

THE
LONDON
LIBRARY

A guide to the Gothic collections

Scope of the Collection

It should be noted that the term 'Gothic' is a very broad term. Historically it refers to the Germanic people of the Goths who played a major role in the fall of the Western Roman Empire, most famously by sacking the city of Rome in 410AD, which led to the emergence of medieval Europe. Gothic originally meant "having to do with the Goths or their language", but its meaning eventually came to encompass all the qualities associated with Germanic culture, especially the Germanic culture dominant during the medieval period after the fall of Rome. The word came to describe the characteristics of a style of architecture which developed in northern France and spread through western Europe from the middle of the 12th century to the early 16th century. This style is characterized by the converging of weights and strains at isolated points upon slender vertical piers and counterbalancing buttresses and by pointed arches and vaulting. From the second half of the 18th century and throughout the 19th century, the Gothic Revival was a conscious movement that began in England to revive medieval Gothic forms and of which the UK Houses of Parliament may be the most famous representation.

At the end of the 18th century it came to describe a style of fiction characterised by the use of desolate and remote settings and macabre, mysterious, sensational, or violent incidents. Horace Walpole's novel 'Castle of Otranto' from 1764 is generally regarded as the first gothic novel. The genre was then popularised by authors such as Ann Radcliffe, Matthew Gregory Lewis and Clara Reeve. Its popularity continued into the 20th century as it expanded into subgenres, for example Southern Gothic and Gothic Romance.

Since the late 1970s gothic also refers to an alternative music-based subculture with its roots in the post-punk movement and which was pioneered by such bands as Bauhaus and Siouxsie and the Banshees.

The Gothic continues its influence into the 21st century and has come to encompass every media format, even digital ones as exemplified by the video game "Vampire: The Masquerade".

Gothic is a very wide concept which is sometimes hard to define and which spans across architecture, literature, film, art, fashion, and music. In general terms it can be described as something that is characterized by mystery, horror, and gloom. Gothic literature combines the genres of romance and horror. It can also be described as something barbaric, rude, and unenlightened as if from medieval times.

Shelving Arrangements

Due to the term 'gothic' being a very broad concept and spanning across all types of art, the Library's gothic collection also covers several shelf-marks and can be found in all three main areas of the Library. It is advisable to search for the general term *gothic* or *goth* on Catalyst, or use the wildcard *goth**. You can tweak your search results by sorting them by Resource type or Author etc., using the options on the left-hand side of the search result list. Within each section, books are generally arranged by author name but edited titles are filed under the book title. Check the Catalyst record for the 'shelved under' information.

History

H.Goths


History books on the Germanic people of the Goths can be found in the front of the Back stacks on level 3. This is a fairly small section. It can be found if you walk past the Green stairs in the entrance hall and through the green door, turn to your left and find the right-hand shelf in the sixth aisle.

Art

Art 4to books can be found in the Art room and the sequence starts on the ground floor. Art books can also be found on the Mezzanine level of the T.S. Eliot wing.


A. Architecture

Books on gothic architecture in Europe throughout history as well as specific famous buildings, such as the Canterbury Cathedral and The Westminster Palace.

24  **BOOK**
The art of Gothic : architecture, sculpture, painting
Toman, Rolf.; Bednorz, Achim, 1947-
c1999
Shelved Under: The art of Gothic :
[Available at London Library Art \(A. Architecture, 4to.\) >](#)

A. Art

The Library does hold a few general books on Gothic art. However, when searching for this topic it would be most useful to search for the name of the artist, such as Goya, Henry Fuseli, Albert Penot, and Grant Wood.


10  **BOOK**
Gothic painting in France, fourteenth and fifteenth centuries
Lemoisne, Paul-André, 1875-1964.; Boothroyd, Ronald, tr.
1931
Shelved Under: Lemoisne, Paul-André,
[Available at London Library Art \(A. Painting, 4to.\) >](#)

A. Cinema

The Library holds a few general books on Gothic cinema. When searching for this topic it is also useful to search for the name of the director, such as James Whale, or the title of the film, such as Frankenstein or Dracula.

4

" ✉ 📌 ⋮



BOOK

British Gothic cinema

Forshaw, Barry

2013

Shelved Under: Forshaw, Barry

[Available at London Library Art \(A. Cinema &c.\) >](#)

Literature

Most books on gothic literature can be found in the *L. History of* section on level 2 of the Central Stacks and the St James building, for example *L. Literature, Hist. of (Gen)*. For the gothic literature from any specific country, please find the *L. History of* section for this country. Books on English gothic fiction will be under *L.English Lit., Hist. of*. (Please note that some may even be found in *Bibliography* or *L. English Drama*).

For books on the specific authorship of authors who were influential within the gothic genre, most of these can be found in the Literature section of their perspective countries, for example *L. English Lit., Stoker* and *L. English Lit., Radcliffe*. (Please note that some may even be found in other Literature sections or *Bibliography*).

Fiction

Gothic fiction is a loose literary aesthetic. While described as having a prevailing atmosphere of mystery and terror and often featuring such things as haunted houses and supernatural creatures, this description is not straightforward. A novel may contain gothic elements and still not be a fully gothic novel. A novel may contain dark topics and supernatural creatures and still not be a gothic novel. Fiction can be found on the level 2 of the Central stacks. The sequence continues onto the Mezzanine level of the T.S. Eliot wing.

Authors of interest are:

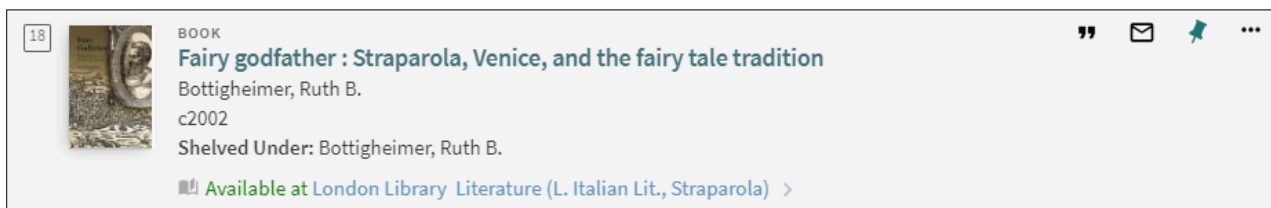
Horace Walpole	Ann Radcliffe
Anne Rice	John Polidori
Bram Stoker	Edgar Allan Poe
Sheridan Le Fanu	Matthew Gregory Lewis
Susan Hill	Shirley Jackson
Neil Gaiman	H.P Lovecraft


At the end of fiction on the Mezzanine level you will find the *Fiction, Colls* section. Anthologies with collected ghosts stories are shelved under the letter G and anthologies with collected vampire stories are shelved under the letter V.

Folklore and fairytales

Gothic literature and fairy tales are much more closely related than one might expect. While it's common to think of fairy tales as simple stories for children, in truth particularly the old original stories collected by the brothers Grimm can be uncanny, spectral, and even transgressive – all words linked to the Gothic.

The Library's collection of fairytales spans several shelf-marks. *S. Folklore* can be found in the front of the Back stacks on level 4. To further explore this topic, books with fairytale stories can be found in *L. Children's Books* on the 6th floor of the Central stacks. For folklore and fairytales stories from individual countries, please explore the Literature section in the Central stacks and the St James building.



18  BOOK
Fairy godfather : Straparola, Venice, and the fairy tale tradition
Bottigheimer, Ruth B.
c2002
Shelved Under: Bottigheimer, Ruth B.
[Available at London Library Literature \(L. Italian Lit., Straparola\) >](#)

***Dracula* and Bram Stoker**

In 1897 Bram Stoker published his book *Dracula*. The novel has come to dominate both popular and scholarly treatments of vampire fiction. Since its publication, it has never been out of print. Count Dracula is the first character to come to mind when people discuss vampires. The image of a vampire as a distinguished gentleman in a cape, as cemented by Bela Lugosi who starred in the 1931 film, dominated the popular stereotyped image of a vampire up until the 1970s.

In 1890s Bram Stoker worked as a business manager at the Lyceum theatre in London and he was a member of the London Library. In 2018, research at the library discovered 26 books on the shelves that were likely used by Stoker to research *Dracula*. Some of these books carry detailed markings that closely match Stoker's notebook references. These books are now located in one of the library safes. However, it is still possible to view the collection. Please speak to the staff at the Issue desk about how to set up a viewing with the Library archivist.

Please also take the time to walk past the photo of Bram Stoker himself which hangs on the landing on the Green Stairs, next to the door to the Back stacks on the way up to the Reading room.

(Please note that the library prohibits making pen or pencil marks in library books and the use of highlighters and sticky notes. You are only excused of doing so if you are the author of most influential novel of your elected genre and your doodles thereby are considered a cultural inheritance.)

For more information and a list of the books which comprises the Bram Stoker collection, please check out:
<https://www.londonlibrary.co.uk/dracula>

For further studies on Bram Stoker and *Dracula*, there are several shelf-marks to explore. Type in either name in the search bar on the catalogue Catalyst. Tweak your search results by sorting them via Location, by clicking on the options on the left of the search result list, to find books in for example, *Biography* and *Literature*.

Biography

The Biography section starts on level 4 of the Central stacks and continues down to level 3. The library holds many biographical books on authors, actors and other historical persons who have in one way or another influenced modern gothic culture.

Two historical persons of note are Vlad III of Wallachia, also known as Vlad the Impaler or Dracula, from whom Bram Stoker took the name for his title character. Also, Elizabeth Bathory, who was accused of murdering hundreds of girls and young women and bathing in their blood to stay young. Both have in folklore and popular culture become associated with vampirism.

Persons of interest are:

Bram Stoker	Vincent Price
Ann Radcliffe	Christopher Lee
Edgar Allan Poe	John Polidori

8 BOOK
Dracula : a biography of Vlad the Impaler, 1431-1476
Florescu, Radu.; McNally, Raymond T. (Raymond Thomas), 1931-1974
Shelved Under: Florescu, Radu.
[Available at London Library Biography \(Biog. Vlad III\) >](#)


9 BOOK
Dracula was a woman : in search of the blood countess of Transylvania
McNally, Raymond T. (Raymond Thomas), 1931-1984
Shelved Under: McNally, Raymond T.
[Available at London Library Biography \(Biog. Báthory\) >](#)


The Gothic subculture and its music and fashion


The modern Goth subculture is a music-based subculture that emerged from the post-punk scene in the late 1970s. The first goth-rock track is agreed upon to be “Bela Lugosi’s Dead” by Bauhaus from 1982. Today, Goth thrives as an underground subculture with many sub-branches and enjoys many organized events and music festivals, its own aesthetics and life philosophy. While fashion is a very important characteristic of the subculture, music is typically regarded as the most important aspect and any person

who listens to Goth music may be considered a Goth. (Regardless, several genres and subcultures are mistaken for Goth).

The library holds a very limited amount of books that relate to the Goth subculture. These are shown below.

1  BOOK
Gothic fashion : the history : from barbarians to haute couture
Godman, Katie, author.
2022
Shelved Under: Godman, Katie,
[Available at London Library Art \(A. Dress, 4to.\) >](#)

2  BOOK
Goth culture : gender, sexuality and style
Brill, Dunja,
2008
Shelved Under: Brill, Dunja.
[Available at London Library Science & Misc \(S. Social Science\) >](#)

1  BOOK
Goth : a history
Tolhurst, Laurence, author.
2023
Shelved Under: Tolhurst, Laurence,
[Available at London Library Science & Misc \(S. Social Science\) >](#)

Other areas of research and study

Encyclopaedias and dictionaries can be found in the Reading room and are for reference use only.


33  BOOK
The encyclopedia of the gothic
Hughes, William, 1964-; Punter, David.; Smith, Andrew, 1964-
2013
Shelved Under: The encyclopedia of the gothic /
[Available at London Library Reading Room \(R.R. Lit. Dicts. \(Gen.\)\) >](#)

The Gothic deals with the uncanny, sublime and supernatural and the darker subject matters of life. People who identify themselves as belonging to the Gothic subculture are often attracted to such topics as vampires and horror stories, they love celebrating Halloween, and enjoy graveyard walks.

No study of the Gothic is complete without looking into and gaining an understanding of these matters, such as the evolution of the vampire in folklore and literature, or death and funeral rituals in different time periods and cultures around the world. Human's fears have changed over the centuries and the psychology behind why some people are so fascinated by horror is an intriguing subject. In *A. Color, 4to* you will also find a book about the history of the colour black which is of course associated with the dark and the Gothic.

Relevant shelf-marks are:

- S.Death
- S.Devil
- S.Burial
- S.Occult Science
- S.Witchcraft
- S.Exhumation



BOOK
Black : the history of a color
Pastoureau, Michel, 1947-
c2009
Shelved Under: Pastoureau, Michel,
[Available at London Library Art \(A. Colour, 4to.\) >](#)


Digital collection

In the Library's digital collection you will find both e-books and online articles on the Gothic. Type in *gothic* or *goth* on Catalyst, or use the wildcard term *goth**. On the left-hand side, tweak the search results by sorting them via Availability and set it to Available online.

EBooks can be read through the Libby app. Simply install the Libby app from the app store on your Android, iOS or Windows 10 device. Or visit libbyapp.com in your Chrome, Firefox, Safari or Edge browser.


Relevant e-Resources are:

- Art History Research net
- Artstor
- International Bibliography of Art
- Oxford Art Online
- JSTOR
- British Humanities Index
- Oxford English Dictionary
- Oxford Classical Dictionary
- History Today
- Oxford Music online



BOOK
The gothic novel in Ireland : c. 1760-1829
Morin, Christina
2018
“ The Gothic Novel in Ireland, 1760-1830 reveals how the Irish contribution to the rise of the gothic novel is all too frequently overlooked...”
OPEN ACCESS
[Available Online >](#)

4







ARTICLE

Jimmy Packham, Gothic Utterance: Voice, Speech, and Death in the American Gothic

Peeples, Scott

American literary history, 2023-05, Vol.35 (2), p.935-937

 PEER REVIEWED  OPEN ACCESS

[Available Online](#)  

” ✉ 📌 ...

For any further questions or recommendations, please speak to the Issue desk staff.