

'Frankenstein' brought alive by techincal tricks

By Richard Tijerina
Senior Staff Writer

Review

Mirror images abounded Wednesday night as the MSC Opera and Performing Arts Society's presentation of "Frankenstein," based on the stage adaptation of Mary Shelley's classic 1819 novel of the same name, took center stage in Rudder Auditorium.

The Guthrie Theatre road production shed a new and dramatic light on the famous story of Victor Frankenstein's monstrous creation. Gone were the images of the creature of Frankenstein as a gargantuan, square-headed, evil monster with bolts protruding from his neck.

Actor Peter Syvertsen's version of the creature was so much more human than the above description. He thought, felt, cried and wondered. He still looked far different than the average human, with a sleek, muscular green-hued body and wiry hair, wearing only a tattered robe. But physical descriptions aside, the creature was no less human on the inside than the scientist who made him.

The play centered around the last few days of Victor Frankenstein's life, with he and his creation, both near death and in the reaches of the North Pole, looking back on their lives through a series of flashbacks. Each watched as their memories came to life through the use of other actors as their younger counterparts. They were watching themselves through their own mirror.

The show opened amid a blast of thunder and lightning, a staged thunderstorm of pyrotechnics that blasted and shocked the audience into their seats. Frankenstein, lying

half-frozen on the ground and clutching a revolver, is confronted by his creation of years ago. The creature, whose name is Adam, has been hunted by the scientist for years, but has finally let himself be caught so he can find the answers that have been plaguing him so long.

Though Frankenstein created Adam, he by no way considers him a son. Immediately repulsed by the monster at the instant the spark of electricity gave him life, Frankenstein tried again and again to rid himself of his creation, though never succeeding.

On the other side, Adam is a man trapped in a world that is unknown to him. Scared by a child's screams at the sight of him, Adam accidentally strangles the boy, who turns out to be Frankenstein's brother.

Confronting Frankenstein, Adam demands a mate in the world to be compatible with. After Frankenstein destroys the woman he created for Adam because of his fears that they would reproduce, Adam screams for revenge and tells the scientist that he will be there on his wedding night.

Mistaking this for a threat on his own life, Frankenstein leaves Elizabeth on the night of their wedding. But Frankenstein Adam sneaks into Elizabeth's room and brutally strangles her. Tracking Adam down, Frankenstein vows that he will search out and find him, destroying him if it's the last thing he does.

But blaming Adam for all the wrong he's done is easier said than done. It is more Frankenstein's fault for rejecting the creature who only asked for his love. In the end, he re-

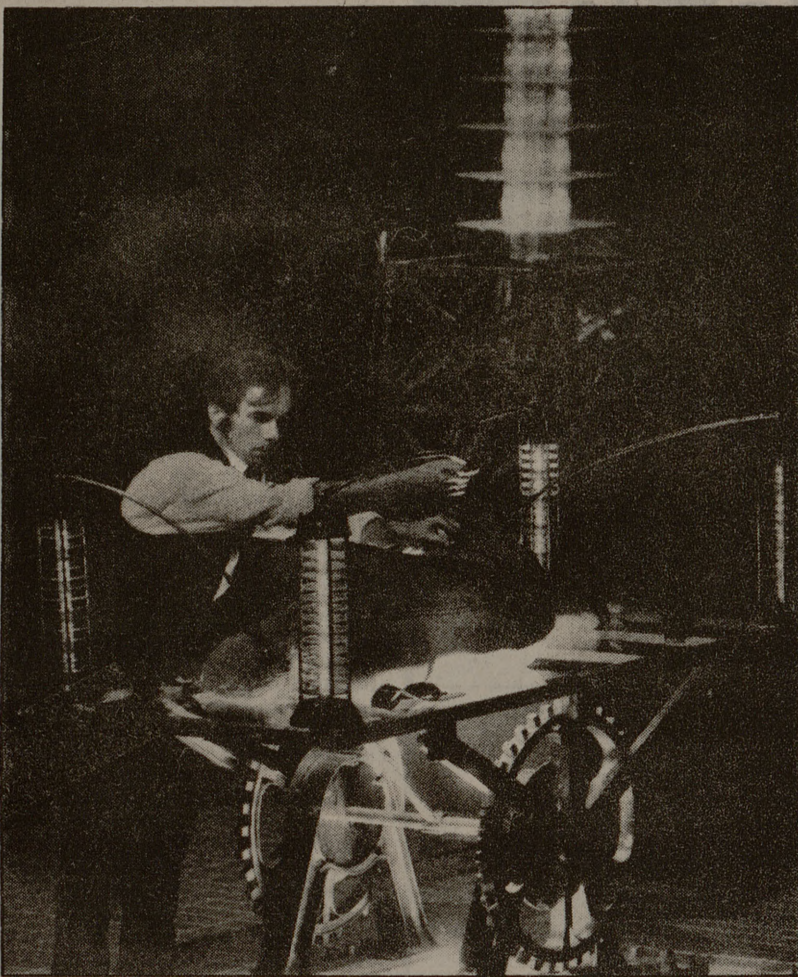


Photo by Mike C. Mulvey

Victor Frankenstein, played by Curzon Dovell, electrifies the creature in 'Frankenstein' Wednesday night.

alizes this. Looking into Adam's eyes, Frankenstein suddenly realizes that he and Adam actually look alike, at least in his eyes. They are the same person.

The play ended on a tragic note, as Frankenstein was unable to end the creature's life in his own dying moments so that they would die together. Dropping the revolver to the ground as he goes limp, Frankenstein dies in Adam's arms. Syvertsen was fabulous as the creature, his stage presence dominating every scene that he was in. As his

other half, Stephen Pelinski shined as the mad scientist who rejected but ultimately accepted his monstrous creation. But the real bright spot in the show was the technical one, with a complex set that took eight hours to set up and incredible light shows that made the audience see and feel the thunder and lightning on the stage.

Though it hardly mirrored all of the old Boris Karloff renditions of the tragic tale of the rejected monster, "Frankenstein" created an image that was far better.

A&M organizations meet to discuss column about apartheid in Battalion

By Catherine Zudak
Reporter

An A&M graduate student questioned the sources and facts used in a *Battalion* column about apartheid at a discussion Wednesday night in the MSC.

"I believe Brian Frederick's column is suspect because of its sources and is not a legitimate political opinion," Ken Hendrickson said at the forum concerned with the March 22 column 'Conditions in South Africa are better than we believe.'

Chibo Onyeji, president of the Nigerian Student Association, said he invited Frederick to discuss the points raised in the column because, "Writing what you want also entails responsibility."

Hendrickson, the only formal speaker at the program, is a graduate student in the Department of History. His area of speciality is European history, but he studies black resistance movements independently with Dr. Larry Yarak, assistant professor of history.

Hendrickson said, "The people responsible for allowing Frederick's column to appear should consider resigning."

"I met with *The Battalion* editorial staff, who told me they are not responsible for the opinions of the columnists. But why aren't they when someone is making an argument and trying to persuade people with information that is patently false?"

"I can refute Brian's arguments in the realm of political argument. And I know he was wrong."

But Sue Krenek, *Battalion* editor, said Hendrickson was never told the editorial staff wasn't responsible for the paper's content.

"Obviously the editors are responsible for what appears in the paper," she said. "But our responsibility also extends to the protection of First Amendment rights. Brian has a right to his opinion, just as Mr. Hendrickson had a right to express his opinion in a guest column Tuesday."

"Mr. Hendrickson's complaint to the editors was that Brian's column was based on sources Mr. Hendrickson felt lacked credibility. But in a situation such as the one in South Africa, the facts are often in dispute. Editors should not play God by declaring certain publications off-limits and certain facts unpublshable."

Hendrickson said Frederick's claim that South Africa was a 'friend' to the United States ignored history.

"During both World Wars large numbers of the South African population favored the Central and Axis powers," he said.

In addition, he said, South Africa has proven a primary force of destabilization in sub-Saharan Africa.

"South Africa continues to fund guerrillas in Mozambique and traffics illegally in weapons," he said.

Hendrickson also argued that Frederick's statement that South Africa has been "steadily dismantling a vicious system of racial segregation"

has little basis in fact. He said that under President Botha the removal of blacks to artificially designated homelands and the loss of South African citizenship have increased.

Hendrickson said some believe a post-apartheid South Africa might be dominated by communists, which would pose a security threat to Western Europe and the United States.

The African National Congress (ANC) often is accused of being a Communist front group, he said.

"The ANC is funded and armed by the Soviet Union," he said. "But even the CIA has no evidence of Soviet domination or control (of the ANC)."

Hendrickson argued against "the strategic minerals argument" that claims a Communist government in South Africa could cut off minerals necessary to defense industries in the United States and Western Europe.

"Sixty percent of South Africa's export earnings comes from the mining industry," he said. "Even supposing a radical black government came to power in South Africa, why would they cut a primary source of income?"

"They couldn't sell (minerals) to the Soviet Union. They're awash with the stuff."

Hendrickson said that the ANC's stated aims are democratic access to the political system regardless of race, including the right to vote and freedom of consciousness.

Hendrickson closed the formal

portion of the program by raising the question of *The Battalion's* editors' responsibility for columnists' opinions.

He said that when he raised the same question with the editorial staff in a meeting last week they pointed out to him the disclaimer that appears on the editorial page. It states that opinions presented do not necessarily represent those of the editors or University officials.

"The disclaimer is not the point," he said. "Not when it includes someone making arguments based on a fraction of the truth."

"I asked them (editorial staff) when you got it (the column) and read it, didn't you question it? He (Frederick) doesn't cite sources at all... I believe that integrity was lacking here... there should be some accountability."

Frederick did not attend the forum. But he said in response to Hendrickson's questioning of his facts, "Everything I put in there was information I had seen reported again and again in the press."

"I think he (Hendrickson) is very politically motivated. He is set on one particular idea. Anything that doesn't conform he throws out. That's one reason I didn't show up. I think these people's minds are closed."

The African Student Association, MSC Black Awareness Committee, Nigerian Student Association and Students Against Apartheid sponsored the discussion.

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