

Gothic Crossroads

A conference exploring and celebrating the multi and interdisciplinary crossings of Gothic and Horror Studies.

**Manchester Centre for Gothic Studies
25-27 June 2025**



Gothic Crossroads Conference Schedule

 25 – 27 June 2025



Dalton Building, Manchester Metropolitan University

Physical crossroads have long been sites where the human, divine and demonic were felt to converge and potent sites for magical, religious encounters, rituals of transformation, binding of undesirable spirits, siting of gallows and links to ancient cosmology. This conference also considers the crossroads as a space where the boundaries between differing spheres are negotiable, asking what it means to walk in the interdisciplinary pathways and cross currents of the Gothic.

The crossroad is a geographical location and ancient symbol closely associated with folklore where two or more realms touch. It is historically and imaginatively connected with travellers and travelling, strange encounters, omens, choice and indecision, danger, suicide, criminality, apocalypse and renewal, guilt and judgement, punishment, ritual and ceremony, lovers' meetings, hanging, summoning, access to Gods, devil dealing, casting out and death. The choice between paths can also lead to repercussions and consequences of "the wrong path", "the path not taken" and "straying from the path". We look forward to hearing your creative and critical reflections on crossing/crossover/cross currents, travelling, intersection, interception, (con)junction, incursion, deviation and transitioning in any/all aspects of cultural production in **Gothic and horror**.

*With thanks for sponsorship from the IGA, prizes and workshops from Manchester University Press and discounts from Blackwells and Elizabeth Gaskell's House. **The Gothic and Heritage fair** was funded by AHEAD, the public engagement programme of the Faculty of Arts and Humanities at Manchester Metropolitan University.*

ahead⁷

Arts and Humanities
Engagement and Dialogue



Manchester University Press



Day 1: Wednesday 25 June

Thanks to all of you for presenting and chairing such a wide variety of critical and creative sessions. All sessions will include a Q and A at the end, after all speakers have finished their presentations. For abstracts and bios, please click on the button on the conference page on our website:

<https://manchestergothic.mmu.ac.uk/gothic-cross-roads-2025/>

Morning Programme

10.00 –1.30: Registration (Atrium)

10.30 – 12.30 Postgraduate training sessions/welcome event:

10.30 – 11.00: Postgraduate Welcome and Coffee: Sarah Dutson and Bronte Schiltz (Atrium)

11.00-12.30: Workshops

11.00 – 11.40 Joan Passey, ‘Teaching the Gothic’: Seminar Room 6/1.05:

11.45 – 12.30 ‘Publishing and Editing the Gothic’: Jen Baker and Tom Dark, Senior Commissioning Editor, Manchester University Press: Seminar Room 7/1.06:

Dalton Atrium: 11.30 and all day: Gothic and Heritage Fair

****LUNCH (included) ****

Early Afternoon Programme

1.30-3.00 Session 1

1a. Gaming and Music Videos: Seminar Room 9/1.08

Chair: Maisha Wester

Bart Mulderij, ‘Choice, Consequence and Delicious of Self-Destruction’

Joshua Tuttle, ‘Gothifying the Castle: *Ravenloft* and Tabletop Gaming’s Gothic Crossover’

Helena Bacon, 'Me and the Devil Views: Music Videos and the Crossroads Myth'

1b. Gothic TV: Seminar Room 8/1.07

Chair: Beccy Kennedy-Schtyk

Shannon Scott, 'Spectral Visitations as Communication in True Detective: Night Country'

Beccy Kennedy-Schtyk, 'Folk Terror: (Re)viewing and (re) rendering *Survivors* (1975-77) at the intersection of televisual genres'

Bronte Schiltz, "'I see what you see": *Red Rose* and television at the digital crossroads'

1c. Gothic Histories/Herstories: Seminar Room 7/1.06

Chair: Dale Townshend

Ellesse Patterson, 'Cradles and Graves: Reading Gothic Women as Thresholds of Death in the Works of Matthew Gregory Lewis'

Stephanie Oliver, 'Romantic Women's Poetry at the Crossroads'

Liz Oakley-Brown, 'Tudor Gothic'

1d. Transformation and Monstrosity: Seminar Room 6/1.05

Chair: Fred Blanc

Jacqueline Victorian Woreniec, 'Celestial In-Between: Angelic and Demonic Intersections in *I, Lucifer* (2002)'

Eric Alejandro Lopez Vasquez, 'Freaks, mental illness and monsters: the crafting of monstrous otherness in *El Señor Presidente* by Miguel Angel Asturias'

Teresa Sorolla and Victor Minguez, 'Poor Bella. *Poor Things* (2023) as Postmodern Gothic Film'

Adriana Raducanu, 'Between the Waters and the Walls: Gothic becoming in *Once a Monster*'

3.00-3.30: * Coffee Break*

Late Afternoon Programme

3.30-5.00 Session 2

2a. Visual Storytelling: Seminar Room 9/1.08

Chair: Beccy Kennedy-Schtyk

Katerina Valentova, 'Silent Crossroads: Thomas Ott and the Unspoken Horror of Wordless Gothic Comics'

Barbara Braid, 'Writer biofiction as gothic remix in the graphic novel *Le dernier jour de Howard Phillips Lovecraft* (2023)'

Jen Baker, "'Distorted, absurd and impossible monsters": Intersections of Textual and Visual Terror in the Gothic Short Form'

2b. Gothic TV: *Severance*: Seminar Room 8/1.07

Chair: Bronte Schiltz

Elleanna Jenkins, 'The Grim Barbarity of Optics and Design: The Tyranny of Organisational Space in *Severance*'

Paddy Lonergan, 'The "Innie" goes to Heaven (Whilst the "Outie" Burns): Work, Consumerism and Salvation in Apple TV's *Severance*'

2c. Folklore and Thresholds: Seminar Room 7/1.06

Chair: Sorcha Ní Fhlainn

Charlie Jorge, 'Satanic Thresholds: Gothic Ruins and the Act of Union in Charles Robert Maturin's *Melmoth the Wanderer*'

Kevin Corstorphine, 'The Room Was, Yet Was Not Mine': Cults and Otherworldly Summoning in Gothic Fiction'

2d. American Gothic, Psychoanalysis and Paranoia: Seminar Room 6/1.05

Chair: Dale Townshend

Meghan Kelley, 'The Skull of Freud: Gothic and the Ancient Burial Ground of Boundary Violations in Psychoanalytic Theory and Practice'

Sophie Bellenberg, 'Georgia O'Keeffe and Frontier Gothic'

Simon Schothans, 'What makes a "Bad Trip": The Philosophical Horrors of Psychedelic Space'

Break

5.15 – 6.30 Plenary 1: [LT1 \(G.37\)](#).

Chair: Xavier Aldana Reyes

Maisha Wester, "*Coded Black*: Gaming the Gothic for Social Justice"

4.30 – 6.00 Book Launch (Righton Building):

Alternatively, our colleagues in Manchester School of Art are hosting a free book launch for *The Routledge Companion to Irish Art*, on the First floor open space, Righton Building, on campus. You're welcome to attend and can register and find out more [here](#) (or just turn up!)

Evening Programme

Dalton Atrium: 6.30 – 8.00: Wine reception

Dinner – own arrangements

7.00 – 8.00 Online Talk

You might also like this online event by our partners at Elizabeth Gaskell's House:

Online Talk (Elizabeth Gaskell's House): Ingrid Hanson, Sewing, Slavery and Social Change: Ruth and its Political Moment

Book now <https://elizabethgaskellhouse.co.uk/events/ruth-sewing-and-slavery/> [elizabethgaskellhouse.co.uk]

Day 2: Thursday 26 June

Morning Programme

9.15-10.45 Session 3

3a. Fashion, Art and the Posthuman: Seminar Room 9/ 1.08

Chair: Jennifer Richards

Ruth Hibbard, 'Mourning fashion at a crossroads'

Samuel Egea-Castañeda, 'Gothic Crossroads on the Catwalk: Posthuman Encounters in Alexander McQueen's *It's a Jungle out there*'

Lucy Winnington, 'Embodied Anxieties: Bioart and the Gothic'

3b. – There is no 3b!! (an absent presence)

3c. Eco-Gothic: Seminar Room 7/1.06

Chair: Francesca Brooks

Joan Passey, 'Queer Ecologies of the Nineteenth-Century Gothic Coast'

Jemma Stewart, 'Strange Bedfellows? The Victorian language of flowers and the Female Gothic'

Jenny Wan Ying Chak, 'Where Harmony Haunts: Gothic Resonances in the Ecology of Premodern Chinese Gardens'

3d. Folk Horror and Fairy tale: Seminar Room 6/1.05

Chair: Matt Carter

Ageliki Velissariou, 'Searching for the Greek Gothic'

Carina Hart, 'The Gothic Fairy Tale as Multiversal Path: Eighteenth-Century Chinese Tales and European Folk Ballads'

Anita Cazorla, 'Between Enlightenment, Faith and Folklore: The Search for National identity in Scottish and American 19th-Century Gothic'

3e. Queer and Trans Gothic: Seminar Room 5/1.04.

Chair: Siorcha Ní Fhlainn

Isobelle Whinnett, 'Is the Ghost Ready to Die? Writing the Queer Teen Ghost to explore the Gothic'

Quen Took, 'Nobody had "the Talk" with me about my unholy transition': Liminal Spaces, Deadly Decisions and the Transgender Vampire'

Hayley Louise Charlesworth, 'Queerbaiting or Reading Queerly in 21st-century Teen Supernatural Drama'

10.45 – 11.15 *Break*

11.15 -12.45 Session 4

4a. Scare Attractions, Dark Tourism and Memorialisation: Seminar Room 9/1.08

Chair: Matt Foley

David Norris, "'There's always my way": Passing Thresholds in Ghost Tours and Scare Attractions'

Rebecca Wynne-Walsh, 'Alcatraz: creepy cocktails, penal tourism and the commodification of trauma'

Hannah Singleton, 'Lancashire's Corpse Path: memorialising the trial and executions of the Pendle Witches within and through the landscape'

4b. Ghosts and Space: Seminar Room 5/1.04

Chair: Xavier Aldana-Reyes

Sarah Martin, 'Most of these rooms have had people did in them': *Last Night in Soho* and the psychogeographic spaces of Horror'

James Bogdanski, "'Handsome and Obscene": Taboo Desire and Gothic Heterotopias in *The Innocents*'

Elena Tchougounova-Paulson, 'The Concepts of the supernatural path and barrier as markers of "outsideness" in the works of Leonid Andreyev and M.R. James'

4c. Abject Bodies: Seminar Room 8/1.07

Chair: Sarah Dutson

Jacky Towell, 'Either you eat, you off yourself, or you lock yourself up': Congenital Cannibalism and Free Will in Luca Guadagnino's *Bones and All* (2022)'

Georgina Kett, 'Contemporary Postfeminist Media and Impossible Female Body standards'

Rachael Head, 'Women are Revolting: abject infantilisation and the grotesque in Mona Awad's *Bunny* and Rachel Yoder's *Nightbitch*'

4d. Vampires: Seminar Room 7/1.06

Chair: Quen Took

Camille Hellebuyck, 'From Monster to Protagonist: Navigating Liminal Identities and Self-Preservation in Vampire Narratives from 19th-Century literature to today's video games'

Michelle Denise Phillips, 'Where am I? What is this Place? Dangerous Mixtures: Hybridity from Victorian Gothic to Iranian Cinema'

Rebecca Alaise, 'Faking the Operatic Femme Fatale: Reconjuring the Singing Women of Nineteenth-Century Gothic Fiction for the Twenty-First Century Imagination'

12.45 – 2.00 ** LUNCH (included)**

Early Afternoon Programme

2.00-3.15: Plenary 2: LT1 (G.37)

Chair: Emma Liggins

Rosario Arias, 'Assembling and Crossing the Human and the Non-Human: The EcoGothic in Neo-Victorian Fiction'

3.15 – 3.45: *Break*

Late Afternoon Programme

3.45- 5.15 Session 5

5a. Theatre and Adaptation: Seminar Room 9/1.08

Chair: Amaia Mugica

Catherine Wynne, 'Bram Stoker's *Snowbound* and the Travelling Stage'

Victoria Lord, 'Defying her Adaptation: Crossroads and Repercussions in Stephen Mallatratt's Theatrical Adaptation of *The Woman in Black*'

West Ambrose and Oscar Anderson, 'Two Paths Diverged: Faustian Bargains, Nineteenth-Century Crossroads and queering the Gothic musical'

5b. Latin American Horrors: Seminar Room 8/1.07

Chair: Angelica Michelis

Iris Irimia Núñez, 'Shunned houses: the haunted house as the clandestine detention centre of the dictatorship in Mariana Enriquez's short stories'

Rafael Mendes, 'Becoming Gothic Monsters'

Emily Horton, 'Latin American Horror and the Maternal "Body-Territory": The Crossroads of Green-Wave Politics and Horror Aesthetics in the works of Samantha Schweblin, Giovanna Rivero, and Elaine Vilar Madruga'

5c. Neo-Victorian Fiction: Seminar Room 7/ 1.06

Chair: Rosario Arias

Sarah Dutson, 'The Female Medium as a "Feminist Killjoy": Spiritualist Crossroads in Neo-Victorian Gothic Fiction'

Elizabeth Train-Brown, 'The Making of a Poltergeist in Urban Palimpsests'

5d. Witches: Seminar Room 6/1.05

Chair: Rebecca Alaise

Kirsten Imani Kasai, 'The Crossroads Witch: Wish Fulfilment, Necromantic Memory and Ethno Gothic Thresholds'

Chloe Campbell, 'A witch on a different wavelength': Intersecting Feminisms and Converging Witch Archetypes in John Updike's 1984 novel *The Witches of Eastwick* and George Miller's 1987 film adaptation *The Witches of Eastwick*'

5.30 – 6.30 Workshops/Screenings/Reading Group

Mezzanine Atrium (Dalton) Contemporary Gothic Reading Group: Quen Took will host a discussion on Andrew Joseph White's novel, *Hell Followed with us* (a new trans horror).

LT1 (G.37): Screening/Q and A: Amaia Mugica, 'Horror (and the body) in theatre'

Seminar Room 9/1.08: Leonie Rowland, Creative writing workshop: 'Gothic Writing for Therapeutic Purposes'

6.30-7.45: Horror fiction author event at Blackwells bookshop

THIS EVENT HAS BEEN POSTPONED DUE TO ILLNESS.

Our partners Blackwells bookshop on Oxford Rd (10 minutes' walk from the Dalton building) have also offered us free tickets for this horror fiction event. Use promo code GOTHIC on checkout on [Eventbrite](#).

Author Sarah Maria Griffin will be in discussion with Jodie Matthews about her latest book EAT THE ONES YOU LOVE; an unsettling novel about workplace love affairs and plants with a taste for human flesh.

Evening Programme

7.30 to 11.30: Evening entertainment:

Goth soirée & buffet at Revolution Bar, Oxford Road (ground floor). Buffet food will be served at 8.30.

Day 3: Friday 27 June

Morning Programme

9.30 – 11.00 Session 6

6a. Gothic Architecture and the City: Seminar Room 9/1.08

Chair: Michelle Ravenscroft

Caterina Daolio, 'At the Crossroads of Gothic Architecture: from Abbeys to Country Houses.'

Eamonn Canniffe, 'Reactionary Gothic: an architectural response to the industrial revolution in the era of international neoclassicism'

Deniz Yilmaz, 'Toronto Gothic and the Financialized Crossroad'

6b. 'Mad Wolves, Strange Trees and Queer Cows: Creative/Critical Approaches to Gothic Animals and Plants': Seminar Room 8/1.07

Self-chaired

Catherine Spooner: Unwinding 'Bersicker': vampire ecosystems and the wolf at the crossroads

Ines Gregori Labarta: Translating Cow in *The Three Lives of Saint Ciarán*

Oliver K. Langmead: Deanthropomorphising Trees: Realising Anti-Ents in *Slow Kingdom*

Kwasu Tembo: Black Skins, White Fangs: On Salves, Selves, and Weremorphology as Afro-Gothic Intensity

6c. Folklore and Fairies: Seminar Room 7/1.06

Chair: Emily Brick

Richard Jorge, 'The Anglo-Irish at a Crossroads: Questioning Colonial Ireland in J.S. le Fanu's 'The Child that went with the Fairies''

Hannah Dwyer, 'The History of the Irish Fairies and the Causes of their Demonisation within Irish Folklore'

6d. The Weird: Seminar Room 6/1.05

Chair: Keith O' Sullivan

Andrew Fehribach, 'Child of God: Aquatic Space and Repressed Consciousness in Appalachian Gothic Literature'

Harry Rooke-Kelly, 'The butterfly's last judgement draws nigh: weird manifestations of Capitalocene anxieties in Jeff VanderMeer's *Annihilation* (2014)

Fredrik Blanc, 'The Mercreature as Metonym: Suspension and Onto-Epistemological Resistance in the Blue Weird'

11.00-11.30: *Break*

11.30 – 1.00 Session 7

7a. Horror Audio/Podcasting: Seminar Room 9/1.08

Chair: Bronte Schiltz

Anna Maria Ronewicz, 'Curated Crossroads: The Old Bacchus Road and The Devil in the Labyrinth of *The Mistholme Museum*'

Violet Brew & Daniel S Martin, 'Presenting the Influence of Gothic Horror Conventions Through our Practical Audio Drama Series: *The 6th of February 2184*'

Lethe-Medea Dickinson, "Is Anybody Listening?": Structure and Audience Positioning in Horror Narrative Podcasts'

7b. "Transmedial borders, Genre Boundaries and Liminality in Horror": Seminar Room 8/1.07

Self-chaired

Claire Henry, 'Isabel Peppard's Multidisciplinary 'Dark Surrealism'

Charlotte Elliott, 'The Unhinged Woman Trope and the Genreless Anti-Heroine in Sayaka Murata's *Earthlings*' (2018)

Tabitha Knight, 'Womb Envy and the Feminist New Wave: A Comparative Analysis of David Cronenberg's and Alice Birch's *Dead Ringers*' (1988/2023)

Oscar Sparkes, 'When the Universe Doesn't Add Up: The Impossible Spaces of Liminal Horror'

7c. Ghosts, Mummies and Men of Science: Seminar Room 7/1.06

Chair: Catherine Spooner

Han O'Flanagan, 'Apparitional Spinsterhood: transitional asexual identity in Marjorie Bowen and Edith Wharton's ghost stories'

Madhuchhanda Ray Choudhury, 'At the Crossroads of the Spectre and the Undead: A Reading of Daphne du Maurier's Short Story, 'Split Second''

Karen E. Macfarlane, 'Necroimperialism: Mummies, Desire, Empire'

Jenny Lange, 'The Gothic scientist: Science or Science Fiction?'

7d. Trauma and Carceral Spaces: Seminar Room 6/1.05

Chair: Meghan Kelley

Maria Cohut, 'Carceral Gothic: Freedom Crossing over into Oppression in *Mr K Released* by Mati Visniec'

Joe Howsin, 'The Self in Crisis: Fractured Narratives and fractured identities in suicide narratives and Gothic autofiction'

1.00-2.15: ** LUNCH **

Early Afternoon Programme

2.15 – 3.45: Plenary 3: LT1 (G.37).

Chair: Eleanor Beal

'Gothic and Horror Writers in Conversation': Readings and discussion from authors Michael Stewart (*Black Wood Women*, 2024) and Susan Barker (*Old Soul*, 2025). Followed by Q & A.

3.45 - 4.00: Manchester University Press Gothic Prize and Closing

Statements, followed by author signings organised by Blackwells bookshop.

Conference Close

