the cambridge companion to
gothic fiction

Gothic as a form of fiction-making has played a major role in western culture since the late eighteenth century. Here fourteen world-class experts on the Gothic provide thorough and revealing accounts of this haunting-to-horrifying type of fiction from the 1760s (the decade of *The Castle of Otranto*, the first so-called “Gothic story”) to the end of the twentieth century (an era haunted by filmed and computerized Gothic simulations). Along the way, the authors explore the connections of Gothic fictions to political and industrial revolutions, the realistic novel, the theatre, Romantic and post-Romantic poetry, nationalism and racism from Europe to America, colonized and postcolonial populations, the rise of film and other visual technologies, the struggles between “high” and “popular” culture, changing psychological attitudes toward human identity, gender and sexuality, and the obscure lines between life and death, sanity and madness. The volume also includes a chronology and guides to further reading.

Jerrold E. Hogle is Professor of English and University Distinguished Professor at the University of Arizona. He has published widely in Romantic literature, cultural theory, and the Gothic.
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THE CAMBRIDGE COMPANION TO
GOTHIC FICTION

EDITED BY
JERROLD E. HOGLE
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DAVID PUNTER is Professor of English at the University of Bristol and editor of A Companion to the Gothic in the Blackwell Companions series. He is widely noted for his work on Gothic, particularly in The Literature of Terror: a History of Gothic Fictions from 1765 to the Present Day (Longman, revised in two volumes) and Gothic Pathologies: the Text, the Body, and the Law (Macmillan), as well as for The Hidden Script: Writing and the Unconscious (Routledge) and his two most recent books, Postcolonial Imaginings: Fictions of a New World Order (Edinburgh University Press) and Writing the Passions (Longman).

ERIC SAVOY is Associate Professor of English at the Université de Montréal in Canada and coeditor of American Gothic: New Interventions in a National Narrative (University of Iowa Press), which includes his important “The Face of the Tenant: a Theory of American Gothic.” He has also published recently on Henry James and queer theory, Nathaniel Hawthorne and psychoanalysis, and American cinema of the 1930s.
This collection strives to introduce undergraduate students and other interested readers to the development and major works of the “Gothic” tradition in fiction, which in this case encompasses prose fiction, some poetry, writings for the stage, many films, and even recent videos and computer games. Inside the frame of an opening chapter that places the Gothic – while also defining it – within the larger needs and quandaries of western culture since the middle of the eighteenth century, each chapter by an expert scholar analyzes a specific historical span or type of Gothic fiction-making to explain the underlying drives and major advances in the works that are most exemplary of the Gothic at that time and in particular locations. The closing chapter then looks back at the progression made in the Gothic tradition from its earlier forms to its most recent manifestations, a stretch of nearly 250 years, thereby reassessing the cultural functions of the Gothic from the perspective of the beginning of the twenty-first century. The result, all the contributors hope, is both a history of the Gothic that is helpful in the reading or viewing of many such fictions and a revelation of the cultural functions that the Gothic was created to serve, and then the different ones it has proceeded to serve, across the three centuries that constitute the modern western world. The longings and anxieties of modern western civilization are brought out in the Gothic as in no other fictional medium, and this volume has been compiled with a view to playing a major role in helping students understand how that has happened and why it has happened differently in different periods and in the many forms taken by this most haunting of symbolic modes.

As this book has come together its editor has found himself grateful to many colleagues, most of all to each of the contributors, every one of whom has given considerable effort and extraordinary knowledge to this project. Working with them – and on this subject – has been a privilege. All the contributors further appreciate the support provided by our home institutions, as well as several of our students. We are especially beholden for extensive, helpful work to the Graduate Associates on this project, Ron Gard and Jay
PREFACE

Salisbury, research assistants to the editor, and to literature editors Linda Bree and Rachel de Wachter at Cambridge University Press, two incisive, wise, and considerate professional guides for this and other Companions. We also thank the initial outside readers of our book for their savvy suggestions and proudly celebrate our debts to the many authors, directors, and computer wizards who have made the Gothic the vibrant form it has been and continues to be. We hope we have returned all these favors by defining and explaining the Gothic with special precision so that its unique history and cultural value can be understood more completely than ever before.
CHRONOLOGY

1750  Horace Walpole, with Richard Bentley, begins redesign of Strawberry Hill in Twickenham, England, as part of a “Gothic revival” in architecture.

1757  Thomas Gray publishes Odes, including “The Bard,” from the Strawberry Hill press; Edmund Burke publishes A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful, connecting sublimity to terror.

1759  Edward Young, author of Night Thoughts (1742–45) in the “Graveyard School” of poetry, publishes Conjectures on Original Composition.

1760  George III crowned King of England; James Macpherson’s forged medieval Ossian poems begin appearing in Britain, culminating in the volumes of 1762 and 1763.

1762  Richard Hurd publishes Letters on Chivalry and Romance, while Thomas Warton brings out second edition of Observations on the Fairie Queene.

1763  The Seven Years’ War between France and England ends; death of the Abbé Prévost, influential historical-adventure novelist, in France.

1764  The Castle of Otranto published in England by Walpole (December); reissued in 1765 with a new preface and subtitle A Gothic Story.

1768  Walpole composes Gothic play The Mysterious Mother (not staged; finally published in 1791 after years of private circulation).

1773  John and Anna Laetitia Aikin publish Gothic fragment “Sir Bertram” with essay “On the Pleasure Derived from Objects of Terror.”

1775  The American War of Independence begins.
CHRONOLOGY

1777  Clara Reeve publishes *The Champion of Virtue*, reissued in 1778 as *The Old English Baron*.

1781  Robert Jephson’s play *The Count of Narbonne*, an adaptation of *The Castle of Otranto*, produced at Covent Garden in London; Friedrich Schiller’s *Die Räuber (The Robbers)* first staged in Germany.

1783  First volume of Sophia Lee’s *The Recess* published (finished in 1785); American War of Independence ends.

1786  William Beckford publishes the “oriental Gothic” *Vathek* in Paris.

1789  Ann Radcliffe publishes *The Castles of Athlin and Dunbayne*, her first “romance,” anonymously; Schiller’s *Der Geisterseher* published unfinished in Germany; the fall of the Bastille in Paris; French Revolution begins.

1790  Radcliffe publishes *The Romance of the Forest*, acknowledges authorship in second edition (1792); Burke publishes *Reflections on the Revolution in France*.

1791  Hans Christian Spiess publishes his “spirit tale” *Das Petermännchen* in Germany (translated in 1792 as *The Dwarf of Westerbourg*).

1792  Mary Wollstonecraft publishes *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*.

1793  Beheading of Louis XVI in Paris; Reign of Terror in full cry.

1794  Radcliffe publishes *The Mysteries of Udolpho*; William Godwin publishes *Things as They Are; or the Adventures of Caleb Williams*; Christiane Naubert’s *Hermann von Unna* (1778) first translated, bringing the *Ritterroman* to England; James Boaden’s *Fountainville Forest* (adapted from Radcliffe’s *Romance*) staged at Covent Garden.

1795  Mercier de Compiègne publishes *Les Nuits de la conciergerie* in Paris; *Der Geisterseher* translated as *The Ghost-Seer*, accelerating the importation of the *Schauerroman* into Britain.

1796  M. G. Lewis publishes *The Monk* the same year he enters Parliament; Mary Robinson publishes Gothic novel *Hubert de Sevrac*; Beckford satirizes Radcliffean Gothic in *Modern Novel Writing* and *Azemia* (1797); Reveroni Saint-Cyr publishes *Pauliska* in Paris.

1797  S. T. Coleridge reviews *The Monk* and brings his *Osario* to the stage; Radcliffe publishes *The Italian*, partly in response to Lewis; William Wordsworth’s semi-Gothic play *The Borderers* first staged; Mary Wollstonecraft’s *The Wrongs of Woman* published.
soon after her death at the birth of her daughter Mary; Walpole, now Earl of Orford, dies; Lewis’s play The Castle Spectre debuts at London’s Drury Lane.


1799 Godwin publishes St. Leon: A Tale of the Sixteenth Century; Brown publishes Edgar Huntly; Napoleon Bonaparte made Consul in France, marking the end of the French Revolution; Georges Leopold Cuvier founds comparative anatomy in Paris.

1800 The largest single year yet for number of Gothic novels published in England; Mary Robinson publishes Lyrical Tales; Joanna Baillie’s play De Montfort staged at Drury Lane; J. B. I. P. Regnault-Warin publishes Le Cimetière de la Madeleine in France; second edition of Lyrical Ballads published, including Wordsworth’s anti-Gothic “Preface”; Charlotte Smith publishes semi-Gothic “Story of Henrietta,” set in Jamaica; Napoleon invades Austria, and Napoleonic Wars accelerate across Europe.

1805 Charlotte Dacre publishes Zofloya, or The Moor; Walter Scott publishes long poem The Lay of the Last Minstrel.

1807 C. R. Maturin publishes The Fatal Revenge; the Marquis de Sade issues “Ideas on the Novel”; slave trade (but not slave-owning) banned in the British Empire; British armies invade Egypt.

1810 P. B. Shelley publishes Gothic novels Zastrozzi and St. Irvyne.

1813 Coleridge’s Remorse staged at Drury Lane; Lord Byron publishes The Giaour.

1815 Napoleon defeated at Waterloo and exiled; France bans slave trade; E. T. A. Hoffmann’s “The Sandman” first appears in Germany.

1816 Maturin’s play Bertram staged at Drury Lane; Scott publishes The Antiquary; the Shelleys, Dr. John Polidori, and Byron near Geneva begin “ghost story contest” that results in Frankenstein and Polidori’s The Vampyre a few years later.

1817 Byron’s Gothic “Dramatic Poem” Manfred published.

1818 Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley publishes Frankenstein anonymously; Thomas Love Peacock publishes satirical Nightmare Abbey; Jane Austen’s counter-Gothic Northanger Abbey published after her death the previous year (though written mostly in the late 1790s); Collin de Plancy publishes the Dictionnaire infernal in France.
# Chronology

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<th>Event</th>
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<tr>
<td>1819</td>
<td>P. B. Shelley's Gothic play <em>The Cenci</em> published but not staged; Scott publishes <em>The Bride of Lammermoor</em>; Polidori’s <em>Vampyre</em> appears under Byron’s name.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1820</td>
<td>Maturin publishes <em>Melmoth the Wanderer</em>; Charles Nodier coadapts Polidori’s tale for the French stage, while Jean Planche’s <em>Vampyre</em> is being performed at the English Opera House.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1821</td>
<td>Death of Napoleon; Nodier publishes <em>Smarra, or The Demons of the Night</em> in Paris, inaugurating l’école frénétique in French writing; Collin de Plancy publishes semi-Gothic <em>Anecdotes du dix-neuvième siècle</em>; Vicomte d’Alincourt publishes <em>Le Solitaire</em>, spawning many translations in the 1820s.</td>
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<td>1823</td>
<td>Richard Brinsley Peake’s <em>Presumption, or The Fate of Frankenstein</em> staged at the English Opera House (Mary Shelley attends); Victor Hugo publishes frequently Gothic <em>Hans d’Islande</em> in France.</td>
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<td>1827</td>
<td><em>Hamel, the Obeah Man</em> published anonymously, set in Jamaica, and focused on Gothicized Obeah magic and slave rebellion.</td>
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<td>1829</td>
<td>Henri de Latouche publishes <em>Fragoletta</em> in Paris.</td>
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<td>1830</td>
<td>G. P. R. James publishes <em>Darnley</em> in London; <em>Blackwood’s Magazine</em> publishes “The Iron Shroud,” later to influence Poe’s “The Pit and the Pendulum” (1839).</td>
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<td>1831</td>
<td>The autobiographical <em>History of Mary Prince</em> published in Barbados to begin series of Caribbean slave narratives that employ or echo Gothic conventions.</td>
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<td>1835</td>
<td>Edgar Allan Poe begins a series of Gothic stories in Baltimore that come to include “Berenice,” “Ligeia,” and “The Fall of the House of Usher,” all collected in <em>Tales of the Arabesque and Grotesque</em> (1839).</td>
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<td>1836</td>
<td>Theophile Gautier publishes <em>La Morte amoureuse</em>, a vampire tale, in Paris.</td>
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<td>1837</td>
<td>Charles Dickens begins serializing <em>Oliver Twist</em>; Victoria becomes Queen of England; Victor Sejour’s African-American Gothic tale “The Mulatto” appears in France.</td>
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<td>1840</td>
<td>W. H. Ainsworth in England begins his “Tudor novels” series with <em>The Tower of London</em>, followed by <em>Guy Fawkes</em> (1841) and <em>Windsor Castle</em> (1843); Dickens begins serializing <em>The Old Curiosity Shop</em>.</td>
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1844 Britain’s W. M. Reynolds begins his Gothic-laden narrative *The Mysteries of London* (serialized until 1856), based on Eugène Sue’s *Mysteries of Paris* (1842–43); the “Urban Gothic” thus fully established.

1845 Poe publishes “The Raven” and a second volume of *Tales*; dies in 1849.

1847 Charlotte Brontë publishes *Jane Eyre* and Emily Brontë publishes *Wuthering Heights*, both under male pseudonyms (Emily dies in 1848); Thomas Preskett publishes *Varney the Vampire, or The Feast of Blood*.

1848 Revolution in France brings Napoleon III to power; leads to Second Empire (through 1869).


1851 Hawthorne publishes *The House of Seven Gables*.

1852 Dickens begins serializing *Bleak House*; Harriet Beecher Stowe publishes occasionally Gothic *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*; Herman Melville publishes *Pierre, or The Ambiguities*, his most Gothic novel.

1853 Charlotte Brontë publishes frequently Gothic *Villette*.

1855 Dickens begins serializing *Little Dorrit*; Charlotte Brontë dies; Gérard de Nerval publishes *Aurelia* in France.

1859 Gothic story collection *The Haunted House* published in Dickens’s journal *All the Year Round*; Edward Bulwer-Lytton publishes essay “The Haunted and the Haunters”; Charles Darwin publishes *The Origin of Species*.

1860–61 Dickens serializes *Great Expectations*; Wilkie Collins publishes *The Woman in White*; Hawthorne publishes *The Marble Faun*; American Civil War begins (leading to Emancipation Proclamation in 1863 and surrender of the South in 1865).

1864 J. S. Le Fanu publishes novel *Uncle Silas*.

1868 Collins publishes *The Moonstone*, shading the Gothic into the detective story and vice versa.

1870 Dickens dies, leaving the incomplete (and Gothic) *Mystery of Edwin Drood*; Third Republic launched in France.

1871 Darwin’s *The Descent of Man* appears, and evolution debates accelerate.

1872 Le Fanu publishes collection *In a Glass Darkly*, including female vampire tale “Carmilla”; dies in 1873.
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<th>Year</th>
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<tr>
<td>1881</td>
<td>Marcus Clarke publishes his Australian Gothic novella, <em>The Mystery of Major Molineux</em>.</td>
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<td>1884</td>
<td>British and French women granted rights of divorce, raising increased concerns about the greater independence of women.</td>
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<td>1885</td>
<td>The Labouchère Amendment passed in England, more strongly criminalizing homosexuality.</td>
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<td>1886</td>
<td>Robert Louis Stevenson publishes <em>Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde</em> to complete his most Gothic period (1881–86); Guy de Maupassant publishes novella <em>The Horla</em> in France; H. Rider Haggard begins publishing <em>She</em>.</td>
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<td>1891</td>
<td>Charlotte Perkins Gilman publishes “The Yellow Wallpaper” in the <em>New England Magazine</em>.</td>
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<td>1895</td>
<td>Sigmund Freud and C. F. Breuer publish <em>Studies in Hysteria</em> in Austria, more fully establishing psychoanalysis; Wilde prosecuted and imprisoned for homosexuality in England; Machen publishes <em>The Three Imposters</em>; M. R. James begins series of Gothic stories with “Canon Alberic’s Scrapbook.”</td>
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<td>1896</td>
<td>H. G. Wells publishes <em>The Island of Dr. Moreau</em>.</td>
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<td>1897</td>
<td>Irish-born Bram Stoker publishes novel <em>Dracula</em> at Westminster; Richard Marsh publishes <em>The Beetle</em>.</td>
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<td>1898</td>
<td>Henry James serializes <em>The Turn of the Screw</em> in <em>Collier’s</em> magazine.</td>
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<td>1899</td>
<td>Dick Donovan publishes <em>Tales of Terror</em> in Britain.</td>
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<td>1900</td>
<td>Freud’s <em>Interpretation of Dreams</em> first appears as <em>Die Traumdeutung</em>.</td>
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<td>1903</td>
<td>Stoker publishes <em>The Jewel of the Seven Stars</em>, and Frank Aubrey publishes <em>King of the Dead</em>; Queen Victoria dies.</td>
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<td>1907</td>
<td>William Hope Hodgson publishes <em>The Boats of the “Glen Carrig”</em>.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1908</td>
<td>Henry James publishes “The Jolly Corner” after a short return to America.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>Stoker publishes <em>The Lair of the White Worm</em>.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1912</td>
<td>Hodgson publishes <em>The Night Land</em>.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1914</td>
<td>First World War begins; Alice and Claude Askew publish “Alymer Vance and the Vampire.”</td>
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Chronology

1918 First World War ends with Treaty of Versailles; partial suffrage granted to women in Britain (and in the United States by 1919).

1919 Freud publishes “The Uncanny,” followed shortly by Beyond the Pleasure Principle (1920), which posits a “death wish.”

1922 F. W. Murnau’s film Nosferatu, based on Dracula, released in Germany.

1925 Universal Studios releases silent Phantom of the Opera with Lon Chaney.

1929 Stock market crash begins Great Depression in the Americas and Europe; Herbert George De Lisser publishes The White Witch of Roseball, a West Indian Gothic tale based on legends about plantation mistress Annie Palmer.

1931 Universal releases Dracula with Bela Lugosi and Frankenstein with Colin Clive and Boris Karloff; Paramount releases Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, which wins Academy Award for star Fredric March.

1932 William Faulkner publishes Light in August; Universal releases The Mummy with Boris Karloff and Dracula’s Daughter; United Artists releases White Zombie, directed by Victor Halperin and set in Haiti.

1934 Karen Blixen publishes Seven Gothic Tales under the pen name “Isak Dinesen.”

1935 Universal releases James Whale’s Bride of Frankenstein with Boris Karloff and Colin Clive, as well as Louis Friedlander’s The Raven.

1936 Faulkner publishes Absalom! Absalom!, for many his most Gothic novel.

1938 Daphne du Maurier publishes Rebecca, adapted for the screen in 1939–40 in Alfred Hitchcock’s American directing debut (Academy Award winner for Best Picture of 1940).

1939 Second World War begins with German invasion of Poland; Universal releases Son of Frankenstein.

1941 Universal releases The Wolf Man with Lon Chaney Jr.; Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde remade by MGM, with Spencer Tracy; Pearl Harbor bombed by Japan in December, bringing the US into the war.

1942 Jacques Tourneur’s Cat People film released by RKO.

1943 Universal releases its sound-and-color remake of Phantom of the Opera; RKO releases Tourneur’s I Walked with a Zombie.

1944 Paramount releases Lewis Allen’s The Uninvited.
#### Chronology

1945
Surrender of the Axis powers ends Second World War; women released from the work force in large numbers; “Baby Boom” begins; RKO makes *The Spiral Staircase* for release in 1946.

1950
Paramount releases Billy Wilder’s highly Gothic *Sunset Boulevard*.

1957
Hammer Studios in England begins its Gothic film revival by releasing *The Curse of Frankenstein*.

1958
Vincent Price stars in popular William Castle film *House on Haunted Hill*, which was shown with the “Emergo” gimmick, whereby a skeleton suddenly sails out over the audience.

1959
Shirley Jackson publishes *The Haunting of Hill House*, later to become *The Haunting* on film (1963); Robert Bloch publishes the novella on which Hitchcock bases his Gothic film *Psycho* (1960).

1960

1966
Jean Rhys publishes *Wide Sargasso Sea*, a rewriting of parts of *Jane Eyre* from a Jamaican and postcolonial female perspective.

1967
Ira Levin publishes *Rosemary’s Baby* (released by Paramount in 1968 as a film directed by Roman Polanski).

1971
William Peter Blatty publishes *The Exorcist* (released as a film in 1973, directed by William Friedkin).

1973
United States leaves Vietnam, ending long western presence in Southeast Asia.

1974
Stephen King starts Gothic best-seller run with *Carrie* (film version in 1976, directed by Brian de Palma).

1975

1976
Anne Rice publishes *Interview with the Vampire* to begin series of Gothic novels, most often set in New Orleans and Paris (*Interview* film: 1994); David Seltzer publishes *The Omen* (released as a film the same year).

1977

1979
Peter Straub publishes *Ghost Story* (turned into film in 1984); first *Alien* film, directed by Ridley Scott, released by 20th-Century Fox; Angela Carter publishes her *Bloody Chamber* collection of stories.
CHRONOLOGY

1980  David Punter publishes The Literature of Terror, heralding an acceleration in the academic study of Gothic.

1982  Julia Kristeva’s Powers of Horror (1980) translated into English; release of Ridley Scott’s futuristic Gothic film Blade Runner; MGM and Steven Spielberg release Poltergeist, an epitome of the suburban Gothic; Joyce Carol Oates publishes The Bloodsmoor Romance; King publishes Danse Macabre, a nonfiction assessment of the cultural functions of modern Gothic horror; Michael Jackson produces and stars in ghoulish music video Thriller.


1986  Andrew Lloyd Webber’s stage musical version of The Phantom of the Opera opens in London, then moves to New York in late 1987 as further adaptations increase; release of David Lynch’s semi-Gothic film Blue Velvet.


1988  René Depestre publishes Hadriana dans tous mes rêves, interweaving zombification with reflections on Haitian history.

1990  Debut of Lynch’s highly Gothic television series Twin Peaks on ABC.


1993  Debut of Chris Carter’s frequently Gothic The X-Files series on FOX-TV.


1997  Paramount releases Event Horizon, and 20th-Century Fox releases Alien Resurrection, the fourth film in the Alien series.

1998  Remake of The House on Haunted Hill, with Geoffrey Rush, released; color reworking of The Haunting released as well.

2000  Peter Straub publishes Magic Terror: Seven Tales.

2001  Full-blown Gothic reappears on film in The Others, with Nicole Kidman.