EDITORIAL NOTE

Welcome to Issue #19 of *The Irish Journal of Gothic and Horror Studies*. This issue is long overdue, so we are particularly delighted to see it finally dragging its pallid flesh out of the dank cavern of the early 2020s and into the light of day.

Issue #19 is the cursed progeny of our new editorial team, Janice Deitner, Orla Donnelly, and Dara Downey. We would like to take this opportunity to thank our excellent contributors for all their hard work and patience over the past few years. The last decade or so has been a difficult one for academics and creative practitioners alike, and the advent of large language models and generative AI is only one of many crises facing the arts and humanities in Ireland and globally. While we are interested in exploring post-humanity, technology, and various digital futures through a gothic lens, we remain committed to fostering and promoting human creativity and scholarship to counteract the threat these new technologies pose to our fields.

In addition to the destabilising influence of changing technologies, the everyday running of the *IJGHS* was severely impacted by changes to the Irish postal system, which has made it prohibitively expensive and administratively onerous to receive and distribute hard copies of books for review. It's been especially disappointing to no longer be in a position to send physical copies of academic books (prices for which often hit three figures) to PhD students and scholars who, like ourselves, are precariously employed on hourly paid, casualised, and short-term academic contracts - or no contracts at all. The scattered and unpredictable nature of such work, both during and since the pandemic lockdowns earlier in the decade, has directly and negatively impacted our own capacity to achieve the sustained focus that is needed to bring a journal issue to fruition in a timely manner. This situation has been extremely frustrating for ourselves, our contributors and peer reviewers, and our prospective readers, many of whom will also be experiencing uncertainty in terms of employment, housing, healthcare, and simply planning for the future. Thank you for sticking with us while we put things back together!

As a result of these delays, the issue that follows this editorial is a sort of time capsule, especially in regard to the reviews. In these pages, you'll be reminded of some of what you might have been reading or watching during those long, strange months of social isolation. You may also, however, come across texts and ideas that speak directly to the present moment. In particular, the articles and reviews featured in this issue seem to return again and again to topics

relating to authenticity and originality, particularly via the very gothic motifs of doubles and doubling, motifs that speak to anxieties around the permeability and autonomy of the self. In doing so, our contributors highlight the ways in which gothic and horror continue to help complicate and resist apparently natural constructions of authority, whether narrative, textual, or socio-cultural. They also draw attention to interactions (progressive, horrific, or indeed both) between different media, genres, bodies, species, and psyches, in ways that were echoed in a number of the discussions that took place at the International Gothic Association conference in Hull in August 2026, organised by longtime *IJGHS* contributor Kevin Corstorphine and his team.

Consequently, both the contents of this issue and its monstrously protracted birth pangs point to the extreme vulnerability of digital media and scholarly legacies in the current era. We have been repeatedly hampered by systems that routinely shut down the email addresses of academics who complete their studies or who come to the end of casualised contracts, so that prospective contributors and peer reviewers become impossible to contact. Around us, other publishing platforms have been closing, as streaming services remove films and series without warning, and precariously employed scholars lose library access and connections with formal and informal networks of peers and mentors. The threads of institutional memory are therefore often cut short, and lines of communication are all too easily broken. All of this is, of course, very gothic, but it also makes our job both more challenging and more urgent.

In order to foster those networks outside of the walls of academia, and to push back against the loss of accumulated knowledge and know-how, we have also recently been developing the Irish Network for Gothic and Horror Studies, a growing community of fans, scholars, creators, and genre-curious people that aims to promote and foster the breadth and vibrancy of gothic and horror fiction, media, events, and scholarship throughout Ireland and beyond. The network was initially set up in 2017 and relaunched in 2025. Our monthly film club, organised by Máiréad Casey, has provided a space for online discussions of easily accessible films, from *Gaslight* (1944) to *Frankenstein* (2025), since its inception in summer 2025. We have a discussion board for all things gothic and horror, including an ongoing short-story book club. We also send out a monthly email newsletter. You can sign up for our mailing list by clicking here or send us items for the newsletter at INGHS@irishgothichorror.com. One of our aims is to forge closer connections between the network and the journal. In doing so, we aim to build the network as a platform for people to promote their work, find out about new releases and events, and engage with like-minded people.

Finally, many thanks to all those who have submitted articles and reviews for upcoming issues - you will be hearing from us shortly. The range and volume of the submissions we receive is a testament to the vibrancy and diversity of work on horror and the gothic on this island and worldwide. Happy Halloween, a chairde!

Dara, Janice, and Orla