



KARLOFF, The Man and The Monster
November 5, 2021 - November 14, 2021
Written by Randy Bowser
Authorized by Sara Karloff

An original one actor production where the famous cinema favorite Boris Karloff comes to life. This multi-media one-act experience traces the origins of Karloff's career and carries the audience into his rise as one of the most renowned movie monster actors and stage actors of all time.

Prime Stage Theatre Performances are located at the New Hazlett Theater Center for Performing Arts, Pittsburgh, PA

Welcome to Prime Stage Theatre’s 2021-2021 Season *Beyond Imagination*

Bringing Literature to Life!

Dear Educator or Parent,

We are proud to bring you the Pittsburgh Premiere of *KARLOFF, The Man and the Monster*, written for the stage by Randy Bowser and authorized by Sara Karloff. *KARLOFF, The Man and the Monster*, starring David Nackman, is a one actor production where the famous cinema favorite, Boris Karloff, comes to life.

All literature produced by Prime Stage is always drawn from middle and secondary Reading Lists, and themes are in the current Pennsylvania curriculum.

This Resource Guide is designed to provide historical background and context, classroom activities, and curricular content to help you enliven your students’ experience with the literature and the theatre. We encourage you to use the theatrical games and creative thinking activities, as well as the Theatre Etiquette suggested activities, to spark personal connections with the character and the story.

If you have any questions about the information in this resource guide, please contact me and I will be happy to assist you. I welcome your suggestions and comments!

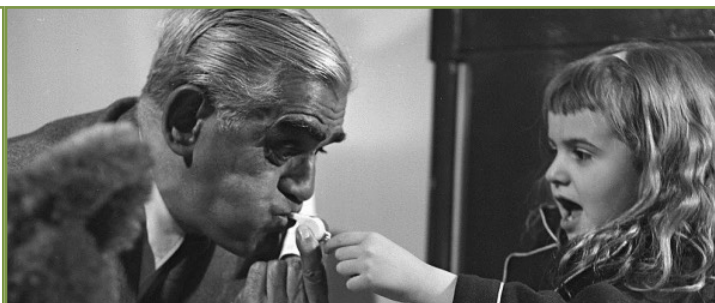
Monica Stephenson, Education Coordinator

Prime Stage Theatre

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The activities in this guide are intended to enliven, clarify and enrich the text as you read, and the experience as you watch the literature.

Boris Karloff visiting The Children’s Hospital of Brooklyn in 1948. Karloff would often visit children’s hospitals or wards when he traveled. He’d entertain and read books. Karloff even dressed as Santa at Christmas.



OUR EDUCATION PROGRAMMING

Literacy in ACTION Program (LACT)
 Global Classroom Program
 Student Matinees
 Act 48 Workshops
 Educational Resource Guides
 High School Drama Awards
 Technical Theatre Internships
 The Jasmine Nyree Theatre Project
 Students Together Organizing Prevention (STOP) Program

OUR EDUCATION PROGRAMMING IS FUNDED IN PART BY THE FOLLOWING FOUNDATIONS

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 American Eagle Outfitters
 Jack Buncher Foundation
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Featured National Standards:

English/Language Arts

Standards Developed by International Reading Association and National Council of Teachers of English

1. Students read a wide range of literature from many periods in many genres to build an understanding of the many dimensions (e.g., philosophical, ethical, and aesthetic) of human experience.
2. Students apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and appreciate texts. They draw on their prior experience, their interactions with other readers and writers, their knowledge of word meaning and of other texts, their word identification strategies, and their understanding of textual features (e.g., sound-letter correspondence, sentence structure, context and graphics).
3. Students use a variety of technological and information resources (e.g., libraries, databases, computer networks, and video) to gather and synthesize information and to create and communicate knowledge.
4. Students use a variety of technological and information resources (e.g., libraries, databases, computer networks, and video) to gather and synthesize information and to create and communicate knowledge.
5. Students participate as knowledgeable, reflective, creative, and critical members of a variety of literacy communities.
6. Students use spoken, written, and visual language to accomplish their own purposes (e.g., for learning, enjoyment, persuasion, and the exchange of information).

Theatre

NA 5-8.3 Designing by developing environments for improvised and scripted scenes

Students analyze improvised and scripted scenes for technical requirements.

NA5-8.7 Analyzing, evaluating, and constructing meanings from improvised and scripted scenes and from theatre, film, television, and electronic media productions

Students articulate and support the meanings constructed from their and others' dramatic Performances Students use articulated criteria to describe, analyze, and constructively evaluate the perceived effectiveness of artistic choices found in dramatic performances.

NA 9-12.2 Acting by developing, communicating, and sustaining characters in improvisations and informal or formal productions

Students analyze the physical, emotional, and social dimensions of characters found in dramatic texts from various genres and media.

NA 9-12.3 Designing and producing by conceptualizing and realizing artistic interpretations for informal or formal productions

Students analyze a variety of dramatic texts from cultural and historical perspectives to determine production requirements.

NA9-12.5 Researching by evaluating and synthesizing cultural and historical information to support artistic choices

Students identify and research cultural, historical, and symbolic clues in dramatic texts, and evaluate the validity and practicality of the information to assist in making artistic choices for informal and formal productions.

NA9-12.7 Analyzing, critiquing, and constructing meanings from informal and formal theatre, film, television, and electronic media productions

Students articulate and justify personal aesthetic criteria for critiquing dramatic texts and events that compare perceived artistic intent with the final aesthetic achievement.

Students analyze and critique the whole and the parts of dramatic performances, taking into account the context, and constructively suggest alternative artistic choices.

All Prime Stage productions and Resource Guides address the following:

Pennsylvania Common Core Standards for *KARLOFF, The Man and The Monster*
Pennsylvania Academic Standards for Reading, Writing, Listening, Speaking

CC.1.3.9-10.A: Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.

CC.1.3.9-10.C: Analyze how complex characters develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme.

CC.1.3.9-10.D: Determine the point of view of the text and analyze the impact the point of view has on the meaning of the text.

CC.1.3.9-10.E: Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure a text, order events within it and manipulate time create an effect.

CC.1.3.9-10.F: Analyze how words and phrases shape meaning and tone in texts.

CC.1.3.9-10.G: Analyze the representation of a subject or a key scene in two different artistic mediums, including what is emphasized or absent in each treatment.

CC.1.3.9-10.H: Analyze how an author draws on and transforms themes, topics, character types, and/or other text elements from source material in a specific work.

CC.1.3.9-10.K: Read and comprehend literary fiction on grade level, reading independently and proficiently.

CC.1.5.9-10.A: Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions on grades level topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

CC.1.5.9-10.G: Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English when speaking based on grade 9-10 level and content.

CC.1.6.11.A: Listen critically and respond to others in small and large group situations. Respond with grade level appropriate questions, ideas, information or opinions.

CC.1.6.11.C: Demonstrate awareness of audience using appropriate volume and clarity in formal speaking presentations.

CC.1.6.11.D: Listen to and acknowledge the contributions of other students well introducing ideas and opinions to enrich the discussion.

Theatre Etiquette and House Rules

It goes without saying that when most children today hear the word “theatre” they think, “oh, MOVIE theater.” And with that thought comes all of those things that we do at movie theater: eat popcorn, drink noisily from soda cups, put feet on the seat, text message—and the list goes on from there.

But live theater is just that: it’s LIVE with LIVE HUMANS who react and respond to the audience, something that we at Prime Stage think is the beauty of the theatre experience. Because of this, live theatre requires a higher level of respect between the audience and performer in order for the experience to be a positive one. As an audience member, you are the final and most important component of this production of *Karloff, The Man and The Monster!*

Please review the following “house rules” with your students prior to attending our production:

- Please stay together with your group and wait for an usher to help you find your seat.
- Please turn all cell phones **completely off** before the performance. If you are texting during the performance, you will be asked to leave. (FYI, the theater will be dark, and light from your phone shines up on your face when you text. Everybody, including the actors on stage, can see you!)
- No photography or videotaping.
- Please stay in your seat until the intermission or the end of the play.
- No eating, drinking, or chewing gum during the performance.
- We encourage active listening and appropriate responses such as laughing or clapping. Please do not talk during the performance!
- Be polite and attentive. Show your appreciation by clapping. (FYI – the actors really love to see how much you enjoyed the show!)

PDE Academic Standards 1.6, 9.1

Thinking Like a Critic

Critics play an important role in theatre. They are often the first to see the show and can write a wonderful – or horrendous – review for all the world to see. Prepare your students to attend the show by “thinking like a critic.”

Read the following questions before the show.



Think about the questions as you’re watching the show and write your answers in a notebook or journal during intermission or on the bus ride home.

Write a critique of the show based on your responses.

PDE Academic Standards 9.1-9.4, 1.4- 1.5

Actor choices—How did they move and speak? Did they seem like people we know? How did they relate to other characters?

Designer choices—What design element captured your attention the most - the set, costumes, lights, or sound - and why? How did the design elements work together to support the entire production? What choices did the designers make in materials, colors, intensity, detail, etc.? What symbols were in the design elements?

Director choices—What was the style, pace, and rhythm of the play? What stage pictures helped to tell the story? How did the director unify all of the elements of the production?

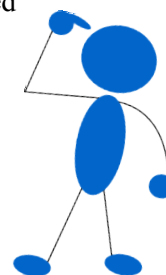
Interpretation—Did the director make a statement about life in our current time? How did the characters, design, and play make you feel? What did the play mean

to you? What might it mean to others?

Evaluation—Why do you suppose the playwright wrote the play? Why was the play produced now? When were moments where the storytelling was very clear? When were moments you were confused about the story? Who would enjoy the play and why?

Remember—it’s all about choices!

Whether you loved the play or not, identify the specific choices that made you feel that way!



KARLOFF, The Man and The Monster **By Randy Bowser**

KARLOFF, That Man and The Monster is a biographical one-man play about the life of film star Boris Karloff, written by Randy Bowser.

The play premiered in Salem Oregon, November 14, 2014, at Level B Theater Pub. Boris Karloff's only child, Sara Jane Karloff, attended the show's opening weekend. The play was developed with Stephen Jacobs, author of the biography *Boris Karloff: More Than a Monster* as the script's dramaturg.

Bowser performed the role of Boris in the premiere. He did not develop the piece as a personal vehicle, but rather as a play open for the general theatre market to all interested producers. A second production ran in October 2016 at the Alliance Performance Center of Tucson, AZ. Charles Prokopp played Boris, and the production was directed by John R. Gunn.

The play ran live, and in online streaming, in October 2020 at Anchorage Community Theatre in Alaska. The production was presented in honor of Boris Karloff, who guest-starred in the group's 1957 production of *Arsenic and Old Lace*. That play was a big success for Mr. Karloff on Broadway.

The initial production of the play was funded by a successful Kickstarter crowdfunding campaign. The Kickstarter page for Karloff's still maintained, and serves as an archive of photos, promotions and blog entries.



Original Poster for *Karloff*, the play

Sourced from [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Karloff_\(play\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Karloff_(play))

KARLOFF, The Man and The Monster

By Randy Bowser

Synopsis

William Henry Pratt escapes his "lonely childhood" of being teased mercilessly for having the dark skin of an Anglo Indian, bowed legs, a severe stammer, and pronounced lisp, by re-inventing himself as Boris Karloff - the actor.

With great humor and graceful panache, Boris jumps back and forth in time in a flow of consciousness stream of free association, embracing the opportunity to re-live the experience of his thriller of a life.

After appearing in 80 films, his "overnight success" of playing The Monster in *Frankenstein* brings him fame and a niche in the Hollywood pantheon of stars, but it's only one milestone on Boris's quest for his higher artistic goal: To be accepted as a true actor, not just a monster.

On the challenging road to his ultimate objective, friend and collaborator, Jack Pierce, molds Boris's face into the variety of characters Boris becomes forever famous for. He also confronts a "real monster" in Canada, meets death himself in the guise of a "Mr. Brink," passionately helps his fellow actors by helping to found The Screen Actors Guild, eagerly embraces the acting outlets of radio, television, records, and eventually returns to his true love - the stage.

At the height of his fame he is cast in his first Broadway show, but starting in the first rehearsal, his inner demons conjure up his childhood affliction of a severe stammer. Boris is faced with the most difficult decision of his life: To give up and drop out of the play, or plow through the terror threatening to destroy his biggest dreams.

Before his final visit to the hospital where he finally unlocks the mystery of a moment in "Frankenstein" that has haunted him for decades, he confides in the audience that his secret ambition is to be:--an actor.

Synopsis written by Randy Bowser

Author of *KARLOFF, The Man and The Monster*



Prime Stage Theatre Company's set rendering of *KARLOFF, The Man and The Monster* by Johnmichael Bohach, November 2021

About the Playwright



Randy Bowser (Playwright) Randy is delighted Prime Stage is presenting the premiere of the new one-act version of **KARLOFF**, his authorized one-person show about Boris “Frankenstein” Karloff. Besides writing the script, his abilities as a composer, recording engineer, graphic designer, set designer, and actor were all utilized when the play had its first production in 2014. His dramatic musical based on “The Picture of Dorian Gray” has been running in Moscow, Russia, for eleven years. “Tainted” is his courtroom drama about the 1920s most infamous anti-interracial marriage lawsuit. He was presented the William Morris Agency award for his musical based on Dante's “Inferno,” the Best Actor award for two years running at The University of Oregon, as well as other acting

accolades throughout his career. As an actor since the age of twelve and a director since his late-20s, theatre has provided the peak experiences of his life.

Below is a highlight of a 2014 Theatre Talk interview between Randy Bowser and Ann Peak McBride on KMUZ 88.5 FM. Randy shares more about his play and what inspire him to write it.

ANN: If you could tell me something about the play. I know it's a one man show, right?

Randy: Yes, it is. It's a bit unusual for, compared to some one man shows, in that there are scads of other people in it, other characters... This is more like a play, with just one person, and so he's constantly interacting with people in his life.

And who do I mean by “him?” It's the story of Boris Karloff. The play is called “KARLOFF” and I suppose there could be some young people who don't know his name, but he is one of the most famous, most loved actors really, from the golden age of Hollywood. — It would be impossible to find someone who doesn't recognize him. Everyone knows his face as that of The Frankenstein Monster.

ANN: And what made you want to do this?

Randy: Well, basically it goes way back to when I was a kid and I was getting into theatre and getting into acting, and Boris Karloff was just one of my acting heroes. Like a lot of people my age there was a magazine that really inspired us to get interested in that genre of film, science fiction and horror, fantasy stuff.

That was a magazine called Famous Monsters of Filmland. Spielberg, Lucas, all these guys point to that magazine as the thing that inspired them. They're all about my age and I'm in that group. This magazine did a great job of telling the readers about these actors and technicians who were artists. —They did fantastic stuff, these pioneers in the kinds of movies we take for granted now. They were the pioneers, and Boris Karloff is definitely the most famous actor in that genre.

ANN: So as a child you became fascinated with Boris Karloff

Randy: All my life, I've loved him. If there's a Boris Karloff movie on TV, I'd probably stop to watch it to this day, because he's always interesting, no matter what the movie's like.

ANN: And what happens in the play? It's biographical?

Randy: It is the story of his life, you know, capsulized in one evening's entertainment, but it's done non-linearly so it jumps back and forth in time. At various times we see him when he's in his '30's, when he's 10 years old, when he's in his late '70's. It jumps back and forth with several themes threading through the entire thing which keep adding up until the end, I think the audience will understand the message that he really was someone worthy of admiration, because of the life he led, and his dedication to acting, and admirable because of the obstacles that he had to overcome in order to become such a famous actor.

About the Playwright

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Randy Bowser as Boris Karloff

ANN: How did you research this, Randy?

Randy: I knew enough – when I first got the idea and I was just thinking, “who could I write a one-man show about?” and this was one of the ideas. I knew that I would have to get clearance from Sara Karloff, that's Boris's only child. She runs Karloff Enterprises so she controls the rights to his persona. And so I ran the idea by her, and it didn't take her very long to be very enthusiastic, because nobody had ever done it before.

So, she authorized the script, now she loves it, and early on last year when I started writing this, she said, she highly recommended, that I get in touch with the author of what is really the definitive biography of Boris Karloff. It's a fairly new book, called “Boris Karloff: More Than a Monster,” by Stephen Jacobs.

So I did get in touch with him and to this day, now for a year, we're in constant contact, every day. He's an English writer, and his book is huge, and he is the world authority. And so, after reading one of my drafts, he helped me hone the drafts. He was so instrumental in helping to write it that he – I refer to him as the show's Dramaturg.

ANN: Well, that's wonderful. So you wrote it and you act in it.

Randy: Yeah. And, I wrote the music for it.

ANN: There's music!

Randy: Since the show's about a movie star. We see recreations of movie scenes. I wanted it to have a very active sound plot. So there are sound effects all the way through it. The actor playing Boris, who in this production happens to be me, also provides all the other voices. So we'll see a scene, for instance, a recreation of a scene from “The Bride of Frankenstein” and we'll hear James Whale's (the director's) voice, “Cut! Action!” - that kind of thing.

Those are recorded and that's also the voice of the same person. So it has a high theatricality to it. Lots of sound – lots of sound effects, then I wrote some original music inspired by old movie soundtracks.

ANN: Wow. It sounds like a wonderful production.

What is a dramaturg?

Dramaturgs are experts in the study of plays, musicals, or operas. It is their **job to provide the cast and crew with vital knowledge, research, and interpretation about the theatrical work in question**, so that they are—in turn—better equipped to do their jobs.

To hear the full interview go to

<https://kmuz.org/theatre-talk-november-7-2014-bli-the-spirit-karloff-death-by-design/>

About the Director



Art DeConciliis (Director) is pleased to have worked on his second project for Prime Stage, having appeared in the company's recent production of *Twelfth Night*. Art has been acting and directing with a number of Pittsburgh theater companies, including Pittsburgh Irish and Classical Theater, Duquesne University, Stage 62, The Theater Factory, Little Lake Theatre Co. and LHRT for more than 38 years. He was a long-standing Board member and former Artistic Committee Chair for Little Lake, where he has been a part of over 160 productions and an instructor of that theater's acting class program for 23 years. Art was a 2007 Post-Gazette Performer of the Year, and is also an active voice-over artist in both the U.S. and Canada. Favorite directing projects include *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*; *The History Boys*; *Proof*; *Doubt* and *The Lion In Winter*. He most recently appeared in South Park Theater Company's production of *A Couple of Blaguards*.

What does it take to direct *KARLOFF, The Man and The Monster*? Prime Stage Education recently talked with Art about his experience directing this unique, one-person show!

Could you tell us about a little bit about *KARLOFF, The Man and The Monster* and what first drew you to this play?

KARLOFF is an engaging night of storytelling, covering the life of horror film star and icon, Boris Karloff. From the high points of his movie career to the challenges of his personal life, the play is a roller coaster ride that is both humorous and heartfelt, providing the audience with an honest view of the man behind the monsters! I was drawn to *KARLOFF* as an opportunity to work on a piece that provides the audience a "behind the scenes" glimpse into the life of this unique performer and his diverse and impressive body of work.

How did you prepare to direct this production? Was there anything unique or challenging?

We were very fortunate to have direct contact with the playwright who provided an extensive library of resource material, including audio and video clips of countless performances and appearances by Boris Karloff. In addition, we had the extraordinary opportunity to meet with Karloff's daughter Sara and gain first-hand insight into the life of her father and her relationship with him.

The biggest challenge of the piece has been to work with actor David Nackman to create a true representation of Karloff in every way, from his physical appearance, to his vocal nuance and indomitable spirit.

Could you tell us how music, projection and sound play an important role in the play?

This is a one-actor show; however, the multimedia components are so essential to the production, they actually serve as a second performer. Throughout the course of the piece, large video projections are used to establish location or create a distinct sense of atmosphere for each scene element. These projections are combined with a soundtrack of multiple effects (thunder, screams, music clips, etc.) that enhance the stage action.

Finally, our actor David has recorded the voices of numerous characters and directors that influenced Karloff's life. These recordings are used to respond to the onstage performer or move the course of the drama into its next segment. It's a very sensory oriented piece!

How are rehearsals going?

Rehearsals are going very well and we are working on combining all of the important elements into a very fluid and exciting production. David is doing a fantastic job of working hard on the script and developing an honest and intriguing portrayal of Boris Karloff.

What would you like audiences to get out of seeing *KARLOFF, The Man and the Monster*?

Many people have a single vision of Karloff as a performer; however, the scope and depth of his artistry really demonstrates his versatility as an artist. His work was included in more than 160 films, several stage productions, multiple recordings and a handful of television appearances. In his quest to be seen as a legitimate actor he touched and left an imprint on nearly all forms of artistic performance. He is so much more than the voice of the Grinch or Frankenstein's monster

About the Actor



David Nackman (Boris) is thrilled to make his Prime Stage debut as Karloff. A three-year transplant from the Big Apple to the ‘burgh, his recent local appearances include *Mamma Mia!* (Theatre Factory/Apple Hill Players) and Scrooge in *A Christmas Carol* (Theatre Factory). Highlights from the previous four decades include regional and summer stock appearances, the first national tour of Neil Simon’s *Biloxi Blues*, a stint on Broadway in Simon’s *Broadway Bound* (with Joan Rivers), and 20 years as a director, improviser and ensemble member at NYC’s Castillo Theatre. Big thanks to the awesome Prime Stage production team, to the amazing and consummate “actor’s director” Art, and to Olivia, my constant support and the love of my life.

David Nackman stars as Boris Karloff in PST’s production of *KARLOFF, The Man and The Monster*. Prime Stage Education was excited to learn more about him and the inspiration behind his role!

We’re so happy to have you here at Prime Stage! Can you tell us a bit about how you came to Prime Stage and what drew you to the role of Karloff?

I’m very happy to be here! I actually arrived at Prime Stage in the way many things happen in theatre, by knowing somebody who knows somebody. I recently moved to Pittsburgh from New York City and was just starting to get my bearings in the theatre community here when Covid happened and I shelved any thoughts about getting onstage. Fast forward to this past summer, when I was in the chorus of *Mamma Mia!* at the Trafford Performing Arts Center, and a fellow cast member clued me in to this show being directed by a friend of his, Art DeConciliis. At first the idea of doing a one-person show was daunting, but the idea of playing Karloff was very exciting. I confess I didn’t know much more than the obvious facts about him at first, but I’m old enough to remember when “Monster Mash” was new, and recall doing a Boris Karloff impression as a precocious and pretentious 6-year-old. Then as I researched Boris in preparation for the audition, the fascinating story of his life and career, as well as the complex interplay between his terrifying screen personas and his own kindness, humor, and decency, took hold of my imagination and have not let go.

***KARLOFF, The Man and The Monster* is a one-person show. You are the only person onstage in this production, right? Is that exciting? Scary? How is it different from rehearsing and performing with a cast?**

Being the only person onstage is definitely scary — it’s a first for me. And in all honesty one of the things I appreciate the most about acting is being part of an ensemble: the development of the relationships between characters, and the ways the cast gives and receives support to and from each other throughout the process. This is very different — not only is there no give and take between actors onstage, but even the offstage characters are in my recorded voice (which is, I think, theatrically interesting, but weird for me!). But I’ve gotten used to it, and I’m beginning to find it exhilarating. (I’ve never sky-dived, but there’s something about the idea of jumping out of a plane that feels analogous.) The flip side of all this is that in my decades of acting experience, I’ve never worked as closely with a director as I have with Art, and he is simply amazing. I literally would not be able to do this without his insight and support. I know he thinks sometimes he’s driving me crazy; the truth is he’s driving me sane.

What do you hope students and adults take away with them after watching this production. What do you want them to learn?

I think the play illuminates a number of themes — the complicated relationship between hard work and luck; the cyclical nature of history (many of the social issues it touches on from the past reverberate today) and the value of reaching for something beyond your grasp. It has sparked my thinking in all these areas, and I hope it does for everyone who sees it. I also think this production has a particular ambition: to reach across the boundaries of time; and lovingly, respectfully, reveal the relatable human beyond the Karloff icon.

Elements of a Production

A play or musical is much more than the two hour show the audience sees. The production process often takes many months, even years, to complete and requires many skilled people.

Creative Team

Every play or musical starts from the imagination or inspiration of the authors. Many times an idea for a show grows from an existing book, play, article, or movie. Other times, authors write an original story or concept. Once an idea is developed, the play writing begins. A dramaturg may be brought on to provide vital knowledge, research, and interpretation along with a director to help guide to overall artistic vision of the show. Once a production is scheduled, a stage manager will be brought on to manage all aspects of the rehearsal and performance.

Cast

The director works with the casting agent or theater company to cast the characters. Each performer must have acting skills and fit the look of his /her character. These elements are all evaluated during the audition process. Actors are generally asked to prepare a monologue or scene from the play and bring a headshot as well.

Rehearsal

The cast will do an initial read-through of the script, followed by daily rehearsal. During rehearsals, the director coaches the actors' reading of the lines and emotions, and also gives them their blocking, line by line, scene by scene.

A technical rehearsal is when the full cast and crew walk through the entire show, ensuring every light cue, sound effect, microphone, etc. works as planned. This rehearsal is mainly for the tech staff. The cast and crew will also get a dress rehearsal, many times more than once, to bring all of the different elements (costumes, lights, sounds, movement) together.

Sound

The sound designer plans the layout of all sound playback and equipment for the show, and adjusts the pitch, volume, duration, and overall quality of the music to meet each specific scene's needs. The sound operator executes the sound designer's plans and handles the mixing equipment for the show. The adjustments are made using the soundboard. The sound effects designer is responsible for creating or enhancing sounds distinct

from music and dialogue, such as doorbells or running water.

Lights

Lighting design goes beyond simply making sure that the audience can see the stage. A lighting designer's job is to make deliberate decisions about what the audience sees in the stage space. Light can be used to establish the time or location of a performance, or to create and enhance mood and atmosphere. A lighting technician hangs and adjusts the lighting instruments according to the lighting designers plans while the designer programs the light cue changes on a computer.

Scenic

The set designer's job is to design these physical surroundings in which the action will take place. A theater set should: suggest the style and tone of the whole production, create mood and atmosphere, give clues as to the specific time and place of the action, and offer creative possibilities for the movement and grouping of the actors. The designer will create a scale model and a rendering with technical plans so that the builders can start making the set. Sometimes the set designer helps to build the as well.

Costumes

The costume designer first researches the setting of the play and the characters. Costumes must be appropriate for the time period and vision of the show, and simultaneously be practical enough to allow for movement. They decide which styles and fabrics to use, and draw up the costumes in renderings. Through costume fitting, they may tailor adjustments for each performer.

Audience

At the front of the theater, audience members will see a marquee displaying the name of the show being performed. After purchasing tickets at the box office and entering the theater, audience members will receive a program, which provides information about the show and actors' biographies. An usher escorts them to their seats. Some shows may have an intermission. When the show ends, audience members will applaud and give a standing ovation if they feel the show was exceptionally good. The house manager oversees aspects of the audience, including supervising the ushers and contacting the stage manager about any audience delays for starting the show.



PST's production of *The Perks of Being a Wallflower*, 2017

Putting it in Context

Who is Boris Karloff?

The following is from the summer 2013 issue of the alumni magazine of Merchant Taylors' School.

Boris Karloff: A brief biography By Stephen Jacobs

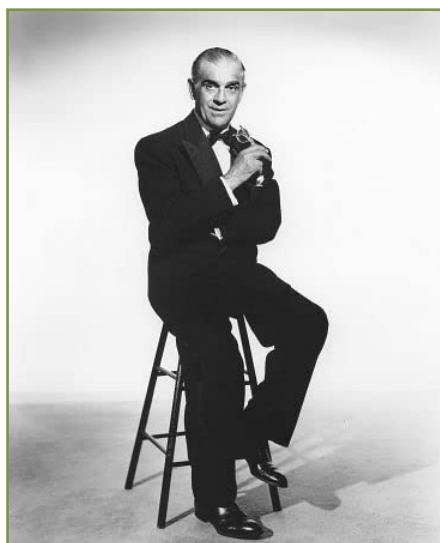


Photo of Boris Karloff by Constantine, 1950s

The day before *Frankenstein* opened in November 1931, Boris Karloff was one of a myriad of character actors in Hollywood. The night after the opening he was a star, and would remain one for the rest of his life.

Yet being a star hadn't been the be all and end all for Karloff. For his main ambition had always been the same – to be a professional actor. Financial security was nice, of course, but he had endured over two decades as an actor without it. But this was the life he had chosen – to the consternation of his family.

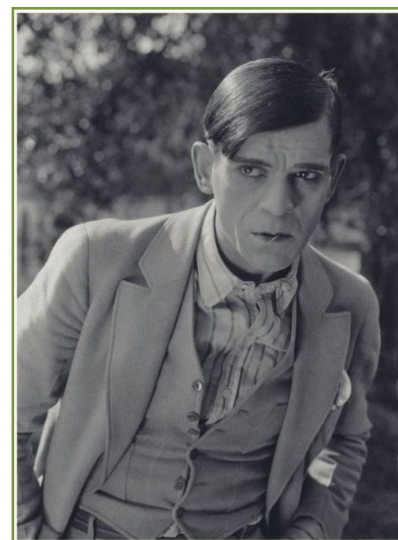
Boris Karloff was born William Henry Pratt on the 23rd November 1887 in Camberwell, South London. The youngest of the nine children of Edward and Eliza Pratt Billy, as he was known, was expected to follow his father and the majority of his siblings into Government Service. Billy's father, Edward Pratt, had had a volatile career in India, working in various roles within the Customs department, collecting tax on salt and opium. In 1879, having been forced to retire, Edward brought his family to England. He remained an embittered man and in December 1889, when Billy was just two years old, Edward and Eliza legally separated.

Of Billy's 7 brothers 4 followed in the father's footsteps, as he later recalled: "Two were in the Indian Civil Service, two were in the Chancellor's Service in China and I was supposed to go to the Chancellor's Service in China with them... I didn't want to." Billy had other plans. "I was a lazy little devil at school because I knew exactly what I wanted to do, go on the stage," he said. "I was not going to pass any examinations if I could possibly help it. I wanted to be an actor."

He would not be the first actor in the family. His favorite brother, George, had also trodden the boards, billed under the stage name of George Marlowe. "Despite the fact that George was an extraordinarily handsome man, he never went very far on the stage," Karloff later explained, "which was the reason he gave it up for a city job. But I tried to emulate him."

Billy's love of acting had begun at an early age. He joined a drama group and at Christmas 1896, at the age of nine, made his acting debut appearing in one of the plays—a version of *Cinderella*. "Instead of playing the handsome prince, I donned black tights and a skullcap and rallied the forces of evil as the Demon King," he recalled. That role proved to be the catalyst. "From then on," he proclaimed, "I resolved to be an actor." Despite brotherly attempts to dissuade him from an acting career Billy's mind was set. Even his schooling at such notable institutions as Enfield Grammar, Merchant Taylors' and Uppingham could not divert him from seeking a life on the stage.

In 1909, aged 21, he emigrated to Canada and made his way to Vancouver, working along the way. When he arrived in the city he had only five dollars in his pocket. Within days he was down to 15 cents. "There wasn't a hope of stage work," he explained. "There was little doing in the theatre at that time and, in any case, managers were not interested in gangling youths with no experience. The dire necessity of eating was soon apparent." He took what work he could.



A 1916 picture of a young Boris Karloff from the silent film era.

Putting it in Context

Who is Boris Karloff? - Continued

He later found work as a real estate broker. He also found himself a wife. On 23 February 1910 Billy married a fellow English émigré, Jessie Grace Harding. His new bearing in life, however, had little effect on his ultimate ambitions and his search for an acting job continued. He eventually was offered a place with the theatrical troupe the Jeanne Russell Players and left his wife in the city while he made his way to join the company. “I had finally become an actor, but I mumbled, bumbled, missed cues, rammed into furniture and sent the director’s blood pressure soaring,” he admitted. “When the curtain went up, I was getting 30 dollars a week. When it descended, I was down to 15 dollars.” Thus began almost a decade of the theatrical work with various companies as Billy – now calling himself Boris Karloff (he later erroneously claimed the surname came from ancestors on his mother’s side) – learned his trade. Years later he arrived in Los Angeles and began to look for work. “I made the rounds of the only possible outlet, the film studios,” he said. “I appeared before the camera for the first time in a crowd scene being directed by Frank Borzage at Universal City.”

For over a decade Karloff made a living, initially as an extra and then as a character actor. Sometimes the work was so scarce he would have to return to manual laboring to earn a crust. Two more wives came and went (he had divorced Grace in 1913) and in 1930 he married librarian Dorothy Stine. The couple would have one child – a daughter named Sara Jane – who was born on 23 November 1938 (her father’s 51st birthday).



Boris Karloff as Frankenstein's Monster

One day in June 1931, Karloff entered the commissary at Universal Studio where he was making the picture *Graft*. That day would change his life forever. “I was having lunch,” Karloff explained, “and James Whale sent either the first assistant or maybe it was his secretary over to me, and asked me to join him for a cup of coffee after lunch, which I did. He asked me if I would make a test for him tomorrow. ‘What for?’ I asked. ‘For a damned awful monster!’ he said. Of course, I was delighted, because it meant another job if I was able to land it. Actually, that’s all it meant to me. At the same time I felt rather hurt, because at the time I had on a very good straight make-up and my best suit – and he wanted to test me for a monster!”

After the success of *Frankenstein* the studios, naturally, wanted to feature Karloff in further horror offerings, and in that decade alone he starred in such genre classics as *The Mummy*, *The Ghoul*, *The Black Cat*, *The Raven*, *Bride of Frankenstein* and *Son of Frankenstein*.

Although he would remain, primarily, a movie actor, Karloff would return to the stage from time to time, with varying degrees of success. The plays *Arsenic and Old Lace*, *On Borrowed Time*, *Peter Pan*, and *The Lark* were successful. *The Linden Tree* and *The Shop at Sly Corner* were not (both closed after only 7 performances).

In 1933 Boris Karloff became one of the nine founding members of the Screen Actors Guild, established to look after the rights of movie actors. He was always an advocate for actors’ rights and had, himself, suffered at the hands of the studios. After shooting the famous lake scene in *Frankenstein*, for example, when the Monster inadvertently drowns the little girl, the cast and crew returned to the studio. “We went back to the studio in the evening to have some supper and then... back onto the backlot and worked all night until five in the morning... I had it [the make-up] on for over 25 hours. It was a long pull.” In addition, Karloff was required to report to the studio at 4 a.m. in order for Jack Pierce to apply the makeup (which took over four hours) to be ready for the 9 a.m. start. At that time neither the application nor the removal process (an hour and a half) was considered to be part of Karloff’s working day.

Did you know...?

Boris Karloff played the Grinch and Narrator for the 1966 animated version of *The Grinch Who Stole Christmas*. He won a Grammy for his recording of this classic tale!



Putting it in Context

Who is Boris Karloff? - Continued

Although the movies would prove to be the mainstay of his career, Karloff would regularly appear on television and radio. His guest appearances would often play on his horror persona. For example, on 18 April 1953, he was the guest on Dean Martin and Jerry Lewis's radio show. "In spite of the fiendish parts that I play in pictures," Karloff told Martin, "I'm really a kind and mild-mannered man. In fact, I'm as soft-hearted and gentle a man as you could ever meet. Don't I appear that way? Dean—why don't you answer?" "I can't," Martin replied. "You're choking me!" Still, TV and radio also presented him with some of his best dramatic roles. It remains a pity that more of his shows are unavailable for us to enjoy.

Karloff was rarely out of work. Such a busy schedule, however, had a detrimental effect on his home life and in May 1946, Karloff and Dorothy divorced. He married his fifth and final wife, Evelyn Helmore, the following day.

Karloff continued to work until the end of his life, even when dogged by ill health. He had been plagued by back problems and later wore a brace on his left leg. His years of smoking also took its toll and during the making of his final films an oxygen tank accompanied him on set.

When he died, on 2 February 1969 aged 81, the newspapers, naturally, concentrated on his horror roles – most significantly that of the Monster in *Frankenstein*. It's doubtful that Karloff would have been concerned. "Well, I must admit the whole of my career has, shall I say, a familiar ring about it," he said in 1968. "They don't change the pattern very much. But I don't hanker for changes."



Watch the following documentary about Boris Karloff.

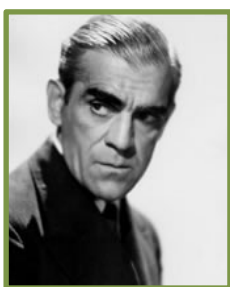
Boris Karloff: The Gentle Monster | Frankenstein Documentary | Classic Monsters

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-kuhdbrR-ag>

Student Activity

Where does the life of Boris Karloff fall in history?

Create a timeline that highlights the important moments in Boris Karloff's life. Consider adding historic events, inventions, and discoveries made during his lifetime.



1887 Born William Henry Pratt in East Dulwich, England on 22 November.

1896 Starred as the demon king in school production of *Cinderella*

1903 The Wright brothers make their first successful flight.

1909 Emigrated to Canada, took up acting & changed his name to Boris Karloff.

1914 World War 1 began

Add More Here!

Make it personal!

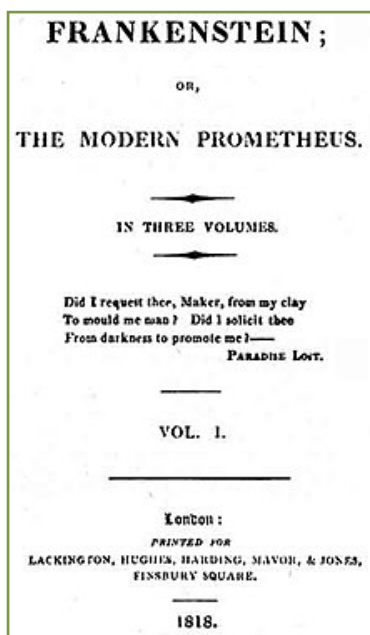
Think of your important moments and where they might fall in history! Create your own timeline starting with your birthday and ending November 1, 2021. Add important local, national, and international events.

Putting it in Context

What is Frankenstein and why is it important?

Frankenstein has captured the imagination of generations, even for those who have never read the tale!

Boris Karloff became famous for his role of The Monster in the 1931 film *Frankenstein*, directed by James Whale. Many attribute the success of *Frankenstein* and the monster movie genre to Karloff's iconic performance of the The Monster.



The film is loosely based on a novel written by English author Mary Shelley. Mary was intrigued by stories of science and galvanism. The theory of galvanism is the idea that electricity can reanimate dead tissue. Shelley started writing the story when she was 18, and the first edition was published anonymously in London on January 1, 1818, when she was 20.

Frankenstein tells the story of a flawed, obsessed scientist, who researches and refines his experiments in order to try to create life. After he succeeds, Victor Frankenstein rejects his creation. He is disgusted by the sight of the "monster". This rejection of the monster leads to dire consequences.

Frankenstein is important because it is the first major work of the science fiction genre. At the time, advances in science led to many positive changes. However, critics saw the progress of science as limitless, raising fears about that it was going too far. Shelley's novel is not necessarily opposed to scientific progress or discovery, but focuses on what happens when science is not paired with individual moral responsibility. Victor Frankenstein is fixated on the glory of achievement, without considering what it will mean to have a new species be dependent on him.

Sourced from sparknotes.com and <https://stanmed.stanford.edu/2018winter/why-issues-raised-in-Frankenstein-still-matter-200-years-later.html>.

Ever since Boris Karloff made an impression with his performance in James Whale's *Frankenstein*, the design of The Monster has been plastered on just about everything imaginable. While this could be accredited to Jack Pierce's design, Karloff can certainly be thanked for this.

Action figures, postage stamps, and even the front of a Burger King in Niagara Falls have all been blessed by The Monster's grisly visage. If anyone closes their eyes and says "think of Frankenstein," it will be Boris Karloff that they see.



To learn more about why the story of *Frankenstein* and his famous monster are so important check out the following articles.

Why Frankenstein Matters, *Frontiers in Science, Technology and Medicine* by Audrey Shafer, MD
<https://stanmed.stanford.edu/2018winter/why-issues-raised-in-Frankenstein-still-matter-200-years-later.html>

Was Boris Karloff Frankenstein's ultimate monster? By Deborah Sur
<https://faroutmagazine.co.uk/boris-karloff-frankenstein-ultimate-monster/>

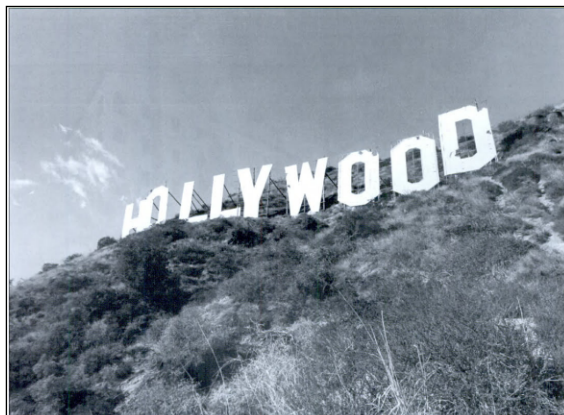
Putting it in Context

The Golden Age of Hollywood

In the play *KARLOFF The Man and The Monster*, Boris Karloff tells us about his experience in Hollywood during the early 1900s. This time, known as The Golden Age of Hollywood, was a period of great growth, experimentation and change in the industry that brought international prestige to Hollywood and its movie stars.

Before the big screen was invented, theatrical entertainment was confined to a stage. In the late 1800s, early filmmakers wanted to shift this method of storytelling in favor of projected images on a screen. However, the most early films were done on a small stage, and shot at an unmoving, wide angle. These performances were also silent, as sound had not yet evolved.

In the 1910s, films makers starting using varying angles and scenes, and created multiple sets to portray scene in ways that real time stage acting could not. This was a breakthrough in modern storytelling. Filmmakers like David W. Griffith built independent film companies and began experimenting with such techniques, creating some of the earliest masterpieces in film such as *The Mothering Heart*, *Ingeborg Holm*, and *L'enfant de Paris*.



The famous Hollywood sign was erected in 1923 and originally read "HOLLYWOODLAND". Its purpose was to advertise the name of a new housing development. After the rise of the Golden Age of Hollywood, the sign became an internationally recognized symbol and was left there.



In 1927 Warner Brothers released the *The Jazz Singer*, starring Al Jolson. The movie consisted mostly of music with only a couple of hundred spoken words. *The Jazz Singer* was an immediate sensation and brought about the demise of the silent movies and the ability to attract a world wide audience with no language barriers.

In the 1920s, “talkies” were introduced. For the first time, sound played through speakers that surrounded a theater while the images played on the screen. By 1929, nearly every movie released used sound. Hollywood producers churned out Westerns, musicals, romantic dramas, horror films, and documentaries. Studio movie stars were even more idolized, and Hollywood increased its reputation as the land of affluence and fame.

Hollywood movie studios, such as Warner Brothers, RKO, Fox, MGM, and Paramount, opened and cashed in on the popularity of film. Anybody who wanted to be in film would have to sign a contract to work under one of these “Big Five” studios. These studios were known to be very controlling, dictating the actors roles, work hours, diet, and even their personal lives outside of the studio.

By the 1930s, at the height of Hollywood’s Golden Age, the movie industry was one of the largest businesses in the United States. Even during the Great Depression, movies were a weekly escape for many people who loved trading their struggles for a fictional, often dazzling world, if only for a couple of hours. Some of the greatest films made in all of Hollywood history were made during this time, such as *Snow White and the Seven Dwarves*, *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington*, *Gone with the Wind*, *Jezebel*, *A Star Is Born*, *Citizen Kane*, *The Wizard of Oz*, *Stagecoach*, and *Withering Heights*.

As television popularity exploded in the 1950s, movie attendance suffered. The Golden Age of Hollywood ended as studios could no longer keep up with huge movie budgets, due to diminishing returns and decline in profits.

Putting it in Context

The Golden Age of Monsters

In the 1930s, Universal Pictures created a monopoly on the mainstream horror films, producing stars such as Bela Lugosi [*Dracula* (1931), *The Raven* (1935), *The Black Cat* (1934)] and Boris Karloff [*Frankenstein* (1931), *The Mummy* (1932)], and grossing large sums of money at the box office in the process. Throughout the 30s and early 40s, no other studio had the same knack for producing consistently marketable horror films. Not only did Universal bring the subgenre of “creature features” into the limelight, they also gave them their golden years, now reflected back on as “The Monsters Golden Era.”

The Universal horror films produced during this period of time left audiences shocked, but craving more. Their recognition of the importance of shock value in horror films would resonate in all horror films to follow.

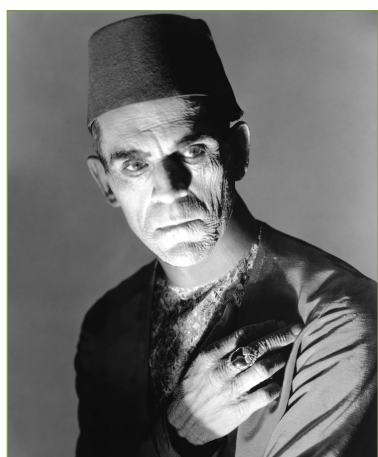
The Monsters Golden Era of Universal Studios is embedded into film history as one of the greatest moments in the history of the horror genre. Not one horror film has come out since that in some way, shape, or form, doesn't borrow from the Universal horror films of the 30s.

Sourced from https://chicagoist.com/2011/10/22/universal_studios_the_golden_age_of.php



A popular photo collage of famous monsters in Universal Studio “Creature Feature” genre.

Clockwise from the top: Bela Lugosi as *Dracula*, Lon Chaney Jr. as *The Wolf Man*, Ricou Browning as *The Creature from the Black Lagoon*, Boris Karloff as *Frankenstein's Monster*, Elsa Lanchester as *The Bride of Frankenstein* and once again, Boris Karloff as *The Mummy*.



Boris Karloff as *The Mummy* in 1932



Béla Lugosi in *Dracula* in 1931



The Black Cat is a 1934 American horror film starring Boris Karloff and Béla Lugosi. The picture was the first of eight films (six of which were produced by Universal) to feature the two iconic actors. It became Universal Pictures' biggest box office hit of the year, and was among the earlier movies with an almost continuous music score.

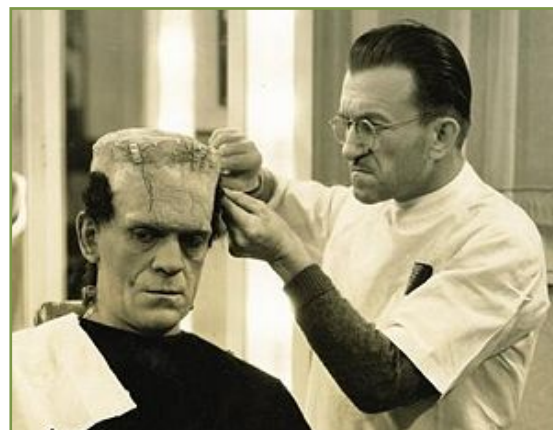
Putting it in Context

Jack Pierce, The Makeup Artist

In the play, Boris shares about his working relationship with Hollywood makeup artist, Jack Pierce.

“I ended up spending at least two-thirds of my life stretched out in this barber chair looking straight up at the face of Jack Pierce. The wonder of it is that we remained friends.”

-Boris in *KARLOFF, The Man and The Monster* by Randy Bowser



Jack Pierce applies the Monster's headpiece to Boris Karloff

In the early days of the movies, people in film learned their trades by doing them. Actors did their own make-up, then did make-up for each other, and eventually a specialized job evolved. Make-up artist Jack Pierce was one who set the standard in the early days of film, and showed future make-up artists just what was possible with a little ingenuity.

An immigrant from Greece, Pierce went to work in cinema, doing all sorts of different jobs, including stunt work, cinema managing, and even acting. Eventually, he wound up doing make-up for other actors, and his creativity eventually got him on staff full-time at Universal Studios. During the 1930s and 1940s, he found a niche doing monster make-up, beginning with designing a special greasepaint for Bela Lugosi as Dracula, and growing from there. Using out-of-the-box techniques pre-dating foam and latex molds, Jack Pierce is credited for creating the iconic monster make-ups for *The Mummy*, *The Wolf Man*, and most famously, Boris Karloff's character in *Frankenstein*. His techniques sometimes took hours to apply (the *Wolf Man* character required yak hair to be systematically glued to the face, for example), but for those actors who were willing to undergo the process, Pierce's work helped to turn them into movie icons.



One of Pierce's earliest works — *The Man Who Laughs* (1928) — is widely credited as the main visual inspiration for arch villain The Joker, who showed up in DC's *Batman* #1 comic book about 12 years later.

A lot has changed for the film industry since those days, as well as the process of make-up artistry. There are now schools where you can study make-up for film, if you desire, while in Pierce's day such schools were non-existent. However, the basic premise behind the artistry has remained the same: experience, innovation and creativity can easily trump education. Jack Pierce's techniques are well outdated today, but his creative way of thinking set a standard in place for make-up artists that remains to this day.

Sourced from <https://www.filmconnection.com/reference-library/film-entrepreneurs/career-profile-makeup-artist-jack-pierce-0411/>

To learn more about Jake Pierce and his incredible work check out the following article.

Jack Pierce, Forgotten Make-up Genius by Frank Taylor

The man behind the classic monsters played by Karloff, Lugosi and Chaney Jr., this creative artist has seemingly been lost to time.

<https://ascmag.com/articles/jack-pierce-forgotten-make-up-genius>

Before Activities

Try these activities to spark curiosity before reading the text or attending the performance.

Who is Boris Karloff?

Read the Boris Karloff: a brief biography by Stephen Jacobs on pages 14, 15 and 16 of this guide.

Answer the following questions either in the form of a class discussion or in writing.

1. What moment from Boris Karloff's life stood out to you? Why?
2. Why do you think Boris left his mother and family to move to Canada? Do you agree with his decision? Why?
3. Was Boris Karloff's fame an overnight success or was it a result of years of hard work? Explain your answer.
4. Do you think Boris was proud to be known to movie audiences and fans as a monster? Explain your answer.
5. How are you similar and how are you different from Boris Karloff?

A Monster Walk

Actors have to think about how their physical movements affect the way the audience sees the character they are playing. In the play, Boris tells the audience how he came to find his posture and movement when playing The Monster.

Try to find your own inner monster with Monster Walk. Everyone gets up and walks in place. The audience or leader calls out different types of monsters that everyone must walk like. Try recreating their postures and movements in your own body. If they call Frankenstein's monster, hold out your arms and stomp. If they call zombie, do your best *Thriller* moves and anything in between!

The Autobiography of Anything

KARLOFF, *The Man and The Monster* tells the story of Boris Karloff!

Of course, everything has a story! Everything comes, in its elemental origin, from the Earth. Collect an assortment of "things:"

Piece of Paper	Shoe
Sneaker	Match
Rubber Band	Paper Clip

Imagine the life story of each of those "things." Describe their history backwards through the personal use, purchase, creation, down to original natural resources from which it or its components were made. Personify the thing and tell its story like an autobiography.

Example:

1. Tell the tale of a piece of newspaper back to the tree in the forest.
2. Tell the tale of a plastic toy's life, tracing its history back to the oil that became plastic and then back to the prehistoric plants that created the oil.

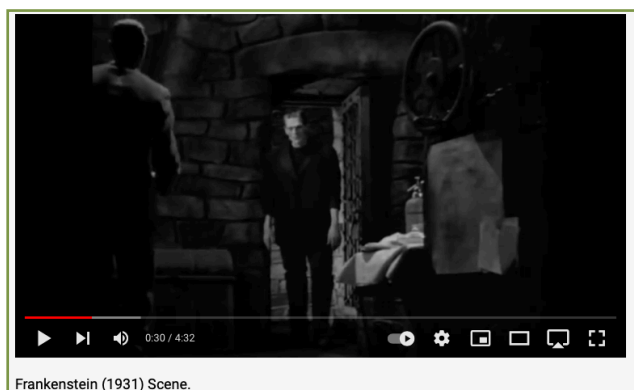
This activity is from storyarts.org

Frankenstein (1931) film clip

Boris Karloff stars as the screen's most memorable monster in what many consider to be the greatest horror film ever made.

Watch the following scene and answer any of the following prompts as a class discussion or as a writing activity in your journals.

- *Describe the two scenes from the clip.
- *How do the other characters treat The Monster?
- *In the first scene, The Monster notices a light and reaches for it. Why do you think he does that? Why do you think that moment is in the scene?
- *Do you think The Monster is bad? Explain your answer.
- *When *Frankenstein* premiered in 1931, it was considered the scariest film ever released. How might this clip be compared to a horror movie clip today?



Frankenstein (1931) Scene.

To watch the scene go to the link below.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=20fP_1TS9tw

During Activities

Try the following activities to enrich the experience and enliven the text while reading play.

Frankenstein Gibberish

Boris Karloff had no lines as Frankenstein’s Monster in the movie, *Frankenstein*. He only grunts and moans to express himself. Try this fun acting improvisation game to explore how we can communicate in different ways.

A group of actors (group #1) are monsters and act out a scene speaking in a weird monster language. They act out a simple activity like digging a hole, preparing for a party, or cooking. The other group of actors (group #2) act out the same scene and translate what was said in English.

- Variation 1: have actors translate what was said by the monsters as they act
- Variation 2: have an actor play a monster who speaks gibberish and have the other actors try to figure out what he/she is saying in a scene where an monster shows up at their door

Collecting Family Stories

In *KARLOFF The Man and The Monster*, Boris shares many stories about the “old days” with his friends and his family. He is not unique. If you think about it we all have stories about our families and friends to share!

Have students collect true tales about the "old days" by interviewing older relatives. Have students find out about the history of their families as far back as anyone can tell them. After learning a story, students may share it with the class.

Go to StoryArts Website for an assortment of effective interview questions to gain stories from older family members. The link is here: <https://www.storyarts.org/classroom/roots/family.html>

This activity is from storyarts.org

Hollywood Sound Studio

Sound plays a big role in how the story of Boris Karloff is told. In the stage notes, Randy Bowser talks about the importance of sound cues and music in *KARLOFF, The Man and The Monster*. “There is an old-fashioned prejudice that using many sound cues in theatre is “too cinematic.” KARLOFF’s sound is designed to emulate the soundtrack of movies, befitting the story of one of Hollywood’s biggest stars from The Golden Age. It is purposely "cinematic."

In the following activity, students will explore the importance of music in a scene, how it can impact the meaning of a scene and convey mood, emotion, and character in ways that dialogue cannot convey.

1. Watch the following clip of Boris Karloff in the 1932 movie, *The Mummy*.
2. Discuss the scene. What happens? What mood and emotion does it convey? What did you learn about the characters? How might the addition of music or additional sounds alter the scene?
3. Have students choose new sound effects and music to play along with the scene. Students may break into small groups. Each group can choose the music and sound effects to create their own version of the scene.



To watch the scene go to the link below.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VAp8WVZm3cc>

During Activities

Try the following activities to enrich the experience and enliven the text while reading play.

Act It Out!

Get into the action by performing a version of the first scene in the play.

1. Have students read the short opening scene based on the play. There are lines, stage directions, off-stage voice cues, sound effects, and lighting effects.
2. Discuss how the class might prepare to perform the scene. Where should the stage be? Can volunteer actors perform the off-stage voice cues? Can students provide all of the sounds effects, the lighting cues, music?
3. Assign parts to everyone in the class! These can be sound or lighting cues, speaking parts, and music.
4. Rehearse and perform the scene. (Remember to follow those stage directions and work together!)
*for an added challenge consider adding dramatic instrumental music to underscore this scene.
5. After the performance, discuss the opening. Did you like how Boris is introduced? How might you have written it?

Scene 1

STAGE DIRECTIONS:

SOUND of a Rain Storm. Thunder and LIGHTS flash. BORIS stalks on and momentarily freezes. He is holding a suitcase. The storm ends. An off-stage voice is heard.

Off-Stage Voice 1

Once upon a time, there was a town called Hollywood.

STAGE DIRECTIONS:

Boris steps to the center of stage.

Off-Stage Voice 2

When the motion picture industry for which it would become famous was not far beyond its infancy, a certain young Englishman came knocking at Hollywood's door.

STAGE DIRECTIONS:

Boris steps forward and begins to pantomime knocking on a door. We hear the sound on knocking.

(The following action should happen while Off-Stage Voice 3 is being read - Boris continues to pound on the door. The sound of knocking increases each time Boris pounds on the door.)

Off-Stage Voice 3

With a determination beyond the ken of most mortal men, he kept on knocking, despite repeated rejection and disappointment. He kept knocking, knocking, and knocking. And as true as his name was William Henry Pratt, his life was a thriller!

STAGE DIRECTIONS:

There is a sudden burst of Thunder and Light. Suddenly the invisible doors open with a loud creak. Boris sees the doors open, steps back and turns around with his back to the audience. He suddenly transforms into Frankenstein's Monster! Slowly he steps backward through the open door. Then, he whirls around to face the audience!

Boris
Boo!

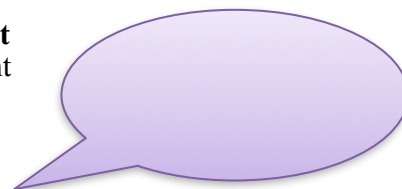
End scene.

After Activities

Try these activities to provide reflection and connection after reading the text or attending the performance.

Meaningful Moments

Students may choose 1 or 2 moments from the performance (or the text) that made a lasting impression on them. Using pictures and words, create a Thought Bubble illustrating each moment. Students should try to capture the emotion as they experienced it. Try to use the same colors, light quality and textures each observed in the performance. Students may hang their Thought Bubbles on the wall to create a mural. The mural should give the viewer an authentic understanding of what it felt like to be an audience member.



Reflection Snapshots

Create a frozen picture or tableau of favorite moments from the play.

After your students attend the performance, ask your them to recall highlights by using their bodies to create frozen “snapshots” of what they saw. Prompts may include: Show me a moment when Boris Karloff was afraid, when he was happy. Show me a moment that surprised you. As students create the moment, ask them to explain their ideas. Pay attention to physical details such as posture or facial expression. Discuss in detail how the actor used physicality to bring the characters to life.

Make-up Your Monster



Make-up artist, Jack Pierce created many of Hollywood’s most famous movie monsters. Have students design their own monster face inspired by the some of the images in the play.

Students may work alone or in pairs to design their masterpiece. Students may draw the monster face free hand or make a monster face collage from magazine pictures and colored paper.

For a Monster Face drawing lesson go to this link: <https://dragoart.com/tut/monster-high-face-drawing-lesson-23362>

For more inspiration and printable go to this link: <https://www.wandersquares.com/blog/2020/4/11/draw-your-own-monster-face>

Who inspires you?

Randy Bowser speaks about what inspired him to write about Boris Karloff in the following quote, “I think the audience will understand the message that he really was someone worthy of admiration, because of the life he led, and his dedication to acting, and admirable because of the obstacles that he had to overcome in order to become such a famous actor.”

Is there someone that inspire you? It can be someone you already know or have never met. Create a piece of art inspired by that person. You can write a short story, a poem, song lyric or even draw a picture.

Discussion or journal entries prompts.

Students can answer the following questions after seeing the performance.

1. What emotion(s) did the performance make you feel? Describe the scene that stirred your emotions.
2. How did the Sound and Lighting add meaning to the performance?
3. How did the story end? How would you change the ending?
4. Is there a part of the performance you would change? What would you change (script, lighting, music, set, costumes, etc)?
5. What five words best describe the performance?
6. What skills and knowledge are needed to create a performance?



Improvisation and Theater Games for the Classroom

Actors have to think fast on stage and trust each other to remember lines and hit their marks. Try these fun acting games and activities teach valuable theatre skills while allowing students to have fun, build confidence, stretch their imagination and grow as an ensemble.

8 Count Shake Down

1. Count 1-8 while shaking your left hand then right hand then left foot, then right foot.

If you have a group of people, it works best to stand in a circle.

Left hand shake - "1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8" Right hand shake - "1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8"

Left foot shake- "1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8" Right foot shake- "1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8"

2. You do the sequence again but this time count up to 7.
3. You repeat this decreasing every time.
4. On the last set of 1 you jump up and shout out "shake down!"

Zip, Zap, Zop

Zip, Zap, Zop is about focus and energy. As students pass the energy across the circle (in the form of a Zip, a Zap, or a Zop), they make eye contact with the person they send the energy to, and work together to keep the rhythm going. The activity also provides an opportunity to explore pace, specificity of choice, "energy" and sequence. Invite students to stand in a circle. Ask the group to repeat the words "Zip, Zap, Zop" three or four times, all together. Introduce the activity: Imagine that I have a bolt of energy in my hands. To start the game, I will send the bolt out of energy out of my body with a strong forward motion straight to someone else in the circle (use hands, body, eyes, and voice to make contact across the circle) and say, "Zip." Explain that the next person takes the energy and passes it immediately to someone else saying "Zap." That person passes it on to another participant with a "Zop." The game continues and the "Zip, Zap, Zop" sequence is repeated as the energy moves around the circle. Encourage all plays to use their whole body to send energy and to make eye contact. They can send the energy to whomever they want but the goal is to include all players. Practice the game. If there is a mistake, encourage students to simply resume playing without discussion. The group challenge is to go very quickly and stay consistent in rhythm; if students struggle, pause the game, discuss strategy and try again.

Two-Headed Monster

A simple game that helps students work together and be creative at the same time.

1. Ask two student volunteer to take the stage and link arms.
2. They are now a Two-Headed Monster. As a Two-Headed Monster, they talk in one-word turns, keeping the same personality.
4. Ask the class for a suggestion of an "object" or "place".
5. The monster must tell a story about that object or place, making it up as they go along.
6. After the monster has finished the story. Students may ask the monster questions.

Encourage the students to tell a story that has a beginning, middle and end.

Encourage the students to make a strong physical and character choice for their monster.

The "two-headed monster" can be used within any other improv activity.

Research shows that using games in teaching can help increase student participation, foster social and emotional learning, and motivate students to take risks!

If this play has piqued your interest, why not check out a book or movie and explore more? Your public libraries have many online resources you can access from home through online services Libby, Hoopla, or Flipster! Check your library's website for help in getting started or use this handy link: [Your Library From Home](#).

DVD Collections

The Boris Karloff Collection (DVD set)

Includes a selection of the horror master's most memorable classics: Night Key; Tower Of London; The Climax; The Strange Door; and The Black Castle. The Climax is in color, all the other movies are in black and white.

Boris Karloff Icons of Horror Collection (DVD set)

A 2-disc set of classic Boris Karloff movies. These include The Black Room; The Man They Could Not H Before I H and The Boogie Man Will Get You.

Penny Dreadful (TV Series)

The title refers to the penny dreadfuls, a type of 19th-century British fiction publication with lurid and sensational subject matter. The series draws upon many public domain characters from 19th-century Victorian Gothic fiction, including Dorian Gray from Oscar Wilde's The Picture of Dorian Gray; Mina Harker, Abraham Van Helsing, John Seward, Renfield, and Count Dracula from Bram Stoker's Dracula; Victor Frankenstein and his monster from Mary Shelley's Frankenstein; and Henry Jekyll from Robert Louis Stevenson's Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. Justine from Justine, or The Misfortunes of Virtue by the Marquis de Sade also appears. (Wikipedia)

Books

Dear Boris : the Life of William Henry Pratt a.k.a. Boris Karloff by Cynthia Lindsay

He scares us witless, and he won our hearts. He was Frankenstein's monster, rising to stardom encased in sixty-five pounds of putty and padding. No matter how horrific the roles, he made them as vulnerable -- almost human -- as they were frightening, and softened our fear even as he sparked it. He was Boris Karloff: The epitome of horror, one of Hollywood's greatest and most productive stars. But Boris Karloff himself -- private, even secretive -- eluded his biographers and his fans. Now one of his closest friends has given us a book that finally reveals the fascinating and complex man behind the screen image, one whose nature was completely at odds with the roles that made him famous, and who was always 'dear Boris' to those who knew him best.

The Passage by Justin Cronin

Best-selling horror trilogy adapted into a TV series.

"Fans of vampire fiction who are bored by the endless hordes of sensitive, misunderstood Byronesque bloodsuckers will revel in Cronin's engrossingly horrific account of a post-apocalyptic America overrun by the gruesome reality behind the wish-fulfillment fantasies." (Publisher's Weekly Review)

Boris Karloff and His Films by Paul M. Jensen

Frankenstein by Mary Shelley

Dracula by Bram Stoker

Doctor Faustus by Christopher Marlowe

Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde by Robert Louis Stevenson

For Young Adults

This Monstrous Thing by Mackenzi Lee

In 1818 Geneva, men built with clockwork parts live hidden away from society, cared for only by illegal mechanics called Shadow Boys. Two years ago, Shadow Boy Alasdair Finch's life shattered to bits. Heart-broken and desperate, Alasdair does the unthinkable: He brings Oliver back from the dead. (Goodreads)

What is the story of Dracula? by Michael Burga

Author Michael Burga explores Dracula's mysterious origins in the historical figures who might have shaped the character, as well as the films and actors that cemented Dracula's place in cinematic history.

Suggested reading listed provided by Shalor North Hills Library.

Beyond the Imagination: A Virtual Discussion on Bringing Frankenstein and KARLOFF to the stage.

RADical DAYS

Beyond the Imagination

prime stage THEATRE

A Virtual Discussion on bringing
FRANKENSTEIN and **KARLOFF**
to the stage!

October 4th at 7pm

Join us for a virtual discussion for behind the scenes look into the process of creating Frankenstein and the switch to KARLOFF.

Register to receive your free link to our Zoom webinar featuring some of the creative team of Prime Stage Theatre's Frankenstein

Wayne Brinda, Ed.D.
Producing Artist Director

Lawrence C. Connolly
Frankenstein Playwright,
noted Sci-Fi Novelist

Art DeConciliis
Director

Prime Stage Theatre Company not only commissioned a new, full-length, Frankenstein play by award-winning sci-fi/horror author Lawrence C. Connolly, they're also presenting playwright Randy Bowser's one person play *KARLOFF* on Nov. 5-14 at The New Hazlett Theater.

On Monday Oct. 4, PST hosted an online discussion with Connolly, *KARLOFF* director Art DeConciliis, and PST producing artistic director, Wayne Brinda.

You can watch the Virtual Discussion on Prime Stage Theatre Company's YouTube Channel!

To watch this event go to the link below.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NkaRGTsSPKo&t=2s>





Please go to our website: www.primestage.com to find this form and send it back directly online!

Or you can mail it to us at: Prime Stage Theatre P.O. Box 99446 Pittsburgh, PA 15233.

THE RESOURCE GUIDE TEACHER EVALUATION FORM

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YOUR NAME _____

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Which part(s) of this experience you find most helpful for you and your students?

Was the guide useful to you?

Which part(s) did you find most helpful?

How can we improve the theatrical for the future?