

**Horror Reverie I:
A Symposium Celebrating 100 Years of *Nosferatu***

TRANSCRIPT

Panel 3: Style, Theme, Politics, Aesthetics

19 February 2022

(duration 42:50)

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

vampire, *Nosferatu*, *Dracula*, horror, queer, Stoker, monster, postmodern, horror genre

00:02 - Robert Singer

Good afternoon, everybody. Can you hear me? Am I coming through?

00:08

Okay. Wonderful. Thank you. I'm clear. Great. My name is Robert Singer. Welcome to everybody, whether it's the morning, afternoon or evening, wherever you may be, I have the pleasure of hosting the third panel of this, I think, really wonderful afternoon, this comprehensive look at a major work of Film Art, a part of I think international film culture at this point. And just a few words, Gary told me I have to say something about myself. I'm a former professor at City University of New York. I'm now retired. I work with Gary as the series editor on the Refocus series, and we're working on a second volume on the commercial as Film Art. And also, I'm working on my own book on film naturalism. Aside from that, I have the distinct pleasure now of introducing three people who are going to present some fascinating work. The first person I'm going to introduce is John Edgar Browning, who's a recognized authority on the horror genre vampires and Monster theory. I'm interested in Monster theory. He has contracted or published in the fields of 20 academic and popular trade books, and over 90 articles, chapters and reviews. John?

01:31-Kristopher [Kris] Woofter

Sorry, John was having some technical difficulties, and he sent us a recording of his talk. It's a six minute piece, I think. And Steve, do you have that?

01:43 - Steven Greenwood

Yes, I have it already. I will pull it up and share my screen for it

01:47-Robert Singer

A miracle of technology. Who could figure.

01:56-John Browning

Hi, John Browning here, if you're watching this.

02:04 (someone doing tech)

Sorry, it'll just take one second. Is that good everyone?

02:20

Yes, yes. It's all perfect. But it's not playing it's but we see it. Okay.

02:29-John Browning

Hi, John Browning here. If you're watching this recording, it means that my Zoom is bugged out or my internet connections bugged out. And I do apologize. So I realized that probably was going to happen during the other panels that are speaking right now. So I decided to make this recording very quickly for the chairs to play for you in case this happened. Well, first, let me say that my first mail order video that I ever bought was *Nosferatu* as well, in the early 90s. In fact, the second one was the '79 Werner Herzog version, which was really hard to find. In fact, it was a bootleg version, because that's all you could find in the early 90s. So anyway, I just wanted to say that. But I'm here today to talk to you just briefly about *Nosferatu's* lack of modernity which is one of the hallmarks of Stoker's original novel. I have in the past and in the present had two projects on contemporary criticism of Stoker's novel. The first came out in 2012, I think, or 2013. It reprinted about 91 contemporary book reviews of *Dracula* and what it did, decidedly I hope, was dispel the myth that *Dracula* the book received mixed reviews. Of the reviews I collected I think a total of maybe three were negative. A few were mixed, and the rest were all positive. So by all accounts, *Dracula* was very well received. The current project of mine should be published to Edinburgh University Press this year, hopefully early next year, is reprinting those in addition to several others, and there's a total of about 275 contemporary book reviews reprinted in this upcoming book that were published between 1897 and about 1920. So of those reviews, a resounding number of them are positive, like it only added a couple, two or

three negative reviews, I think, to the original set of negative reviews. So that's really great. I mean, that basically shows that not only was Stoker's novel, a fantastic read by the critics that be, but that it may also have been one of the most reviewed books in the entire Victorian canon. But anyway, one thing I want to bring up about it in connection with *Nosferatu* is that two huge things I noticed across many of the reviews was that reviewers brought up two things that they found when they were reading *Dracula*. The first is that we have a gothic book, a book in which there is a vampire that is bringing the story from the past to the present, which was pretty out there for Gothic literature, okay; it always took place, as you all know, at least 100 plus years in the past. Stoker's novel did not do that, okay. Combined with that, it brought it from the past to the present, but also brought it from over there to over here. Okay, so there was from Transylvania to London. That too just took people aback, okay. This is a book taking place in the present day, and it's taking place in London, okay. I mean, Gothic literature happened in the past, it always happened over there. Because in the past, you can see things like ghosts may be happening. Oh, and it has to happen in that country over there where, you know, people can sort of exoticize it and think perhaps, that that's the kind of place that would have those kinds of goings on. So that combined was the first item that a lot of reviewers commented on. The second though, and it kind of goes along in tangent with this is the, the modernity and the technology in the novel. It was enough for the readers to see *Dracula* in London, in the present day, but to see all of this technology of the day, because you know, Stoker really loved his technology. He put all that in the book, and readers just thought it was fantastical. Many of them even though they were like, I can't believe he did this, but I kind of like it. And they didn't realize what why they liked it. And as we know, now Stoker's novel was really instrumental in kind of helping bridge this gap between the Gothic and kind of weird fiction and horror, okay, because before then, you know, horror took place in the past, but now it can be happening for us in the present. What I-what I find interesting about *Nosferatu* is that it doesn't take place in the present; it takes place I think in like the 18, late 1830s or something like that. So nearly a century before it's released. That's interesting because it goes back to this this early sense of the Romantic Period. Combined with that, or going along with that rather is the central character of the Ellen character. She plays a much more central presence in the story than she did even in Stoker's novel. It needs her innocence and her devotion and her willingness to sacrifice herself because she's the only one that really knows what's going on. And that too, was powerfully romantic in reference to the period so both of those thematics...

08:04-Robert Singer

Oh he's experiencing a technical difficulty here.

08:10-(someone doing tech)

and the audio the audio is also not playing on my computer through the videos I think that the audio didn't record properly in the video. Oh, okay, so the audio comes back in a couple of seconds. I'll just keep going and ignore the parts with no audio...

08:37-John Browning

...these thematics from from Stoker's everybody commented on and relocated story in the past and kind of relocated in the sense of the Romantic period. I mean, I can only imagine what the what the movie could have been if they located it, as Stoker did in the present time. Can you imagine Orlok or Dracula coming to Germany of the 1920s. I mean, it really would have spoken to the devastation, the desolation, the downtrodden feelings that were experienced there at the time. The visuals would have been fantastic. In fact, it probably would have been cheaper to do that. Okay. But you know, I'm sure there are many scholars here who have some of these answers that I've always wondered. But the first thing I always notice when I watch *Nosferatu* is just this lack of technology, the lack of modernity, and it is also something my students pick up on. So I hope you enjoyed this presentation. I'm sorry if I had to give it this way through a recording, but I'd be interested to hear your thoughts.

09:56 – Robert Singer

Thank you very much. We'll take some questions afterwards. I now have the distinct pleasure of introducing somebody whose work has fascinated me Mario de Giglio-Bellemare, PhD, who teaches courses in genre cinema, grotesque traditions, and Monster ethics in the Humanities department of John Abbott College in Montreal. He also coordinates the Montreal Monstrum Society. His forthcoming book is [on] Grand-Guignol cinema and the horror genre. And I eagerly anticipate reading that book as soon as it's out. So I have the pleasure of introducing him now.

10:35 – Mario DeGiglio-Bellemare

Thank you so much. Can you hear me properly, everyone? That's good. Um, I'm very, very happy to be here. I'm very happy to be celebrating a movie that I think is not only, you know, a great film within the horror canon, but just one of the great films I think ever made. I know that I start with a lot of hyperbole, but I actually really truly believe this about this movie. I want to sort of just think about, open up questions about what a queer sublime [reading] of Murnau kind of looks like. Through my

interest, of course, in French, French surrealism in the French traditions, that of course, as you know surrealists are were the first to really kind of appreciate this movie. Béla Balázs says in 1924, that he compares *Nosferatu* to a “glacial draught of air from the beyond”. And I think that's probably the most beautiful quote ever written on the film. And I think that probably exists because someone like, you know, Albin Grau was, you know, he believed basically in vampires. He was an occultist. We've heard people talk about this, he did the set and costume design, he was a person who was sort of a believer in you know, Pan sophism and you know, theosophy those kind of things, I mean, theosophy. I think that um, you know, the vampire that we get from just mixing together of a queer Murnau, as you know, he was gay. And this you know, Albin Grau focused on theosophy and pan sophism, we get this very, very electric mix, in the creation of *Frankenstein*. So the Surrealists were really, really appreciating this film in the 20s. *Nosferatu* actually is released in Paris on October 27 1922. At the Cinema Opéra, André Breton is writing about this movie in several places, and obviously talking about the movie in relation to his dreams. And, of course, the surrealist project is a project of trying to create art from the unconscious. And so this is what is happening in Paris in the 20s and 50s. We have another kind of renaissance of studies in France, we sometimes forget that the first book on the horror genre is called *Le Fantastique [au cinéma]* by Michel Laclos, the horror genre from 1958. And at that time, what Lotte Eisner is also publishing, and the great Ado Kyrrou...a lot of people don't really know that well, because this stuff has not been translated. Eisner is writing in French too, and living in Paris, as you know. So there's a lot going on in the 50s here, starting to take the monster basically on their own terms, in terms for scholarship. Um, Eisner says that basically *Nosferatu* is a kind of documentary you know, and it's very true. There's something about the film that's very hybrid, right. It's like this expressionist, realist, sort of, you know, presentation of the monster. So this hybridity is very, very important to me, in terms of the kind of queer kind of perspective that I'm interested in and I want to get to at the end. Ado wrote for *Positif* and was kind of critiqued by a lot of people at the *Cahiers du Cinéma*. But he writes a beautiful sentence on on *Nosferatu*. “Murnau’s masterpiece, the film that places him very high...

14:27-Kristopher

Mario did your sound just cut out. I'm not sure if you went on mute.

14:33 – Mario

Sorry about that. That was Mario hitting his mouse. Yeah, I'm back. Yes. So I'm actually reading a quote from Ado Kyrou. So he's saying "a symphony of horror as the film's subtitle insists, from Bram Stoker's novel *Dracula*, Murnau and his script writer Henrik Galeen have created the most terrible nightmare of the cinema." He continues, "In the Carpathian castle, in the alleys when a demonic cart rushes to meet us, in the holds of a cursed ship in the streets with endless macabre funerary processions. These are the sites that generate the shivers of terror." Of course the surrealists are really interested in bridges, right. And of course, the Gothic tradition is full of bridges and portals. And there is this famous moment in *Nosferatu* where Hutter goes over the bridge into the "land of phantoms," I think one of the cards says. So these borders are important. In the horror genre they speak to, of course, I have already mentioned, the paradox of the monstrous. Noël Carroll actually pulls out in his analysis, that actually at the core of the horror experience, of a horror story, the horror narrative, in his terms, is this paradoxical, impossible monster that fascinates us. So we are starting to think about the monster much more in a kind of paradoxical way in this moment. This, I think, also links up to the notion of the sublime that Rudolf Otto in his book, *The Idea of the Holy*, kind of describes as a religious experience, as an encounter with the *mysterium tremendum*. Right, that radically other mystery that brings on a stupefying combination of fascination, terror and wonder and dread. Right. So, Lovecraft did this very well. And there's something about this movie, I think that could be read through—I think Kris [Woofter] would agree with me—a kind of weird lens, because a kind of cosmic kind of sublimity really comes through for me in the awfulness of, you know, of this creature who's awful and awesome in the same time, right? So, even in the Bible we know from the work of Timothy Beale that a monster like Leviathan doesn't...he's not only against God like, God is good monsters are bad, but no, monsters are both all full of awe, so awful and awesome. So they're both demonized and deified in the same moment. I'm going to say a few things about [Gilles] Deleuze's kind of notion of the sublime, but I just want to finish on: so what does a queer vampire look like? From my perspective, the borders that interests me, are the borders of the taboo, of the abject, of the deviant, of the transgressive, of the excessive. The borders of queer theory. So for me, horror is always a kind of drag, the kind of performance of excess, right, we love excess. Those of us who love the horror genre... so Judith Butler writes the drag gesture is found in the performative, but also in the parodic, mimetic, and of course, disruptive, and this is what interests me. She situates these gestures on the surface of the body, she says, right. For Butler performativity does not mean that all gender construction is a performance, as it is sometimes understood. Butler uses performance to signify that the body is no longer an inner

being. So that in a Cartesian sense. But rather a variable boundary, a surface whose permeability is politically regulated. So, identity then is very much shifting in the kind of queer drag aesthetic, right? And so, bisexuals understand this, right. And I see the creature in the movie, you know, Orlok is a kind of bisexual figure, right? And who is identified with this very strong, powerful woman called Ellen, you know, who is sort of like, is able to kind of fix everything at the end, she reads from the Forbidden book, right? She, she takes on the monster, there are no authority figures at the end of this film;

18:54

she's really, kind of has a power. So through...even, she's sitting at the sea, kind of waiting for Hutter to come back. But really, it's the vampire who's coming by sea. So there is a kind of interesting Othering that, that brings together, Ellen, and, and the vampire. And I agree with Kris [Woofter], that there is something, I mean, this is not the story of a seducer in the sense that it is sort of done later in the Gothic tradition. But it is the story of a kind of performative...a performance of transgression. So in the same way that I would say, there's something transgressive about Nosferatu entering Hutter's room and you know, biting him too. So vampirism is associated with you know, deviant blood practices and stuff. So I think that there's a way to read this film as a kind of drag film coming from a filmmaker who's queer and queering the monster in this particular way around the subliminal. Yeah. So that's what I've got to say. Thank you.

20:10 – Robert Singer

Well, thank you very much Mario. Appreciate that. And I'm sure we'll all have some questions and points to raise. Again it's a fascinating study. I now have the pleasure of introducing. Now I get points if I get this right. This is Sorcha Ní Fhlainn.

20:28 - Sorcha Ní Fhlainn

Very close (*corrects pronunciation*).

20:30 – Robert Singer

Thank you. Thank you. So Sorcha is a senior lecturer in film studies and American Studies at Manchester Metropolitan University in the UK. She's a founding member of the Manchester Centre for Gothic studies, and author of *Postmodern vampires: Film, Fiction and popular culture*, which was awarded the Lord Ruthven prize by the International Association of the Fantastic and the arts in 2020. She has published

widely on socio cultural history, subjectivity and post modernism in film studies, American Studies, horror studies, and popular culture. Sorcha, please.

21:07 - Sorcha

Thank you, I'm just going to share my screen and forgive me, for all my efforts might not be the most amazing in terms of ability on this one. Okay. So I'm going to make this nice and brief. One of the things I'm fascinated by when looking at the history of vampires, which I've spent the majority of my life thinking about, especially as an Irish woman, because of course, you know, we got dibs on the undead as well for some time. One of the things I'm fascinated with is the history of the undead. So part of this is looking back at the book I did do back in 2019. And I'm continuing this now today looking at other forms of Irish undead folklore, the *na marbh* of the undead, that kind of stock, the folkloric elements of Irish culture and Irish history. But today, I'm going to talk a bit about, you know, the legacy of this film aesthetically through Hollywood cinema and thinking about the vampire as a particularly important cipher, or cultural mirror for the socio-political anxieties of the day, because it does change quite a lot. And what happens when they invoke the image of Shreck's Nosferatu, what happens with... there's something fascinating to say about that. So come with me down the rabbit hole. So vampires are of course, inherently political, this is absolutely...has been found to be absolutely the case. In this image, which is Alex Ross, he used as a protest image against George W. Bush's war on terror, particularly looking at the use of the Patriot Act. What Ross was trying to identify was essentially this vampirism, so vampirism not only necessarily feeds on, in undead fashion, feeds off the body politic, but also extends very, very troubling, in his view, very, very troubling ideas around the corpus of the government. The idea that we can actually draw down from the life blood of the people...of the greater people of the United States at the time. So what I thought was quite interesting about using this was that you know, we're going back to those images of Lugosi, we're going back to Dracula, but what I find quite interesting on this was that it still uses the vampire and associates him with power, and almost supernatural power in this instance. So I'm going to jump back a little bit to where Murray was kind of talking about earlier as well, because I'm—as Murray is as well—I'm also fascinated with the kind of undeadness or the postmodern reiterations we have of vampires. And in this image, which you see of Kurt Barlow in Stephen King's Salem's Lot, the film directed by Tobe Hooper in 1979. What I found quite interesting about this was that there is a shifting change in the political spectrum that we get in terms of Nosferatu, or this image indeed, of Graf Orlok coming through various vampire typographies afterwards. So in the case of Kurt Barlow, what's so interesting

about him is that he transgresses into the American homeland, of course, illegally. He has his coffin or his box is found to be without custom stamps, for example. So this shows again, that kind of the vampire coming into this sort of small town, King himself describing the novel as *Dracula* in the American heartland essentially. What he's interested in is this idea that infiltration happens, we can never shore up our borders completely because this is how vampires transgress and take over. And in the case of Kurt Barlow, a terrifying vampire, which I came across as a child watching it through my fingers one night as a kid when it was on TV. Not exactly 1979 mind you but a while after. What I will say about this is that it is such an interesting image, to conjure up this idea and this style essentially that Tobe Hooper uses of Graf Orlok because it invokes with it the authority of ancient vampires. Recall that the 1970s is a period of huge vampiric evolution and change. So what we have here is, contradictions of the image of the vampire come up a lot in the 70s, particularly in 79, 79 is such an important year, because you have, of course, you've got Werner Herzog's gorgeous make remake of *Nosferatu*, you have this film as well. But then you also have *Love at first Bite* with George Hamilton. So there are numerous different ways of looking at it. And, you know, it'd be wrong of me to say it's not mentioned Frank Langella as the stunning universal *Dracula* at the same time. So *Dracula* is everywhere in the late 1970s. And this falls in line very much with sort of the idea of malaise, the terror of being (ingrown?) and the terror of being forgotten in economic terms. And this is something that really comes up in the 70s as an anxiety, as a projection of this anxiety. So when Kurt Barlow takes over in *Salem's Lot*, it is quite a frightening sight to behold.

25:44

As I was saying with Herzog's remake, there is a beautiful sense of artistic...nostalgia in one element, I do think that there's a desire to reinvoke and reanimate in this vampire, but I also think as well, there's a heightened sexuality, which I know Millie was referencing in her talk as well. And this heightened sexuality is something that I think again, very much reflects the 70s evolution of vampirism, more generally. It's most certainly lovingly recreating the image and does again recall that image of rats which you know, we were talking about before, as well. So we do see this sense of plague and pestilence, but we also see again, that idea of sexual trysts and using the vampire in the female body as a conduit for that kind of expression of desire and, and horror as well. So that when we get to a little bit later, I'm going to jump into the 80s. And the reason why is I'm working a lot in the 1980s, at the moment anyway, but one of the things I wanted to think about was that vampires do change when they transform on screen in later postmodern initiations. So this is Max from *The Lost Boys*.

You'll notice that towards the end of the film, when he's revealed to be the head vampire. And what I do you find quite interesting is this is the beginning of several evolutions...moments of evolution on screen, we see the transformation of the face into something that resembles at least in part, elements of Shreck's makeup. Again, the arched eyebrows, and you often see it again, this sort of sense of pronouncement in the cheekbones, this sense of sort of pestilence. And what Max is peddling as his form of pestilence is of course popular culture. He works in a video store. So this idea of, MTV generation sense of, you know, living permanently at the fairground, this idea of vampirism is something that promises eternal youth but really draws down the economic life the youth in the film, this is something that comes up again and again. So I thought this was a nice illustration of it, because again, using the fangs, the teeth, the placement of it, it falls in line with trying to gain some sort of legitimacy or authority out of the image of Graf Orlok, but put through your filter in the 1980s of course. Later ones then, this is a real favorite of mine, and one that doesn't tend to get enough love is *Vampire's Kiss* from 1988. It's a really, really special film because it is a film that really allows Nicolas Cage to go completely off piste, go completely nuts. So he is a yuppie who—he's a literary agent up and he gets bitten by the gorgeous Jennifer Beals and then slowly believes that he's turning into a vampire. And it's intercut with sequences from *Nosferatu*, from Murnau's film. As Cage is slowly transforming and becoming increasingly more unhinged as the film progresses, he doesn't bother investing in expensive fangs so he buys these awful cheap plastic ones. He ends up eating a pigeon in Central Park, so to show the true level of his derangement. What I found quite interesting about watching this again is not only is it so firmly planted in 1980s anxieties, as the yuppies begin to have their breakdown on screen, but that it calls back again to *Nosferatu* in order to again gain back legitimacy away from sort of early or other vampires that are in the culture at the time, the Ricean vampire the like, and actually call back to gain that legitimacy of "I could only be turning into a vampire. And of course, then I must then emulate the physicality of Orlok on screen." So again, when he's, when he's attacking people he gets stiff as a board, he looks like an erect sort of almost like a penis, it's quite interesting to see this sexual anxiety and his inability to fully perform is coming through as an expression of Graf Orlok through again, the 1980s lens. Later once again we see something like let's say *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, so if you're watching TV in the 90s, this is The Master from the first season. And what I found interesting about The Master was again, even to legitimate Buffy's arch nemesis nemesis in the first season, we have to go back to this image of Orlok. And I think that is quite interesting because on one level, the big-bad isn't even the most interesting thing in the show. It's almost like a sideshow in order to legitimate the story arc of the

series. But on another level, I found that it was something that was really interesting in the late 1990s. You're still having these sorts of ideas of, in order to be a truly legitimate and frightening vampire, in contrast with the sexy gorgeous ones that are running around in the series, you do have to then produce this ancientness in the sense of ancient horror, which you get in that in the case of *Buffy*. And this again, pops up again and again. But I thought this was quite an interesting way to kind start it out. Remember, Buffy kills Dracula—a terrible iteration of Dracula—in the fifth-season opener. So we do see this idea of having to kill off the patriarchs involved if Buffy and her postfeminist heroes and colleagues are to survive. Then we get to gorgeous, wonderful Willem Dafoe whom I believe, you know, Elias spoke to this beautifully earlier so I don't have much to add to that, except to say that of course, I completely found the reading of him being the sympathetic vampire at the mercy of Murnau's monster in *Shadow of the Vampire*, found this to be completely apt and definitely indicative of a turn more generally and 21st century vampire revolution that we see as they become increasingly not only sympathetic, but in some cases, also pathetic in later iterations. So this is a lovely turn, and a particularly timely one at that, I think at the millennium. We also get—I'm sorry, for the quality of the image, is not that good—in *Blade 2*, we have the Reapers, again transformed through sort of DNA, and scientific discovery and mutation. And we see this sort of perfect eating machine, as they're described, their cancer with a purpose in the case of *Blade 2*. And again, the idea of this ancientness is so important. It's this fusion of ancient myths and technology, exactly what John Browning was speaking about earlier, this is the fusion that we get them in the case of Del Toro's version in *Blade 2*. What I found particularly wonderful about this was that because of the removal of the mandible bone, you get this sort of fusion of the vampire with a science fiction kind of character, like, let's say predator. So you see the sense of the mouth becoming all-encompassing, all frightening, and also taking on sort of sexual genitalia imagery as well. So it fuses that with the vagina dentata quite nicely. And then we come to the most recent one I have thought of, in terms of popular cinema. Of course, there are many other minor versions start to think about. And this is Peter, Peter, from *What We Do in the Shadows*, if you have seen Jemaine Clement and Taika Waititi's film from 2014. And Peter, unfortunately, is killed in a fatal sunlight accident, as described, and Peter is also 8000 years old in this flatshare and is a fascinating character because unlike a lot of other postmodern vampires, Peter doesn't really speak. So Peter just kind of sighs and sits there, and then of course, is eventually killed off in this accident. What is really nice though about this is that Peter is possibly the most vampiric of all the vampires in the flatshare. All of the other ones are representative of various different cinematic ancestors on screen. But Peter is the true

vampire of them all, and unfortunately, gets killed off in the case of the film. But what I thought was quite nice about including Peter here is that at the end of the day, despite all the offspring that you can have of postmodern vampires, you still have to have that nod of that recognition and that power to recognize Graf Orlok and and his offspring from Nosferatu. I'll leave it at that. If there's any questions, I'll be happy to answer them. Thank you.

33:14-Robert Singer

Well, thank you very much. That was a wonderful presentation there. And I we do have some time for some questions. I have one earlier from Matthew, who asks, and I think that's been answered, but perhaps we can just give a quick summary if people are interested about the lasting legacy of Nosferatu, in particular in relationship to the horror genre and beyond. I just want to chime in there and say that, um, one of the things I picked up from all these, really fascinating presentations, is an almost aberrational genetic lineage. It's—they're linked, but they're not identical, but they are linked together in some malformed genetic structure. And I think that all of you made a very strong case for one of the ways in which horror and in particular genre theory operates. It's there, but it's always somewhat different. And I would point out one last thing, the vampires on Broadway...Gary's done some work on Lugosi, but I happen to see many years ago, Frank Langella on Broadway, doing the Dracula and I could tell you, the equal number of men fainted as many as equal number of women. It was a very, very successful production there. But there's I think room here for some questions if people would like to just come right on board and ask that would be a wonderful way to start, to finish up our day. Who would like to take it away here?

34:48 - SORCHA

Can I just add I met Frank Langella several years ago in Dublin and I can tell you he is today still as swoon-worthy as he was in the 1979 film, so much so that my mother who doesn't like vampires was like, Oh, my God, he's beautiful. So there you go.

35:04-Robert Singer

So you've seen him in the late 70s.

35:07-SORCHA

I wasn't alive, but I would have.

35:11-Robert Singer

Do we have some questions here? Some people would like to ask. Just rush on right in.

35:19 - Kristopher

Yes, there are questions in the chat coming through. There's from Penny Goodman and an earlier one from Robert Gadsby. Can you—do see those, Robert?

35:31-Robert

Oh let me just get that I'm sorry. No I...oh, question for Sorcha, contemporary media has romanticized the physical look and added a somewhat charm to vampires. Would *Nosferatu* have had the same impact on popular culture if Orlok was portrayed as more human and dignified, as seen in later culture by actors like Lugosi or Gary Oldman. What would we look in the film for differently as we look at the films today? In other words, the question of charm and affability. Good looks.

36:11-Sorcha

Yeah, no, I agree. I think that it is that otherness, that strangeness that, that sense of? Yeah, that sense of complete, I don't want to say monstrosity because there are human elements there, of course, but I do think that has had the lasting impact where we've evolved away from that, and especially with the obviously...the sexuality component that comes through from Lugosi onwards in particular, I think that's a huge contribution to that evolution. So I think that in some ways, then when they're trying to cite back for legitimacy in cinematic terms, at least, it is going back to that image of Orlok, because Orlok is so different from what comes afterwards. Yeah, so I think it's a fantastic observation.

36:55-Robert

The other point is, somebody mentioned before, there's this shot in the Coppola's *Dracula*, where he sort of physically deconstructs into rats, and they flee the room. That's the only other illusion I can remember to rats in the *Dracula* film. But there's an example of a very charming, literally romantic *Dracula* who crosses oceans of time, as opposed to just the actual ocean. But was there another question here? I thought maybe we'd ask, let's see. Oh, for Mario.

37:34

Could you expand on the comment you made about Orlok being the kind of bisexual vampire, which I found very interesting. I got the impression you didn't mean he just bites men and women.

37:47-Mario

The Vampire is always a very sexual figure in the Gothic tradition. And so when our queer filmmaker who's not out is making a film about a vampire, that aspect kind of gets kind of pulled into the kind of experience I think. Vampires are often gendered feminine, by the way. Right. So they suck, right? They have long nails, are often dandies, in traditions, I think Linda Williams talks about this, in her essay on, you know, there's a woman look, and she's the one who sort of starts thinking about the ways in which then the woman, Ellen, and Orlok actually have a kind of commonality. So, yeah, I mean, I, you know, the window on window action too between Orlok and Ellen, I think is very sexual. Of course, during censorship, with censorship, you know, sexual acts had to be sort of presented differently. And I think that happens in you know, a Tod Browning's *Dracula* also, coming into the Abode right. And so, that's, you know, that man on man scene for me is about a scene of bisexual, young love, and that resonates as queer for me.

39:03-Robert

And *True Blood* have a lot of that to the series on HBO, between male characters. Well, I'm getting the sign from above that it's time for me to wrap up and turn this over to Gary or Kris. So if I may, thank the panelists for really wonderful presentations. I found each one of them really worthwhile and brought so much to the table in our symposium today. So Kristopher, Gary, would you like to chime in here?

39:36-Kris

Literally pop in. Well, yeah, thank you so much, everyone. This is... as for being a half an hour overtime at the beginning, we're only 20 minutes over time now. So I feel that's a success. And everything was so fascinating. And yes, thanks so much for being here. We're still, we're closing up here with still 85 contestants with from an original 150. So that's that feels pretty great. By the way these things go. I would just like to close, I'm not sure if Gary is here and I'll let him say something if he's, if he's out there, but to close with: thanks to everyone, the wonderful speakers today. Elias Merhige and the scholars, the artists, the practitioners that we've heard from today. It's just been a kind of fantastic mix of perspectives. Thanks also to Gary Rhodes and Mark Jancovich. And again, Mark, really wanted to be here, but he will for the next one. And once

again, just to remind you that this symposium will be published online, in *Monstrum*, in video form, along with a transcript with a framing piece by Christina Massaccesi. I'll actually I say I'm going to put a link to *Monstrum* in the chat, but what I might do is just send it out through the Eventbrite and then to the list of speakers on email, I'll send you a link to Monstrum. So you can check that out. Let's see, we have already, also just to note, that we've already decided upon the next two Horror Reverie symposia that we're going to do. So stay tuned for 50 years of *The Exorcist*, next year. And after that, 50 years of *Texas Chain Saw Massacre*, same time, same place, probably just a couple years from now. And finally, thank you to our sponsors. We have the CORÉRISC. Collective, research collective, the Fonds de recherche du Québec, Montreal Monstrum society- Monstrum. And Gary's...Oklahoma Baptist University and Mark's at University of East Anglia. Thanks so much. And yeah, I guess we'll see you next year around this time for round two. So thank you very much. Thank you.

42:29-Gary

I want to thank everybody again, Kristopher, including yourself for all the hard work you've put into this. We really appreciate everybody being here and we will look forward to seeing everybody next year to celebrate the 50th of *The Exorcist*.

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