

NOTES

1. John Keats, 'This living hand, now warm and capable', in *The Poems of John Keats*, ed. by Jack Stillinger (London: Heinemann, 1978), p. 503 (l. 1).
2. 'Z' [John Gibson Lockhart], 'Cockney School of Poetry IV', *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* (August 1818), 519–24 (p. 524).
3. Henry Stephens to George Felton Mathew, March[?] 1847, in *Keats Circle*, ed. by Hyder Edward Rollins, 2nd edn, 2 vols (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1969), II, 206–21 (pp. 208–09).
4. *Ibid.*, II, 206 and 214.

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Daisy Hay, *The Making of Mary Shelley's Frankenstein* (Oxford: Bodleian Library, 2019), 128pp. ISBN 978-1-8512-4486-7; £12.99 (pb).

IT IS WELL KNOWN THAT THE LITERARY LEGEND *FRANKENSTEIN* was produced during the Genevan summer of 1816 when Mary Shelley was enjoying an evening of ghost stories with friends at Byron's house, the Villa Diodati. Daisy Hay's *The Making of Mary Shelley's Frankenstein* celebrates the two hundredth birthday of *Frankenstein* by tracing the journey of Mary Shelley's creation from her manuscripts to pop culture standby. It showcases five chapters, revealing the complex story of the novel's birth through an assemblage of objects and images which are mainly drawn from the collection of the Bodleian Library at Oxford. Hay takes a historical approach by tracing the inspiration of the story back to a heterogeneous mixture of things, the material bases which Mary appropriates for literary creation. Hay points out that Mary's novel writing is parallel to Frankenstein's construction of his creature—an assortment of body parts are purloined to form a new whole.


The opening chapter 'Time' gives us an investigation about the external things she internalised and incorporated into her imaginative visions. Hay presents how in *Frankenstein*, Mary Shelley drew upon ghost stories she read including the anthology *Fantasmagoriana* (1812) and Coleridge's 'Christabel' (1816). She also drew on 'a visual grammar of Gothic monstrosity that developed in the second half of the eighteenth century', including paintings by artists Francisco de Goya and Henry Fuseli (p. 21). Hay argues that *Frankenstein* displays scientific ideas Mary percolated in her time. Three interconnected strands of influences on the science of *Frankenstein* are identified: Galvani's

pioneering work in the field of electrophysiology; Erasmus Darwin's 'theory of spontaneous vitality'; and Captain Cook's thwarted 1776 attempt to circumnavigate North America from the Pacific. Importantly, Hay calls attention to the political significance of both gothic and scientific elements in the novel. The monstrousness bore a metaphor for revolutionaries, implying 'first the potential and then the vainglorious corruption of Revolutionary ambition' (p. 26). The public debate about the origins of life can also be framed in political terms—the materialist approach to 'the vital spark of life' denied the supremacy of God, and posed a threat to the hierarchies that prevented Britain from turning into 'anarchy of revolution' (p. 32).

Chapter 2 presents people who exerted influences on Mary Shelley's works via a series of anecdotes. Being the daughter of the disseminator of feminist philosophy Mary Wollstonecraft—the author of *The Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792)—Mary Shelley never got to know her mother in person who died shortly after giving birth. Left in the care of her father, the anarchist William Godwin, and growing up in an unconventional household, she became 'the epitome of a radical idea' (p. 37). She made great use of her literary pedigree and the family's substantial library holdings. Her literary talent and imagination were sustained by the intellectual circle of Romanticists ranging from Coleridge and Wordsworth to Percy Shelley. Hay shows that Mary's works reflect the tangle of voices around her, such as 'the conversational fireworks of Shelley and Byron' (p. 51), Byron's doctor John Polidori's talk about the origins of life, and Matthew Lewis' debate with Byron about slave trade. Mary also conveys her thoughts about parents' responsibilities and reproduction anxieties, which are reminiscent of her real-life experiences such as her loss of children, her mother's death and the suicides of Fanny Imlay and Shelley's estranged wife, Harriet.

The following chapter discusses how Mary adapted the tropes and devices of aesthetic theories in her representations of landscapes and nature. As Hay comments, landscape in Mary's works is 'more than source and setting', but rather made as 'an idea which united the novel's intertwined strands of commentary on creativity, egotism and community' (p. 61). Chapter 4 then concentrates on the manuscripts of *Frankenstein*. Arguments are illustrated with images of the *Frankenstein* Notebook and manuscripts in their original form. *Frankenstein* manuscripts, which are regarded as animate objects, bear a resemblance to Frankenstein's Creature. Yet at the same time, the manuscripts of the novel embody 'a narrative of sociable creation' that differs from 'the model of egotistical creativity depicted in the novel itself' (p. 93).

Daisy Hay's nuanced readings of Mary Shelley's works, combined with photographs of manuscripts, books or physical artefacts from the collection, give readers a vivid picture of Mary Shelley's time and how she translates life into art. As Hay in the concluding chapter argues, *Frankenstein*—as a productive, ethical and political metaphor—articulates the anxieties of an age inundated with emerging technologies, innovations and sudden changes.

Visual iterations and adaptations in today's pop culture make it endure as a reminder of human's extraordinary faculty of imagination and its frightening consequences. 

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Anna Mercer, *The Collaborative Literary Relationship of Percy Bysshe Shelley and Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley* (London: Routledge, 2019), 244pp. ISBN 978-0-3672-7795-6; £29.59 (eBook) / £96 (hb).

ROMANTIC SCHOLARS HAVE FREQUENTLY REFERRED to the deep collaborative relationship between Mary and Percy Shelley in the authors' literary pursuits. Anna Mercer's debut monograph, *The Collaborative Literary Relationship of Percy Bysshe Shelley and Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley*, reminds us—through the writings of Charles Robinson and Timothy Morton, among others—that this relationship has not been thoughtfully enough considered. Much to the detriment of currently available research on the Shelleys, this deficiency has been 'acknowledged' (p. 3), but not yet fully examined. The introduction to Mercer's work dexterously asserts the extent to which '[t]heir experiences as a literary couple reflect their artistic intimacy', a communion of literary genius that 'provide[s] a beguiling example of how creativity flourishes and develops when provided with the support of an emotional and literary partner' (p. 24). Mercer delivers on her promise to fill a void in our understanding of the Shelleys' working and personal relationship, as well as how the complex and often unfortunate circumstances of their lives together produced inimitable affection and literary success.

Mercer's powerful suggestion that the Percy and Mary Shelley's mutual respect for each other's work engenders an authentically collaborative creative process that flourishes through both their lives. Mercer argues that it is 'evident that the Shelleys engaged in a reciprocal process of creative idea-sharing, drafting, reading, and copying, which had a hugely important effect on the works that they produced' (p. 30). This explicates further upon the extant scholarship on their relationship by making inseparable Mary's influence over her husband's work and his over hers. This theme is consistently drawn throughout Mercer's chapters, the first of which covers the period between 1814 and 1818, by the end of which it becomes increasingly clear how profound a connection they shared in life and creativity. Yet Mercer is careful not to