

## A Monster at Heart: The Romances of Frankenstein

Dr Rich Pascal joins us again for the Autumn Book Club lecture on Tuesday 28 April, and he promises to provide a new perspective on the literary classic *Frankenstein*.

'I shall be with you on your wedding night': thus said the monster to his unfortunate creator Victor Frankenstein, who had entertained rather different plans of connubial bliss on his honeymoon. To a greater degree than is ordinarily realised, Mary Shelley's 1818 novel, the original *Frankenstein*, is concerned with love and marriage.

Dr Frankenstein's engagement is sorely tested and compromised as the result of his obsession with creating human life via an innovative alternative to the usual means; and the success or failure of the monster's effort to develop into a fully human creature hinges, as he himself realises, on the prospect of finding a Significant Other to love and cherish. Most of the numerous stage and screen versions of the story that have appeared subsequently ignore this aspect of Mary Shelley's classic, but one of the greatest of them, James Whale's 1935 Hollywood production *Bride of Frankenstein*, retains and elaborates upon it. In this talk we will consider in some detail the fate of true love in those two Frankenstein masterpieces, and speculate about the possibility that at bottom the famous tale is one of passion grown monstrous.



Illustration from the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of  
"Frankenstein" (1831)

As usual, this evening lecture will be followed by group discussion about the book over a glass of wine.

Tickets for the event are just \$10 for Friends and \$15 for non-members. With a limit of 40 seats, be sure to book early to avoid disappointment. Bookings can be made through the Friends office on 02 6262 1698 or [friends@nla.gov.au](mailto:friends@nla.gov.au)

And if it's been many years since you last saw the film *Bride of Frankenstein*, we have arranged for the Reel McCoy Film Society to screen this movie classic at the National Library on Wednesday 15 April. See the film program at the end of the newsletter for further details.