



Frankenstein: A Cultural History

Susan Tyler Hitchcock

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A lively history of the Frankenstein myth, tracing its evolution from a Romantic nightmare to its prominence in today's imaginative landscape.

Frankenstein began as the nightmare of an unwed teenage mother in Geneva, Switzerland, in 1816. At a time when the moral universe was shifting and advances in scientific knowledge promised humans dominion over that which had been God's alone, Mary Shelley envisioned a story of human presumption and its misbegotten consequences. Two centuries later, that story is still constantly retold and reinterpreted, from Halloween cartoons to ominous allusions in the public debate, capturing and conveying meaning central to our consciousness today and our concerns for tomorrow. From Victorian musical theater to Boris Karloff with neck bolts, to invocations at the President's Council on Bioethics, the monster and his myth have inspired everyone from cultural critics to comic book addicts. This is a lively and eclectic cultural history, illuminated with dozens of pictures and illustrations, and told with skill and humor. Susan Tyler Hitchcock uses film, literature, history, science, and even punk music to help us understand the meaning of this monster made by man. 68 illustrations

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