



# FRANKENSTEIN

A LIVING COMIC BOOK

STUDY GUIDE SLIDES

# FRANKENSTEIN: A Living Comic Book

By Craig Francis, Rick Miller, Paul Van Dyck

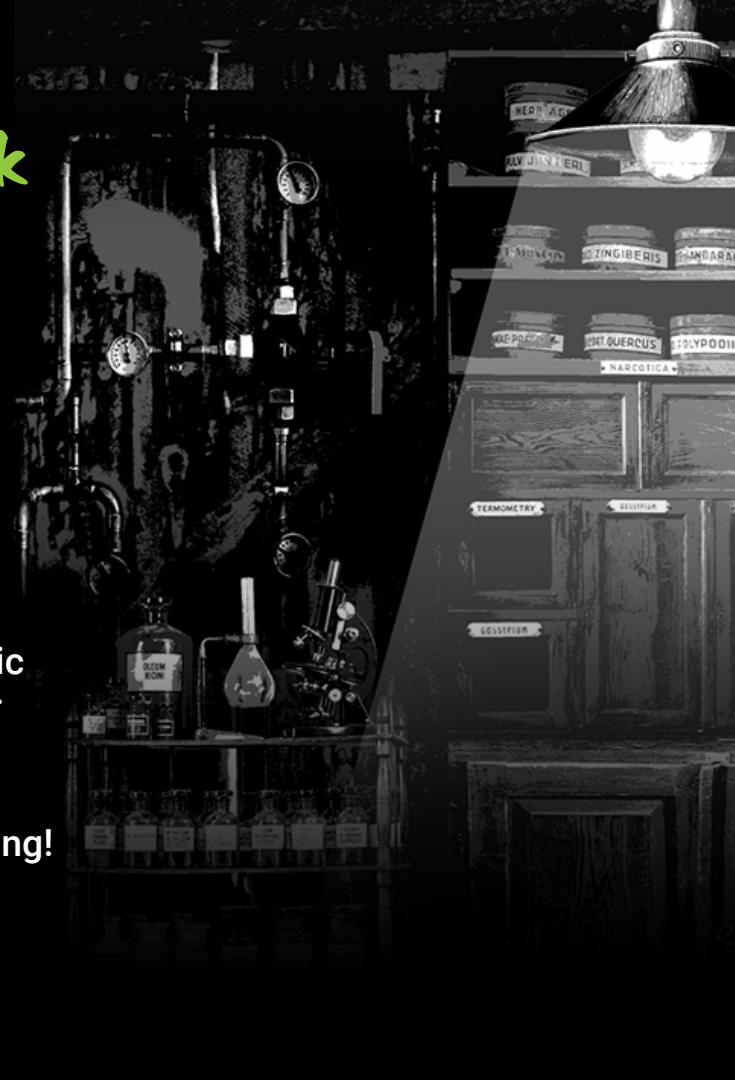
Adapted from the novel by Mary Shelley

Directed by Craig Francis and Rick Miller

A Kidoons & WYRD Production in association with

The 20K Collective and Geordie Theatre

*FRANKENSTEIN: A Living Comic Book* is a play that revives the original story of Frankenstein through innovative technology. Graphic novel panels and projected word bubbles interact with actors through an immersive multimedia design, along with classic theatre techniques such as masks and puppetry. *FRANKENSTEIN: A Living Comic Book* focuses the audience on modern day issues, adapting the novel's framing story to confront climate change, Artificial Intelligence, and technology... monsters of our own making!



# THEATRE ETIQUETTE

Theatre etiquette is a set of rules that explain how to behave when watching a play to be respectful to the cast and crew and the other patrons (spectators).

- Arrive on time and use the bathroom before the start of the play to avoid interruptions.
- Stay in your seat and do not chat with your friends during the play.
- Do not use electronic devices (phones, tablets).
- Feel free to react! You can clap or laugh when you are impressed or amused; it lets the actors know that you are enjoying yourself!

## ABOUT MARY SHELLEY

Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley was the author who wrote *Frankenstein*, the novel behind the play you are about to watch. Mary Shelley was born in 1797, the only child of a social philosopher father and a feminist author mother. She married the poet Percy Bysshe Shelley in 1814, and began writing *Frankenstein* during travels with him in 1816. Published in 1818, *Frankenstein* is considered the first work of Science Fiction, and it is interesting to note that this entire genre was created by an 18-year-old young woman. Mary Shelley wrote many more books and articles, and died in 1851 at age 53.



# PRE-SHOW VIDEOS

Explore our outreach videos—designed for pre- or post-show viewing to deepen your connection with the play through behind-the-scenes insights, thematic discussions, and creative context.



**FRANKENSTEIN: A Living Comic Book**  
presents "ICE TO MEET YOU"



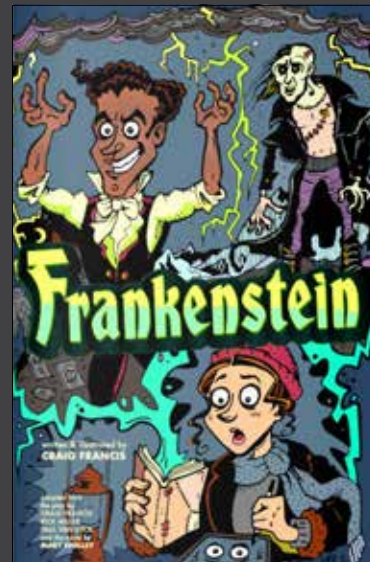
**FRANKENSTEIN: A Living Comic Book**  
presents "IT'S ALIVE!... (and Touring)"



To watch the videos,  
please visit: [frankenstein.ca/education](https://frankenstein.ca/education)

For the full graphic novel  
online, please visit:

[frankenstein.ca/comic](https://frankenstein.ca/comic)





# MEET THE CHARACTERS



**MARY**

A young person in  
the present day



**MARY'S DAD**

An inventor,  
a pioneer in robotics  
and AI



**VICTOR  
FRANKENSTEIN**

A clever student in  
the early 1800's



**ALPHONSE  
FRANKENSTEIN**

Victor's father



**WILLIAM  
FRANKENSTEIN**

Victor's little brother

## MEET THE CHARACTERS (continued)



### **JUSTINE**

The Frankensteins' housekeeper and William's nanny



### **PROFESSOR KREMPE**

Professor of medicine



### **ELIZABETH LAVENZA**

A student of medicine, Victor's close friend



### **THE CREATURE**

Victor's creation



### **LINA**

Coffee shop owner in Geneva

# MEET THE CHARACTERS (continued)



## **DELACEY**

A blind old man in  
the Swiss woods



## **FELIX**

Delacey's son, a  
woodcutter



## **GRACE**

A lighthouse keeper  
in Scotland



## **THE COMPANION**

Victor's second  
creation

For the full cast  
and crew,  
please visit:  
[frankenstein.ca/  
cast-and-crew](http://frankenstein.ca/cast-and-crew)

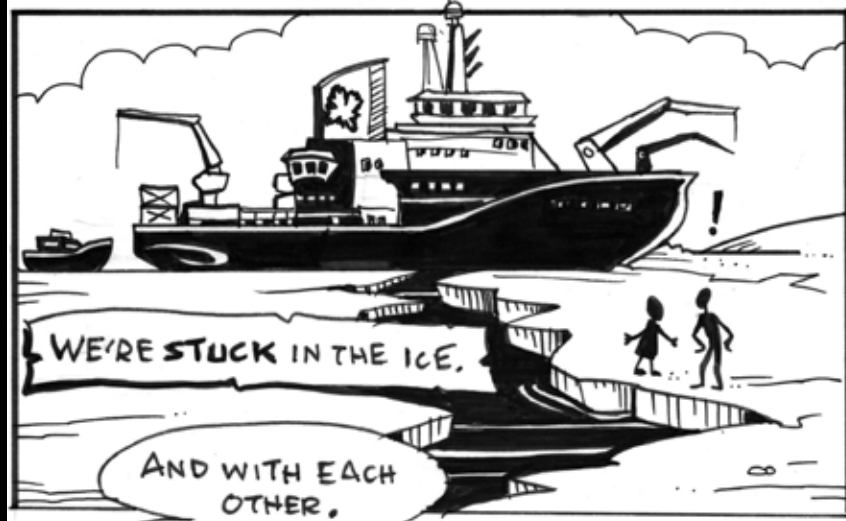




## Meet Mary, our narrator...

Mary, a young graphic novelist, drops out of art school when she thinks her self-portrait project is a failure. At the same time, Mary's father, a scientist and pioneer in artificial intelligence, abandons a robotic brain project he'd been working on. With plans suddenly changed, Mary goes with her father to the Arctic, to work on his next big project: fighting climate change.

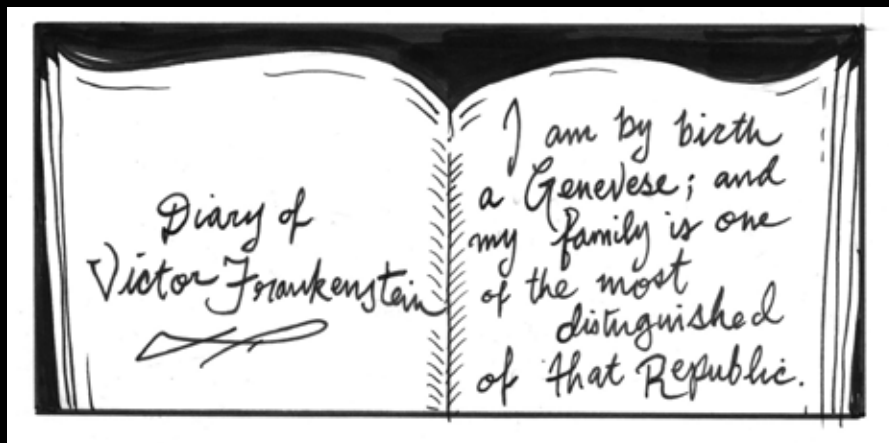


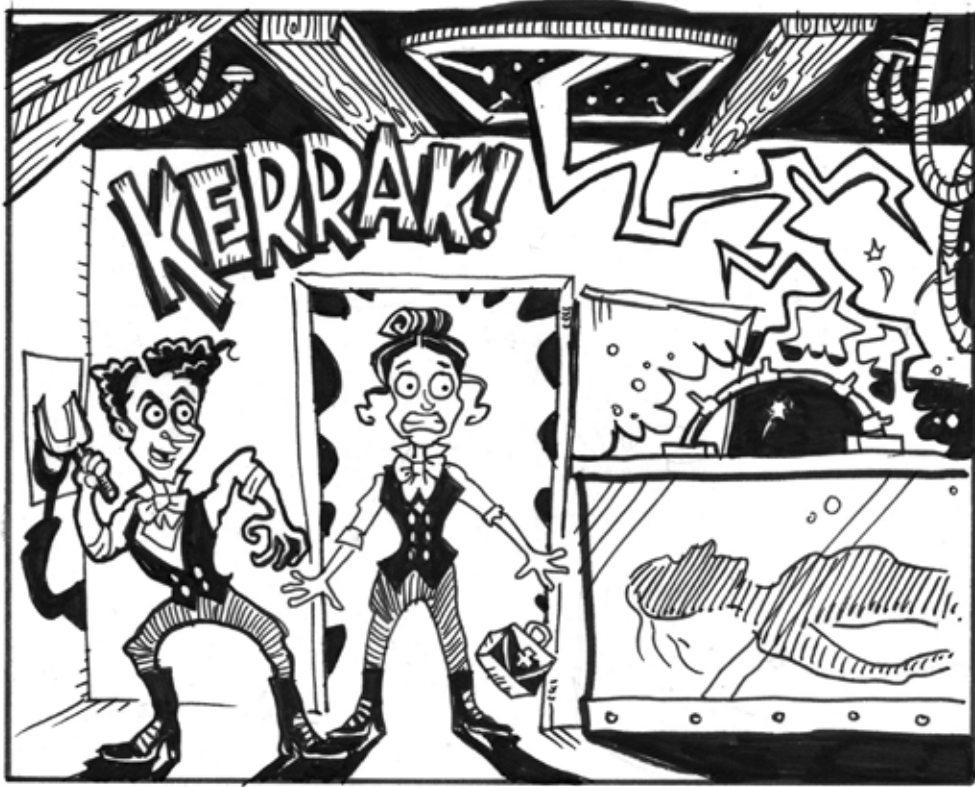




## One day...

While on a walk, Mary finds a peculiar book frozen in a block of ice: it's a journal written 200 years ago by a certain Victor Frankenstein, a young man from a wealthy Swiss family.





Victor, whose mother died when he was a child, became obsessed with fighting death. He studied natural science and medicine, and their endless possibilities. He created a monster by stitching together human body parts and bringing it to life, horrifying his friend Elizabeth, and himself, in the process...

Unable to face the Creature, Victor – like Mary's father  
200 years later – abandoned his project.







The problem was that Victor's Creation had feelings. It followed him. It found him. It taught him an important lesson...

*Frankenstein* is a story about our relationship with technology, facing the monsters we create, as well as love, loss, and forgiveness.



# PRE-SHOW ACTIVITIES

# Pre-Show Discussion Questions

1. Would you want to live forever? Why? Why not?
2. Do you ever feel lonely? What do you do when you are lonely?
3. Name some human creations / inventions / discoveries that you think have benefited us, and others you think have harmed us.
4. What do you know about Artificial Intelligence (AI)? What are the benefits of AI? What are the potential risks?
5. What do you know about climate change? How can scientific discovery help with climate change?
6. What would you do if you felt like the project or artwork you were working on was a failure? Why?
7. What are possible reactions people might have when they are facing something that scares them? What do you do?

# Climate change and artificial intelligence

In the play, Mary's father is attempting to address climate change with the help of artificial intelligence... Is that actually possible? Let's find out! Climate change often refers to how the surface of the Earth is getting rapidly warmer over time. Visit [NASA Climate Kids](#) to learn more about climate change and to answer these questions.

- What is climate change?
- Why is it an important issue for humans to address?
- What can humans do to contribute to improve this situation?



## Climate change and artificial intelligence (continued)

Artificial intelligence or “AI” is the ability for a computer to perform tasks that normally require human intelligence, and to learn by itself. For instance, with AI, computers can respond to questions, review data, research, and problem-solve.

- Can you name 5 times you encounter AI in your day?
- How does technology affect your life? Our society?
- How do you think artificial intelligence can help humans address the issue of climate change?

Watch [Four ways AI can help tackle climate change](#) by BBC Ideas

Click!







# POST-SHOW ACTIVITIES

# Post-Show Discussion Questions

1. Why did Mary drop out of art school? Would you have done the same? Why or why not?
2. Why did Mary's father abandon his robot?
3. Why did Victor abandon his creature?
4. How did the Creature react to being abandoned? To having no parent figure?
5. How did the Creature learn to talk? Read?
6. What are 3 lessons the Creature learns from Delacey?
7. Why was Delcacey able to befriend the Creature despite its appearance?
8. The Creature wanted a companion because it was the only one of its kind in the world. Discuss the importance of having even one friend who knows what you are going through.
9. Once Victor and The Creature hurt each other, they each take revenge. Are there other actions that they could have taken that would make the story turn out differently?

## Post-Show Discussion Questions (continued)

10. This is a multimedia play, which means the artists used many theatrical techniques (sound, visuals, special effects, costumes, props, video productions, etc.) to bring the story to life. Discuss these techniques and which you enjoyed the most.
11. Discuss the different fathers in Frankenstein. Describe their characteristics as fathers and their relationships with their child (or creature).
  - a. Victor's father, Alphonse
  - b. Mary's father
  - c. Delacey, Felix's father
  - d. Victor ("father" of the Creature)
12. Which character do you relate to the most? Why?
13. At the end of the play, the Creature writes "I forgive you" as the last entry in Victor's journal? What was he forgiving him for?
14. According to you, what lessons can we learn from this story?

# JOURNAL WRITING

Choose one of the following journal activities. Remember to date your entry, use “Dear diary,” as an opener, and feel free to use a personal, informal tone when writing, as if you were writing for yourself only.

- Mary learns about Victor’s life and the time period in which he lived by reading his journal. Write a journal entry about your daily life that includes information that would help someone living in a different time period or a different part of the world understand you and your society.
- Write a review of the play as a journal entry. Make sure to include information about the plot, the actors, the special effects, how you felt while watching it and whether you would recommend the play to your friends.

# SCIENTIFIC DISCOVERY

When Victor's mother dies, he becomes obsessed with achieving immortality using his scientific knowledge. Similarly, Mary's dad wants to fix climate change by using advanced technology. Both attempted to fix a problem with scientific discovery and innovation.

Select and describe a personal or world problem that you would like to fix and explain how you would address it using scientific or technological innovation. Just like science-fiction writers, feel free to stretch or even make up the science behind your invention.





# SCENARIO: FACING OUR OWN MONSTERS

One of the themes of the play *FRANKENSTEIN: A Living Comic Book* is the importance of facing our monsters before they face us. While Victor's monster was an actual creature, monsters can also be our fears or mistakes. In groups of 2-4 students, create and write or perform a scene in which a character either faces a long-time fear or creates an unideal situation they must face and fix.



# DESIGN YOUR OWN COMIC BOOK

BACK AT THE LAB...

The writers and producers of FRANKENSTEIN: A Living Comic Book used interesting comic book and graphic novel techniques to bring the story to life. Using some of the techniques you have learned, design your own comic strip. First you will brainstorm and select the scenes, including actions and dialogue, and develop a storyboard, before completing the final comic strip product.

Here are some comic strip techniques to explore:

- Speech bubbles or thought bubbles
- Onomatopoeia (a word that imitates the sound it is describing)
- Captions in the top left corner to indicate time or location, or any other narrative information

KERRAK!

WHOOOSH!

WHAT COULD POSSIBLY  
GO WRONG?

AAAHH!

## QUOTATION STATION: Women in Medicine

VICTOR      What's wrong?

ELIZABETH    It's the university, they're refusing to give me a degree. They said I could study medicine all I want, but I'll never be a doctor.

VICTOR      Why?

ELIZABETH    Because I'm a girl.

VICTOR      But you're the best student I know.

ELIZABETH    Better than you?

VICTOR      Absolutely.

When *Frankenstein* was published in 1818, women were not allowed to become doctors in Europe, Canada, or the USA.

1. Why might that be? What did people think?
2. Is it fair? Do women make lesser doctors?
3. This is an example of sexism, which is when people treat someone unfairly based on their gender. Can you think of other examples of sexism?
4. What can you say if you witness someone acting sexist or saying something sexist?

## QUOTATION STATION: Women in Medicine (continued)

Art, as well as science, can have sexism. When Mary Shelley published the book in 1818, she left her name off it, partly because she was a woman. Even so, The British Critic wrote “The writer of it is, we understand, a female... and we shall therefore dismiss the novel without further comment.”

Can you think of any other examples of sexism in the arts?  
In math or science? In sports?



## QUOTATION STATION: Friendship

CREATURE	I am alone. Humans are repulsed by me. But... someone as repulsive as myself would not run away from me.
VICTOR	You want me to disfigure someone so they look like... you?!
CREATURE	No, ding dong! I want you to make me a companion

1. Why does Creature want a companion? What could a companion or friend provide him with?
2. Humans are social creatures that crave human interaction. Share a time when you felt lonely. Why did you feel this way? What did you do? (If you find that question upsetting, you can share why it upsets you instead of a time you felt lonely.)
3. How is the Creature different on the inside, compared to its appearance?
4. When and how did Creature learn about the value of friendship? Companionship? Family? (these might all be different people / events.)



## QUOTATION STATION: Facing Our Monsters

MARY

We create, and we can learn from our creations. The world is full of monsters... monsters of our own making. And running away from them is no longer an option. We all have the choice to face our fears. Before they face us!

1. What did Victor learn from the Creature? What did Mary learn from her creations (her art)? Are there lessons you could apply in life?
2. Victor and Mary both ran away from their failures. How might the story be different if they looked after the things they created?
3. What does Mary mean when she says the world is full of monsters of our own making?
4. Why can't we run away from them? What can we do instead?