press.

Brontë Schiltz

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“It Is In Our House Now”: *Twin Peaks*’ Televisual Terrors

When David Lynch and Mark Frost’s *Twin Peaks* first aired in 1990, it fundamentally altered the landscape of television. From uncanny evocations of dream states to the horrific portrayal of incestuous abuse and murder, the medium, after its broadcast, would never be the same again. Fittingly, in an article on *Twin Peaks*, Lenora Ledwon argues that television ‘would seem to be the ideal medium for Gothic inquiry. It is, after all, a mysterious box simultaneously inhabited by spirit images of ourselves and inhabiting our living rooms.’ This choice of form feels particularly self-reflexive when the television set itself plays a prominent narrative role.

In the first series, the television makes the absence of murdered Homecoming Queen Laura Palmer present through home videos examined on a set at the Sheriff’s Department, news broadcasts viewed in abusive homes and a soap opera that seems to mirror “real” events. 1992 prequel film *Fire Walk With Me* begins with the destruction of a set and visually signifies the veil between life and death signified with static, but depictions of spiritual salvation also borrow the aesthetics of television viewership. Then, in the third series, demonic entity uses televisions as a medium for dark communicative magic, and Laura’s traumatised mother, Sarah, repetitively watches extreme human and animal violence in her living room. This paper examines how, as television viewership grows in both ubiquity and danger, with reality TV increasingly associated with suicide and biased reporting with bigotry, its representation in *Twin Peaks* becomes increasingly dreadful, too.

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Brontë Schiltz recently graduate with an MA in English Studies from the Manchester Centre for Gothic Studies. Her research interests include the televisual Gothic, the queer Gothic and the neoliberal Gothic. Her work has previously been published in the *SFRA Review*, *Fantastika Journal*, *The Sibyl*, *Aeternum Journal*, *SIC Journal* and *Revenant*, as well as *Vision, Contestation and Deception: Interrogating Gender and the Supernatural in Victorian Shorter Fiction*, edited by Oindrila Ghosh. She has also appeared on two podcasts, *Victorian Legacies* and *The Ghost Story Book Club*, and given two talks as part of the *Romancing the Gothic* online lecture series.

Panel 5b

Derek Johnston

Queen's University, Ireland

Gothicising *Picnic at Hanging Rock*

This paper considers the 2018 television adaptation of *Picnic at Hanging Rock* as an example of Gothicised historical television drama, which uses the Gothic mode to present a past in a way that challenges our expectations of what prestige historical drama should be like, and to emphasise historical traumas and the way that they are still relevant and active today. The adaptation does this in part through its added emphasis on oppression and entrapment through gender, class, wealth and ethnicity. It also does it through its embrace of more ‘Gothic’ aesthetics, placing it alongside other Gothicised historical television dramas such as *Taboo*, *Peaky Blinders*, *The Terror*, and *Black Sails*.

I argue that this trend or grouping is partly a response to developments in the aesthetics of television and the idea of what a 'prestige' drama should look like. I also argue that it is a reaction against ideas of what a prestige historical drama should look like, particularly in terms of Andrew Higson's conception of the 'heritage drama'. By challenging our expectations of the heritage drama, and particularly of a text with a familiar presentation, we are encouraged to consider it anew. By presenting these historical dramas through a Gothic lens, we are particularly encouraged to consider their representations of trauma, and how those traumas remain relevant to our lives today.

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Derek Johnston is Lecturer in Broadcast at Queen's University, Belfast. His main areas of research are in television and its use of fantastic genres, including the Gothic. He is the author of a number of articles and book chapters, including the chapter on 'Gothic Television' in *The Cambridge History of the Gothic*, and wrote the book *Haunted Seasons: Television Ghost Stories for Christmas and Horror for Halloween* about seasonal horror traditions.

Aparajita Hazra

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Ghosts from the Past: Memory and Trauma as Art Horror in Keith Thomas's *The Vigil*

The word trauma, that derives itself from the Greek 'traumatizo', which signifies 'to wound', often initiates a discourse of agony that engages in a constant and excruciating psychomachia in the human psyche. The past oft comes back to haunt the present in myriad gothic ways.

The present paper proposes to take up Keith Thomas's Anglo-Yiddish film *The Vigil* to analyse how trauma translates into horror. The film metonymises the debilitating trauma of the holocaust through a corpse kept on vigil. The Shomer (the person who keeps watch on the corpse before it is taken for burial) finds himself scared out of his wits by paranormal visitations, even as the viewer gradually realizes that the ghosts he sees have close connections to his own traumatic experiences as a Jew who bore the brunt of savage anti-semitism. The past has forever been one of the revenants of the Gothic. And past trauma haunts memory—both individual as well as cultural—inexorably. *The Vigil* shows how the ghosts of memory make a crossover from the mnemonics of an individual to that of a community to create cultural, natural as well as art horror.

The paper also would analyse the film *The Vigil* from the perspectives inspired by the works on trauma theory propounded by Primo Levi, Cathy Carouth, Paul Ricoeur et al.

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Aparajita Hazra is Dean of Arts and Professor in the Department of English in Diamond Harbour Women's University, West Bengal, India. She has been widely published and has presented papers widely in India, France, New Zealand, Macau, Malaysia, Canada, Ireland, Georgia and Scotland. She has authored *The Terrible Beauty, Her Hideous Progeny: Mary Shelley's Frankenstein, The Brontes: A Sorority of Passion, Marlowe, the Muse's Darling* and *The Art of Articulation* from Macmillan Publishers. An Anthology on the Gothic is on the way. She is the recipient of the Noble Asian Educational Leader Award, 2020, the Asian Education Award 2021, the National Faculty Award for 2021-22.

Barbara Braid

University of Szczecin, Poland

Theme Parks as Gothic Heterochronia in *Antebellum*

Michel Foucault's heterochronia (1986) is a type of heterotopia, that is, space that both reflects and contests social structures. Heterochronic spaces offer "the absolute break with [...] traditional time" (Foucault 1986: 26), among which Foucault recognises a specific subtype of heterochronia, where "time [is] in its most fleeting, transitory, precarious aspect" (Foucault 1986: 26). These are spaces where time is only now, and future disappears from the horizon. Foucault implies that this is due to pleasure resulting from the engrossment in the entertainment of funfairs, holiday camps, theme parks or festivals; but as gothic culture repeatedly shows, these spaces may also evoke fear and trauma.

Antebellum (dir. Gerard Bush and Christopher Renz, 2020) is set simultaneously in the pre-Civil War plantation in the South and contemporary America. Both the nineteenth-century slave Eden and the twenty-first-century scholar Elizabeth are played by Janelle Monáe, thus suggesting a time-travel between these settings. However, much later the audience learns that Elizabeth was kidnapped and located in a Civil War re-enactment park, where a slave plantation was secretly recreated and Black people were tortured and murdered. This presentation looks at the Antebellum theme park as a gothic heterochronia: a space where time is permanently still, frozen in the traumatic historical moment of slavery, entrapping its main character. As a new Black horror, that is, one which tackles the issue of racism in contemporary American society via gothic metaphors of imprisonment and monstrosity, the film proposes a criticism of what is claimed to be post-racial America.

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Barbara Braid is Assistant Professor of English Literature in the Institute of Literature and New Media, University of Szczecin, Poland. She specialises in neo-Victorian fiction, film and television adaptation, gothic fiction and queer studies. Her upcoming publication (co-written with dr Anna Gutowska) on Emily Dickinson's recent screen biofictions will be soon published in *Neo-Victorian Studies* journal. She has also published on madness motif in neo-Victorian fiction, queer gothic and lesbian gothic, Frankenstein adaptations, and biofiction. Her upcoming project will be a monograph on neo-Victorianism as heterochronia.

Session Seven

Panel 7a

Enrique Ajuria Ibarra

Ibarra Universidad de las Américas Puebla (UDLAP), Mexico

Collective Memories and Intertextualities: Spectral Fungal Networks in Silvia Moreno-García's Mexican Gothic (2020)

Silvia Moreno-García's Gothic romance, set in a Mexican mining town, demonstrates her extensive knowledge of the Gothic tradition. With explicit references to classic novels, such as Ann Radcliffe's, the Brontë sisters, and Daphne du Maurier, Mexican Gothic's appeal on the collective cultural knowledge of this fictional form. Moreover, with protagonist Noemí Taboada, the novel reworks and rethinks the trope of the Gothic heroine as she navigates the patriarchal and domestic context of 1950s Mexico. Moreno-García's work is very conscious of the dynamics of collective cultural memories, a theme that is also pivotal in its plot development. Whilst saving her cousin Catalina from the Doyle family, Noemí discovers that all the ghosts she had been seeing inside the Doyles' old house were actually projections

of a collective memory stored by a fungus that guaranteed the family patriarch, Howard, eternal life. Anyone who spent a few days inside the house would eventually be contaminated by fungal spores, making them prey to ghostly memory apparitions and to be controlled by Howard himself. Howard's survival depended on a monstrous, symbiotic relationship that established an organic network with the fungus. In the end, all supernatural events had a very natural explanation, one based on sharing bodies and minds to avoid the horror of death. This paper examines Mexican Gothic's idea of the network as a spectral Gothic strategy that, as much as it binds its victims, also offers the possibility for rebellion when collective memories reveal the atrocities done for the sake of survival of one selfish man.

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Enrique Ajuria Ibarra is Senior Assistant Professor at Universidad de las Américas Puebla (UDLAP), Mexico. He has published several articles and chapters on Mexican Gothic horror cinema. He is the editor-in-chief of the online, peer-reviewed journal *Studies in Gothic Fiction*. He is currently exploring the Gothic in the Archie Comics Universe and continues looking at Gothic and horror in Mexican film and literature.

Jason Haslam

Dalhousie University, Canada

Twice-Told Tales: Networks of Allusions and Alien Abductions in Contemporary American Gothic

Analyzing the centrality of alien-abduction narratives to American culture and American Gothic more specifically, this paper argues that the cultural circulation and iteration of popular Gothic tales is in fact their very site of analysis. The paper will begin with the "original" tale of abduction, in the story of Betty and Barney Hill, an interracial couple who, in 1961, claimed to have been abducted by aliens, and then turn to William Gibson's story of the semiotic cultural haunting of pop culture, "The Gernsback Continuum." These introductory analyses will lead to the central study of the second season of the anthology gothic television series, *American Horror Story*, titled "Asylum."

"Asylum" rewrites several "real" stories, which have themselves become remarketed so often as to become detached from their historical moment even as they are inseparable from their cultural frames. These include the story of early feminist journalist Nellie Bly; Lizzie Borden; the late 1940s exorcism of "Roland Doe," which inspired *The Exorcist*; Ed Gein, inspiration for Norman Bates of *Psycho*, Leatherface of *Texas Chainsaw Massacre*, and Buffalo Bill of *Silence of the Lambs*; the story of Betty and Barney Hill themselves; and many others. All these narratives suggest "rememberings," in Toni Morrison's sense, of cultural symptoms of America's repressed histories of violent othering, what Robert Mighall calls the "gothic vestiges" of the past. *American Horror Story*, however, offers both a more conservative and a more radical view: the re-remembering of these stories as popular horror narratives is presented as a process of creating what Jerrold Hogle calls the "gothic counterfeit," in which each retelling replaces the original material history, such that all history becomes an empty signifier: horror stories are always "twice-told tales." While this reading may support materialist denunciations of the "culture industry," my argument is that each iteration of these horror narratives adds to a network of new possibilities for forming communities that evade the national narratives of racism, heterosexism, and other divisions.

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Jason Haslam is a Professor of English at Dalhousie University. He is the author or editor of several books, including the monograph *Gender, Race, and Science Fiction*, the collection of essays *American Gothic Culture: An Edinburgh Companion* (with Joel Faflak), and a scholarly edition of Ian Fleming's *Casino Royale* (with Julia M. Wright). He is currently editing the Broadview Anthology of Science Fiction.

Nancy Johnson-Hunt and Lorna Piatti-Farnell
Auckland University of Technology, New Zealand

Magic on the Margins: The Villainous Networks of Dr Facilier as a Queer and Racialized Character in Disney's *The Princess and the Frog* (2009)

Disney villains have come to play an iconic role across popular culture. From *Snow White's* (1937) 'Evil Queen' to the more recent 2021 live-action film *Cruella*, there remains an inextricable connection to the 'Gothic' and peripheral notions of the 'Other'. The 2009 release of Disney's *The Princess and the Frog* is no exception, as it remains loaded with multiple Gothic, historical and racial (con)textual intricacies. In connecting the Gothic to Disney, Piatti-Farnell (2019) proposes, Disney's animated films frequently depict "dark and gloomy atmospheres, as well as numerous narratives of body modification – most often than not caused by magic and sorcery" (2019, p.46). In this instance, specific corporeal (trans)mutations are facilitated through Dr Facilier's Voodoo magic as he transmogrifies main characters Tiana (Anika Noni Rose) and Prince Naveen (Bruno Campos) into frogs. Like most Disney villains, Dr Facilier operates by exercising his unique charm, his boundary-pushing performance and enchanting intimidation. This paper will analyze Dr Facilier's appearance across three pivotal moments in the film, from his formal introduction to Prince Naveen, to his interaction with magical entities halfway through the film, and finally his inevitable demise at the end of the film. Dr Facilier's villainous trajectories calls attention to his longstanding desire for power and possession over the city of New Orleans, while also reinforcing his Otherness in Gothic manifestations. Ultimately, this paper aims to reveal how the Gothic functions alongside Dr Facilier's racial and queer-villainous characterization in an effect to display the dark recesses and desires of his Voodoo-laced networks.

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Nancy Johnson-Hunt is a former advertising strategist turned doctoral candidate at Auckland University of Technology. After a decade-long career within the Advertising and Marketing Industry, both in New Zealand and North America, she returns to AUT, undertaking her PhD within the Popular Culture Research Centre. Her doctoral thesis explores the representation of ethnicity in popular reality television dating shows and how these portrayals conform to, or challenge stereotypes historically constructed to amplify racialised bodies, spaces, and issues. Her research interests include the diffusion of advertising culture, construction of ethnic and racial identities across popular media and culture, and the influence of celebrity in shaping everyday lives.

Cited works:

Piatti-Farnell, (2019). *Gothic Afterlives: Reincarnations of Horror in Film and Popular Media*. Lexington Books.

Panel 7b

Emma Baird
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Just a Phase? The Enduring Global Networks of Goth Identity

This paper presents research findings that inform contemporary perspectives and provide new insights on the complex phenomenon of international Goth identity. Emergent from this research are elements that characterise engagement in the social and aesthetic online networks of Goth and support the view that global connectedness is fundamental to the endurance of contemporary gothic identities.

Analysis of empirical data from over 2000 Australian and International participants details the constituent factors of Goth which have enabled its spectrum of aesthetics and modes of engagement to expand and endure.

Findings here demonstrate Goth to be a sophisticated, mature culture, not simply isolated pockets of subcultural expression and that Goth culture exists as a globally-recognised identity construct having distinct, highly codified socio-aesthetic preferences and behaviours. Data illustrates how in recent decades these modes of engagement have transitioned from solely in-person to largely online networks.

Here, I describe how online perpetuation of Goth aesthetics has reinforced the core tenets of the culture, by providing tangible bonds to previous generations in conjunction with new in-culture experiences. The complex phenomenon of Goth, and notions of the gothic, is thus intentionally formed, maintained, and evolved through shared cultural experience. I posit Goth should be considered as a mature cultural phenomenon and a socio-aesthetic framework around which identity is formed and endures through different life phases.

Findings here show that even without physical sites of Goth activity, Goth culture is an example of an enduring globally connected, socially active identity network founded on a constant aesthetic framework.

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Emma L. Baird is currently an Early Career Researcher and Adjunct at Curtin University. She completed her PhD at Curtin University in the School of Media, Creative Arts & Social Inquiry. For her doctoral thesis, she wrote a study entitled "*Just a Phase? Goth Subculture as an identity constant beyond youth*" in which the longevity of Goth identity was examined via insider ethnographic research and surveys of Australian and International participants. With a background in art and design, Emma's research interests intersect with notions of aesthetics, spectacularity, self-design, the phenomena of beauty and the Gothic Mode.

Kristin Leeds

University of Tasmania, Australia

Hateful Selves and Criminal Minds: The Subversion of Gender Norms in the Crime Fiction Work of Japanese Author, Kirino Natsuo

Since her prize-winning debut, *Kao ni furikakaru ame* (*Her face veiled in Rain*) in 1993, Japanese author Kirino Natsuo (1951), has consistently challenged gender stereotypes and exposed the effects of hegemonic masculinity by critiquing Japanese society. Kirino is an established and respected writer of crime fiction, in both her original Japanese and in Anglophone translation, receiving several awards within Japan and internationally, including the 51st Mystery Writers of Japan Award for *Out* (2004) and the 44th Tanizaki Jun'ichiro Award in 2008.¹ She was also the only Japanese writer ever nominated for the Edgar Allan Poe Award Best Novel Category, which she received in 2004 for *Out*. This paper will explore the way in which gender norms are challenged and subverted in Kirino's narratives. The three

texts, *Out*, (1997) *Grotesque*, (2007) and *Real World* (2003) foreground the role intersectional disadvantage plays in the lives of women during the so called 'Lost Decade' of the 1990s.³ The 'Lost Decade' refers to the slowing of economic growth that began with the collapse of the Bubble Period in 1989 and continued throughout the 1990s. I will demonstrate how Kirino's characters gain agency through subverting normative gender stereotypes to resist the limitations placed on them due to age, gender, class, and race while drawing on conventions of the gothic.

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Kristin Leeds is a Masters student at the University of Tasmania and a senior secondary teacher of Japanese, English, French and Asian Studies. She enjoys reading and teaching crime fiction and is interested in the way in which authors draw on true crime in their works; particularly from 'The Lost Decade', where she worked as an English teacher.

Sarah Pearce and Claire Albrecht

Independent Scholars

'All fear the Friday sunset': Two Women, Lord Byron, and the Water...

On Friday 13 May 2022, on the last night of lashing rain and 'misty wind', we sat with 'brows of moonshine' in front of the fire, drank wine, and wrote Australian Gothic poems inspired by the water, the isolation, and the infamous poets' holiday on Lake Geneva where *Frankenstein* was written. Channelling Gothic tropes and trying very hard to spook each other, we felt truly connected to Shelley and her peers – our 'blood crackling of crickets'. We then quite literally mixed our poems with Lord Byron's 'Darkness' (1816) and set ourselves an almost impossible task: 164-word found poems using the jumbled document as source text, poems that were heavily constrained by the way and order in which the poems were mixed together digitally.

The resulting reincarnated puzzle-poems present a dissolution of voices and eras; an intertextual disorientation; an exchange of imagery, terrors and tenses; mutations upon mutations within a haunted rhizome of history and words. They speak back to and through Lord Byron and each of us, drawing upon the uniqueness of Australian Gothic, the brutal wet winter at Gunyah, and our own experiences of embodiment and psychology.

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Sarah Pearce is a poet, editor and researcher from Tarndanya/Adelaide. Her work appears in *Aeternum*, *Outskirts*, *Meniscus*, *writing from below*, *TEXT*, *The Suburban Review*, *Overland* and various anthologies. She has held residencies at Adelaide City Library, FELTspace gallery and Gunyah, and performed at Blenheim and Adelaide Fringe Festivals. She did a PhD on the suffering female body in the Brontës and writes predominantly on female embodiment, the Gothic, queer narrative(s) and mental health.

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Claire Albrecht is a poet, editor and curator from Mulubinba/Newcastle NSW. She was the 2019 Emerging Writers Festival fellow at the State Library of Victoria, a 2020 Varuna 'Writing Fire, Writing Drought' fellow, and the 2021 West Darling Arts Writer in Residence. She will (COVID willing) be a resident at the Helene Wurlitzer Foundation, New Mexico in 2022. Claire's debut chapbook *pinky swear* was published in 2018, and her most recent book *handshake* was shortlisted for the Puncher & Wattmann First Poetry Book Prize.

Session Eight

Panel 8a

Alessandro Cabiati

Ca' Foscari University of Venice (Italy) and Brown University (United States)

Gothic Terror and Female Deviance in Nineteenth-Century Adaptations of 'Bluebeard'

With its suspenseful atmosphere, mysterious and murderous male protagonist, and magical objects, it is hardly surprising that Charles Perrault's fairy tale 'La Barbe bleue' (1697) was the inspiration for numerous Gothic tales in the nineteenth century. Some of these adaptations placed Gothic devices such as the representation of the terror experienced by Bluebeard's latest wife when faced with the uncanny manifestation of his violence within the broader nineteenth-century cultural discourse on female deviance, and its relations with masculine authority and dominance. Shifting the focus of the story from Perrault's warning against female curiosity and disobedience – the moral message of the fairy tale – to a more profound analysis of the wife's feelings of fear and horror provided the female protagonist with a psychological depth that includes, as I will demonstrate in this paper, a display of a variety of abnormal behaviours. In these adaptations, the terror experienced by Bluebeard's wife serves as a springboard for the representation of psychological and nervous disorders that became popular in the nineteenth century such as hysteria, monomania, female depravity, and masochism. And yet these conditions are represented not simply as a consequence of masculine violence, but most importantly as a trigger for rebellion against male marital authority. This paper will analyse intermedial and intercultural rewritings and retellings of Perrault's 'Blue Beard' from nineteenth-century Britain, France, and the United States, including Sarah Wilkinson's Gothic bluebook 'Blue Beard; or, Female curiosity. A Romantic Tale' (1806); the poem 'Blue-Beard's Closet' (1861) by American author Rose Terry Cooke; Alphonse Daudet's short drama 'Les Huit pendues de Barbe-Bleue' (1861); and Marcel Schwob's short story 'La Petite femme de Barbe-Bleue' (1892).

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Alessandro Cabiati is a Marie Skłodowska-Curie Global Fellow at Ca' Foscari University of Venice, Italy, and Brown University, USA, where he investigates the ways in which nineteenth-century literary fairy tales contributed to the cultural discourse on psychological deviance and abnormality, while also influencing medical debate. In recent years, he has undertaken research at King's College London and at the Universities of Oxford and Edinburgh.

Samira Aziz

North South University (Bangladesh) and Victoria University of Wellington (New Zealand)

"The Truths of Fiction Reside in Metaphor; But Metaphor is Here Generated by History:" Telling it Slant in Joyce Carol Oates' *The Accursed*

In Francine Prose's review of *The Accursed* (2013), the final instalment in Joyce Carol Oates' Gothic saga, she observes that the text uses Gothic devices to "conjure up the truly frightening spectres that have haunted our nation since its inception." *The Accursed* has notable differences from the previous texts in the Gothic "quintet," which often use postmodern stylistics that often overlap with the Gothic, conveying a satirical version of American history. A superficial consideration of the novel would conclude that its typical Gothic features like the found manuscript structure and unreliable narrator trouble any stabilizing or authoritative notions of history. The novel even includes a bibliography that is

prefaced by the statement “The truths of Fiction reside in metaphor; but metaphor is here generated by History.” While it is possible to read this through a postmodern lens as an affirmation that does away with the boundaries between history and fiction, I argue that Oates uses this device for a different purpose – to draw attention to the real historical events that “inspired” the novel. In *The Accursed*, instead of metaphor’s failure to depict reality, as would be argued in postmodern thought, it actually underscores reality and historicity. The bibliography, in effect, intimates that it is indeed possible to know history, even through metaphor. The Gothic can be invoked for a historically authentic telling of the past.

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Samira Aziz is a senior lecturer at the Department of English and Modern Languages at North South University, Bangladesh. She is currently on study leave to pursue a PhD in contemporary Gothic fiction at Victoria University of Wellington. She has published and presented papers on historiographic metafiction and Gothic literature. Her research interests also include media and television studies and South Asian gothic.

Panel 8b

Ashleigh Prosser

Murdoch University, Australia

*The Monstrosity of Choice: Networks of Metatextual Haunting in *The Wanderer: Frankenstein's Creature* (2019)*

Networks of metatextual haunting form the basis of many modern video games that adapt iconic works of Gothic literature and present the player with choice-based narrative gameplay. This paper will explore the ways in which these literary monsters (and their creators) return, haunting these games and their players in uncannily strange yet familiar ways. The 2019 arthouse game, *The Wanderer: Frankenstein's Creature*, is one such example. The game is an interactive story-based walking simulator in which you play as the monster borne of Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein* (1818). Upon waking as the monster, unable to recall your past or understand your present, you begin to traverse the world around you by making binary choices that directly influence the way in which the landscape is presented to you. Likewise, this network of choices then shapes the kind of ‘monster’ that the world sees you as, and that you will eventually become, as the game asks you to create your own version of Frankenstein’s monster. Like Shelley’s original text, then, *The Wanderer: Frankenstein's Creature* confronts the player-reader with existential questions about life and death, human nature and what exactly makes the monster monstrous. What this paper seeks to explore through the neo-Gothic lens offered by such examples is why these metatextual monsters seem to return again and again to haunt popular culture.

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Dr **Ashleigh Prosser** FHEA is a Lecturer in Professional Learning in the Deputy Vice Chancellor Education & Equity Portfolio at Murdoch University in Perth, Western Australia. Ashleigh holds a BA(Hons-1st) and PhD in English & Cultural Studies from The University of Western Australia, and a Graduate Certificate in Educational Leadership from Queensland University of Technology. Ashleigh’s research interests lie with the study of gothic and horror in literature and popular culture, as well as the scholarship of teaching and learning. Ashleigh is a Fellow of the Higher Education Academy, the Associate Editor of *The Australasian Journal of Popular Culture*, the Managing Editor of *Aeternum: The Journal of Contemporary Gothic Studies*, and the Secretary of the Gothic Association of New Zealand and Australia (GANZA).

Matthew Thompson
Independent Scholar

Blood in the Time of COVID: Vampiric Societies, Morality and Pandemics in *Shadows of New York*

Modern vampires have often been described as ‘de-fanged’ monsters who have become more and more empathetic as authors such as Anne Rice and Stephanie Meyer have shifted the ‘alien threats’ of the vampire to something that should be embraced. However, authors such as Rice also often create vampires who are fascinated by a mortal world that is constantly moving beyond them and their anachronistic sensibilities. As a result, the vampire defines their own morality by human norms – enabling “the undead to grasp and construct their vampiric monstrosity in opposition to the humanity they lost through transgression”. One text that has attempted to take a different approach is the video game *Shadows of New York* (2022). This game is interesting because it not only attempts to utilise the idea of vampiric societies separated from the human hierarchies, but it also uses current events – particularly the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown – to show a vampiric society and norms that run autonomously outside of human endeavours. This paper will show how *Shadows of New York* uses the pandemic to illustrate how removed vampires are from the networks that they once held dear, instead emphasising an insular vampiric society in a time of flux while the mortal world grinds to a halt. By doing this, the paper will show a vampiric society and protagonist that must re-define its norms as it moves further and further away from human society.

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Matthew Thompson is an independent scholar who has worked for both Griffith University and the University of Southern Queensland. His PhD examined reconstructions of the Ripper Murders and how they informed narratives of serial killers, gender violence and the Victorian Age. Thompson has contributed book chapters to *Gothic Afterlives* (2019) and *The Superhero Multiverse* (2021) on the figures of Jekyll/Hyde and Jessica Jones respectively; and has written articles for the upcoming *East End Encyclopaedia* – including the entry for Jack the Ripper. Thompson is currently working on examining constructions of vampirism in interactive media.

Gargi Bendre
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When Species Meet: A Post Humanist Study of the Relationship Between the Human and Non-Human in Film and Fiction.

This paper will analyse the relationship between humans and non-humans using the lens of posthumanism, where I consider supernatural creatures, humanoids and the paranormal as non-human.

The relationship between the human and non-human characters in fiction and visual media has been evolving. Once a repugnant character, the vampires of today are irresistibly attractive, not dangerous. They live in harmony with humans; this ‘normalisation’ has been the key is seeing the “metamorphosis of the maleficent to the beneficent” Girard. To consider this relation and its transformation for the purpose of this paper, I use two texts – the first novel of the series *The Southern Vampire Chronicles* titled *Dead Until Dark* by Charlaine Harris and the film *Ex-Machina*.

Both texts are rooted in interspecies relations and make explicit the importance of such relations for both the human or non-human. In *Dead Until Dark* the relations range from platonic to overtly sexual. In *Ex Machina*, the human Caleb is attracted to and believes he has to save the android Ava. Caleb's need to protect Ava is also rooted in Caleb's belief in Ava's existence albeit her consciousness.

Through both the texts, I wish to locate the motivation of the human endeavouring to build a close relationship with a non-human and what factors are in play when a human and non-human cohabit or in the words of Donna Haraway, 'when species meet.'

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Session Nine

Panel 9a

Angelique Nairn and Lorna Piatti-Farnell

Auckland University of Technology, New Zealand

*A Most Violent Rural Network: Comic Turns and Monstrous Animals in *Black Sheep* (2006)*

Understandings of the Aotearoa, New Zealand Gothic have often emphasised the haunting landscape, colonial anxiety, and domestic dysfunction. Yet, despite being predisposed to telling stories of psychological trauma and the inner monster, Aotearoa New Zealand Gothic offerings tend to grapple with the serious and comic, leading to, for example, the development of the 'kiwi splatstick' film genre. Marked by its perchance towards excess horror and splatter, the horror-comedy or splatstick film prompts affective responses in viewers, who might be repulsed by the gore. However, in remaining detached from the pain and suffering on screen through the blatantly comic moments, these viewers are also challenged to consider the underpinning social commentary embedded in the messages of these films. One such film that embodies the splatstick approach is *Black Sheep*. At the heart of the horrific in this film are the zombified sheep that terrorise the locals, mutilating and devouring their human prey, but rather than simply being disturbing, the comic moments of the film ensure the horrific does not detract from a much more nuanced exploration of the New Zealand settler identity and rhetoric of pure New Zealand. That is, although riddled with graphic mauling and haunting moments, we contend that the film can consider the cultural anxieties associated with genetic modification, agricultural slaughter, and the move to organic farming by keeping the horror light and funny. Therefore, viewers are never too disgusted by the horrific to miss the political motivations underscoring the film.

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Lorna Piatti-Farnell, PhD, is Professor of Film, Media, and Popular Culture at Auckland University of Technology, where she is also Director of the Popular Culture Research Centre. She is President of the Gothic Association of New Zealand and Australia (GANZA), and coordinator of the Australasian Horror Studies Network (AHSN). Her research interests lie at the intersection of popular media and cultural history, with a focus on Gothic and horror studies. She has published widely in these areas, including volumes such as *Consuming Gothic: Food and Horror in Film* (Palgrave 2017), *The Vampire in Contemporary Popular Literature* (Routledge, 2014), *New Directions in 21st Century Gothic: The Gothic Compass* (editor, Routledge 2015), *The Gothic and the Everyday: Living Gothic* (editor, Palgrave 2014), *Gothic Afterlives: Reincarnations of Horror in Film and Popular Media* (editor, Lexington 2019), and *The Superhero Multiverse: Readapting Comic Books Icons in Twenty-first-century Film and Popular Media* (editor, Lexington 2021). She is currently completing her latest monograph, entitled *Poison and the Popular Imagination: Insidious Matters, Dark Histories and Infamous Tales* (Lexington). Prof. Piatti-Farnell is Editor of the Routledge Advances in Popular Culture book series.

Holly Randell-Moon

Sturt University, Australia

Settler Colonial Gothic Trappings in 'Belief: The Possession of Janet Moses' (2015)

This paper critically investigates the gothic framing of mākutu lifting in the documentary drama film *Belief: The Possession of Janet Moses* (2015). My interest in this paper lies not in interrogating the 'truth' of mākutu but how the gothic framing of the latter in the film works to present Māori spirituality as an existential threat that entraps families and places. The film frames and presents mākutu through gothic tropes of exorcism and horror. This occurs through a delayed narrative where contextual information regarding the injuries and death incurred by the family are revealed through narrative twists to heighten the tension of the docu-drama. The suburb of Wainuiomata is also framed through panning shots and an eerie musical score which conjures a sense of dread and hidden horror. While the film is advertised as a revelation of 'how both love and fear could drive a New Zealand family to unwittingly kill one of their own', the effect of the gothic tropes is to render Māori spirituality, family relationships, and populated areas as alterity and as horror. The film then reiterates settler colonial tropes of Māori medicine and spirituality as a dangerous presence. My analysis demonstrates how the gothic can be used to deploy racialising and colonising knowledges that continue to ensnare media representations of Māori.

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Holly Randell-Moon is a Senior Lecturer in the School of Indigenous Australian Studies, Charles Sturt University, Australia. She has published on infrastructure, biopower, and settler colonialism in the journals *Media International Australia*, *Policy & Internet*, and *Westminster Papers in Culture and Communication* and the edited book, *Colonialism, Tourism and Place: Global Transformations in Tourist Destinations* (2020). Along with Ryan Tippet, she is the editor of *Security, Race, Biopower: Essays on Technology and Corporeality* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2016). She is co-editor of the journal, *Somatechnics*

Celeste McAlpin-Levitt

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The Biopolitical Hillbilly in the Global Rural Gothic

The hillbilly is an enduring trope in the Rural Gothic subgenre, a figure who while most often associated with an American setting has evolved convergently as a broadly global

character in most, if not all, settler colonial states. This apparently benign comic portrayal of the rural white lumpenproletariat's economic, cultural, and even genetic impoverishment has endured as a result of the hillbilly's symbolic saturation with social anxieties. The hillbilly's simultaneous poverty and whiteness has led to what Matt Wray has referred to as "a monstrous transgressive identity of mutually violating boundary terms": they are both settler and imagined "Native," vigorous and lazy, patriotic and subversive, evangelist and heathen, family-centered and sexually deviant. The hillbilly's duality poses an existential challenge to settler colonial states that are simultaneously invested in "making live" and "letting die" such a contradictory subject. This paper's intervention into the infamous figure of the hillbilly is an exploration of how they may be read as a cultural obstruction to settler biopolitical mechanisms, one which is uniquely positioned to expose the death-function in the economy of biopower. I will trace how twentieth century Rural Gothic writers have turned to an aesthetic of the grotesque in their attempts to categorize and contend with a figure who is both a cornerstone of the structure of settler invasion and whose existence challenges the integrity of the settler colonial dream.

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Celeste McAlpin-Levitt is a PhD candidate in English at UC Santa Barbara. Her dissertation explores twentieth century global Rural Gothic literature's relationship to cultural imaginaries of the rural poor, whiteness, disability, intrafamilial sexual abuse, and queerness.

Panel 9b

Megen de Bruin-Molé

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Haunted TikTok: Entertainment in Gothic Times

In the 'Gothic times' in which we live, horror is everywhere and always imminent. What does Gothic horror look like in this context? This paper explores the question in relation to #HauntedTikTok, looking at two found footage videos purporting to capture live paranormal occurrences and considering how these videos are (re)produced, received, and (re)circulated. Louisa G. Rogers conceptualises hashtags or 'core aesthetics' like #HauntedTikTok as 'algorithmically led micro-communities', where more obscure aesthetics 'form satellites around more popular content forms and occasionally gain virality themselves for their freakishness or downright surrealism'. In this way, she suggests, core aesthetics become 'late technoculture's answer to the subculture', with all of the liminality and rebellion that this implies.

On TikTok, a social media platform usually reserved for dance routines, fluffy animals, and influencers, horror and terror relies explicitly on a Gothic duplicity and fakery, as well as a metamodern evocation of irony and sincerity. As one commentator describes, highlighting the uptick in Haunted TikTok content following the start of the COVID-19 pandemic: 'The question of what's real and what isn't – which is at the heart of Haunted TikTok – is in itself a commentary on those pretty lies we tell through online personas. Because even though we know that perfect influencer aesthetic isn't actually authentic, we want to believe it is anyway'.

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Megen de Bruin-Molé (@MegenJM, she/her) is a Lecturer in Digital Media Practice at the University of Southampton. She specialises in Gothic adaptation, transmedia, and contemporary remix culture. She is the author of *Gothic Remixed* (Bloomsbury 2020), which explores the boundaries and connections between contemporary remix and its related modes through the lens of monster studies, and the editor of *Embodying Contagion* (UWP 2021), which considers how epidemic fantasies and fears are represented in contemporary discourse. Follow Megen's latest work on her blog: frankenfiction.com

Chera Kee

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The Ghost in the Machine: Distortions, Fissures, and Gaps in Ghost Hunting Reality TV

While modern "scientific" ghost hunting has over a century-long history dating back to the rise of Spiritualism in the 1840s, it blossomed in the early 2000s with the release of several ghost-hunting reality TV shows, including *Ghost Hunters* (2004-2016; 2019-present) and *Ghost Adventures* (2008-present). While traditional modes of investigation, including personal experience, are still valued on these shows, many new methods of ghostly detection have appeared over the last two decades. Investigators now use digital and infrared cameras, spirit boxes, and Electromagnetic Field (EMF) detectors, among other things, to find ghosts. Yet, one of the most pervasive forms of evidence used in these shows is the disruption of audio-visual technologies.

Examining several episodes of *Ghost Adventures*, this paper addresses audio-visual disruptions in contemporary ghost hunting to argue that these shows highlight the horrors of our digital devices. By using everyday items, such as cell phones and radios, ghost-hunting shows suggest that these devices work not only as instruments of communication but as vehicles of intrusion, preventing the past from fading away. Reading digital gaps, stops, and fissures as evidence of haunting suggests that rather than disappearing in the face of the new, old beliefs and old forms (such as ghosts) can annex the new. Thus, the audience's relationship with everyday digital technologies becomes fraught with new dangers, as now, the dropped call or the garbled voice on the radio suggests something far more sinister than a simple defect.

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Chera Kee (@bluecatzombie, she/they) is an Associate Professor of Film & Media Studies in the English Department at Wayne State University. Her research focuses on horror media, fandom, and adaptation. She is the author of *Not Your Average Zombie: Rehumanizing the Undead from Voodoo to Zombie Walks* (University of Texas Press, 2017), which explores the abundance of highly individualized and personable zombies in American media and how they often stand as figures of resistance.

Erika Kvistad

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"Approximately six hundred million square miles of randomly segmented empty rooms": Auto-Generated Haunted Spaces in the Digital Gothic

In Mark Z. Danielewski's "networked novel" (Pressman, 2006) *House of Leaves* (2000), the only sound breaking the silence of the house's infinitely expanding maze of rooms is an occasional distant growl. This sound is not just an interpretive crux for our understanding of

the house, it also touches on a duality in the way “haunted” spaces are imagined in the Gothic. Is the growl the sound of something inside the house - a Minotaur in the maze - or is it the sound of the house itself, creaking as its walls stretch, shift, and reform? Should we be afraid of, in the words of one Reddit poster, “some hairy, growling monster”, or of the house and its endless growth?

This paper picks up on these two Gothic ways of imagining a haunted space - a space that is haunted by something (a ghost, a monster), and a space that is itself inherently wrong - and examines them through the present-day digital Gothic fascination with, as in *House of Leaves*, infinite spaces. Discussing *The Backrooms*, a collaborative digital horror concept where an endless, randomly generated series of empty office spaces exists alongside our own reality, the images of the Liminal Spaces Twitter bot, and SCP-455's infinite haunted cargo ship, I explore the way digital horror allows us to experience spaces generated without human agency, at non-human scales. In these collaborative or semi-collaborative digital texts, I suggest, there is a continual creative tension between the horror of what might wait for us within these spaces, and the horror of the space itself.

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Erika Kvistad (@erikakvistad, she/her) is associate professor of English at the University of South-East Norway. Her Ph.D. is on sexual power dynamics in Charlotte Brontë, and she has previously published on sexual consent negotiation as a textual and cultural phenomenon, domestic spaces in Victorian horror, and the idea of the monstrous in university pedagogy. Her current work is on haunted digital spaces and horror hoaxes on the internet.

Session Ten

Panel 10a

Leonie Rowland

Manchester Metropolitan University, United Kingdom

‘She Gets You Through the Phone’: Criminal Commodities and Communications Technologies in the Techno-Animism of *One Missed Call* (2003) and *Ju-On: Origins* (2020)

Crimes are rarely committed without the aid of objects. In Nobuhiko Obayashi’s *Hausu*, a schoolgirl is eaten by a piano; in Edogawa Rampo’s ‘The Human Chair’, a man climbs into a chair to assault hotel guests; and in Satoshi Kon’s *Perfect Blue*, a director has his eyes removed by a stereo—to name a few. Joining this Gothic lineage of literal accessories to murder are the haunted mobile phones of *One Missed Call* and the spectral landlines of *Ju-On: Origins*. In both texts, telephones are framed—quite literally—as criminal commodities that appear to move and mutilate of their own accord. First, my paper situates this within the late-capitalist reification of Japanese indigenous spirituality known as techno-animism—that is, the symbolic animation of technology in a commercial context. Animism, here, is a system of knowledge that conflates the traditional values of Shinto with the neoliberal doctrine of ‘progress’—a potentially radical shift in human-object relations that, in the hands of capitalist developers, becomes a recipe for conservatism encoded into our networks.

The paper then demonstrates that supernatural narratives surrounding animist commodities, evidenced by the texts in question, have become mundane in contemporary

times due to the animating potential of communications technologies. This age of techno-animism marks a turn towards haunting futures, rather than a haunted past, as the defining feature of object-orientated Gothic narratives in contemporary Japan.

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Leonie Rowland is a PhD candidate with the Manchester Centre for Gothic Studies at Manchester Metropolitan University, researching commodity animism in the Japanese Gothic. Her work can be found in *Japanese Horror Culture: New Critical Approaches*, *Fantastika Journal* and *The Dark Arts Journal*, and is forthcoming in *Gothique II*.

[please note: this presentation will be pre-recorded]

Janette Leaf

University of London, United Kingdom

Plague Network as Punishment in Guy Boothby's *Pharos the Egyptian*

Guy Boothby's 1899 Gothic masterpiece, *Pharos the Egyptian* is startlingly topical and demonstrates how late-Victorian Gothic continues to cast a dark light on current concerns. Boothby was an Australian author writing around the *fin-de-siècle* who wove together a web of literary influences including Rider Haggard, Oscar Wilde, George du Maurier, Richard Marsh and Bram Stoker. This paper will highlight those literary borrowings and will show how Boothby skilfully manipulates them to move his plot towards its terrifying denouement when the undying, magician formerly known as Ptahmes manufactures a plague network to punish his European enemies. Those foes are the imperial archaeologists who defile ancient Egyptian sacred spaces, who commodify dead bodies and burial goods, and who contaminate Pharos's own tomb and remove his remains. As the Pharaoh's right-hand man at the time of Moses, Pharos/Ptahmes witnesses first-hand the persuasive power of plagues, and he uses the same technique to introduce a deadly infection to decimate a whole continent. The vector for the disease is the English painter, Cyril Forrester, the son of the man who disturbed Pharos's resting place and in whose studio Pharos's mummy case is being kept. Pharos is evil and corrupting. His vengeance is disproportionate, but the Egyptian villain's criticism of western intrusion is eloquent. This complicates the reader's response to the ethical issues he raises. Boothby's novel of more than a century past is centred on a pandemic and questions one society's rights to appropriate the culture and corpses of another. It foreshadows today's moral and epidemiological trends.

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Janette Leaf is an Associate Research Fellow at Birkbeck, University of London, and co-editor of *Crawling Horror: Creeping Tales of the Insect Weird* (British Library Publishing, 2021). Her interdisciplinary research into Egyptology and insect imagery focuses on *fin-de-siècle* Gothic fiction, fine art, material culture, and museum exhibits. She describes herself as a Gothicism, Cultural Entomologist and Egyptomaniac. She has presented at numerous international conferences and been guest speaker at Gothic reading groups, bookshop events, radio interviews and podcasts. Her PhD was awarded by the University of London, and she holds Masters degrees from the University of Hertfordshire and Cambridge.

Bridget M. Marshall

University of Massachusetts Lowell, Massachusetts, United States

Teaching the Gothic in a Gothic World

How do we teach the Gothic novel in a world that has become in some ways, more Gothic than the novels we're reading? From the increasingly unhinged machinations of a megalomaniac ruler at the center of Horace Walpole's foundational *Castle of Otranto* (1764), to the precarious position of women across Ann Radcliffe's many Gothic novels, to Charles Brockden Brown's depiction of yellow fever decimating the population of Philadelphia, popular Gothic novels have taken on new resonances with current events. In a globalized world where Covid and now monkeypox have created new threats to individual and public health, and where climate change is an ever more serious threat to entire nations, can Gothic novels even seem scary to contemporary readers? What can we do in the classroom to engage our students with this material, and, perhaps even more pressingly, how we can use the Gothic to help students to better understand (and perhaps fight back against) some of the horrors of the contemporary world? In this paper, I'll discuss some of the strategies I use for teaching the Gothic novel in ways that connect it more directly to contemporary social and political concerns. In part I'll discuss my own changing approach to choosing which texts to teach and my increasing focus on bringing marginalized voices into the syllabus alongside more traditional texts to think more broadly about how people from different backgrounds have engaged, challenged, and ultimately broadened the Gothic tradition.

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Bridget M. Marshall is Professor of English at the University of Massachusetts, Lowell. Her most recent most recent book, *Industrial Gothic: Workers, Exploitation and Urbanization in Transatlantic Nineteenth-Century Literature* (University of Wales Press, 2021) explores how nineteenth-century British and American literature reflects anxieties about the Industrial Revolution and how authors used Gothic stock characters and imagery – vampires, ghosts, and haunted buildings – to explore some of the real-life terrors of the world's industrial transformation.

Panel 10b

Amanda Rutherford

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Gothic Landscapes of Pandemic

Covid-19 has brought suffering and loss to societies across the globe, with no community left unscathed. From the onset, this has been a pandemic of terror, with an ever-increasing death toll, and a rising sense of fear for the safety of both self and loved ones as each new variant spreads. Social media and the news sprawled the imagery of the virus, with overcrowded hospitals, ventilators and collapsing systems, which was soon followed by the ever-growing images of mourning, piled up dead bodies, and mass graves. While the pandemic has caused irreversible devastation, it also resonates with historical events and popular stories of the Gothic, where cities are shut down and people pushed into isolation. Agnieszka Monnet (2016) states that the Gothic has increasingly been used to engage and explore real-world issues and concerns, and as such the pandemic can be examined with a Gothic lens. The Gothic themes of "constraint, entrapment and forced actions" (Bowen, 2014) became a large part of every-day living, and this presentation argues that Covid-19 has in fact, become the metaphorical Gothic and supernatural force that has trapped communities across the globe in a web of despair, fear, and the terror of loss.

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Amanda Rutherford works in the School of Language and Culture at Auckland University of Technology in New Zealand. She is a member of the Gothic Association of New Zealand and Australia, the Popular Culture Association of Australia and New Zealand, International Gothic Association, the Pacific Modern and Ancient Language Association and the Northeast Modern Language Association. Her research interests include Mediated Popular Culture, Fairy-tale, Fantasy, Gothic and Horror.

Sarah Baker

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Horrors of a Gothic hospital

In 2019 the Chinese authorities advised the WHO of cases of pneumonia of unknown cause originating in Wuhan, Hubei province. From January 2020 the WHO declares the epidemic a global health emergency. The pandemic has triggered severe social and economic disruption and continues to be ongoing. With the impact of the pandemic, images of hospitals overrun, damaged and not coping have filled media. In Gothic fiction, the setting is a character and while it has typically been haunted houses, graveyards and dark forests, the contemporary location of the modern hospital under siege is not new and there have been many examples in popular culture texts. This presentation examines the idea of the gothic hospital with key examples from the covid pandemic as well as other examples fictional and non-fictional examining the networks of horror and terror that are portrayed when hospitals become sites of terror. The paper will examine the gothic hospital in texts such as *Five Days at Memorial* (2022), *The First Wave* (2021), *Resident Evil* (2002-2016), *The Walking Dead* (2010-2022). Primarily the presentation engages with the ideas of death and decay, the uncanny in the everyday where the place that is the site of healing and solace becomes a place of inversion and unhappiness where safety where the audience is unsettled. Finally, it considers how these images of hospitals under strain in Covid-19, relates to many examples in popular culture texts that are normally associated with images of disaster or apocalypse.

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Sarah Baker is a Senior Lecturer in the School of Communication at Auckland University of Technology. She is the co-founder of the AUT Popular Culture Research Centre and a member of JMAD and the AUT Media Observatory Group. She is a Senior fellow of the Higher Education Academy. Her research interests include political economy, current affairs television programmes, popular culture, the Gothic, sexuality, and gender.