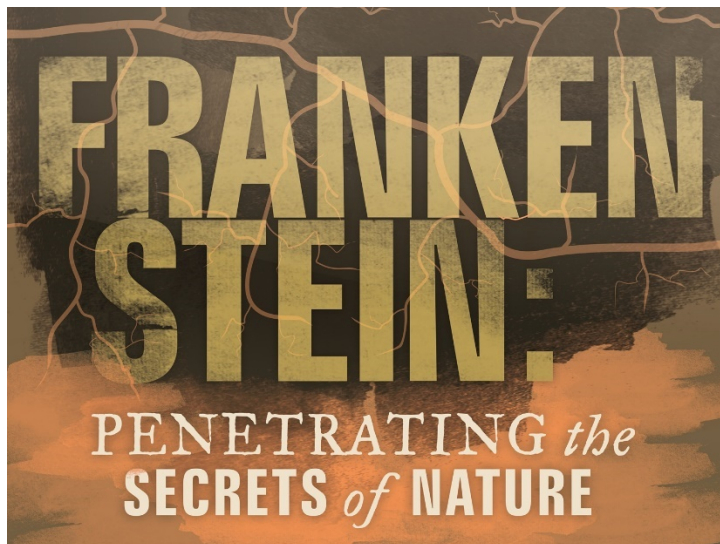


# NLM Traveling Exhibitions

## PR Information



[www.nlm.nih.gov/frankenstein](http://www.nlm.nih.gov/frankenstein)

The National Library of Medicine produced *Frankenstein: Penetrating the Secrets of Nature*, guest curated by historian and educator Susan E. Lederer, PhD (University of Wisconsin-Madison).

The traveling exhibition and companion website explore the power of the novel *Frankenstein; or, the Modern Prometheus* to expose hidden fears of science and technology as human efforts to penetrate the secrets of nature continue. In 1816, Mary Shelley conceived a story about a scientist who creates a creature that can think and feel, but is monstrous to the eye. Spurned by all, the embittered creature turns into a savage killer. Shelley's story served as a metaphor for apprehensions about scientific advancement that continue to resonate today.

*Frankenstein: Penetrating the Secrets of Nature* includes an [education component](#) with two K-12 lesson plans and a university module. A [digital gallery](#) features a curated selection of fully digitized items from the historical collections of the NLM, which are also available in their entirety in [NLM Digital Collections](#).

Please include this courtesy line with all public announcements about the project:

**The National Library of Medicine produced this exhibition and companion website.**

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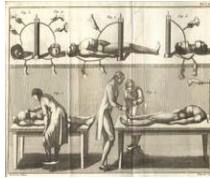
Host venues for *Frankenstein: Penetrating the Secrets of Nature* receive the following PR images. For your reference, there are brief captions for the images. Please include their corresponding **courtesy** noted below when using them.



Mary Shelley was only 18 years old when she began writing *Frankenstein*, inspired by a “waking dream” in which she envisioned “the hideous phantasm of a man stretched out, and then, on the working of some powerful engine, show signs of life.”

Portrait of Mary Shelley, ca. 1851-1893

**Courtesy The Bodleian Library, University of Oxford**



Luisi Galvani (1737-1798), a professor of anatomy at the University of Bologna, performed an extensive series of experiments in “animal electricity” or “galvanism” to reanimate dead tissue in the 1780s and 1790s.

Illustration from *Essai Théorique et Expérimentale sur le Galvanisme, tome premier* (Theoretical and Practical Essay on Galvanism, first volume), Giovanni Aldini, 1804

**Courtesy National Library of Medicine**



Human dissection advanced medical knowledge in early 19th century, while it challenged traditional understanding of what it means to be human.

Illustration from *The anatomy of the arteries of the human body, with its application to pathology and operative surgery*, Richard Quain, 1844

**Courtesy National Library of Medicine**



The English actor Thomas Potter Cooke played the role of the monster in *Presumption*. During the performances, his face was painted green, his lips were stained black, and he wore blue body paint.

T. P. Cooke as the monster in *Presumption; or, The Fate of Frankenstein*, Thomas Charles Wageman (c. 1787–1863)

**Courtesy The Carl H. Pforzheimer Collection of Shelly and His Circle, The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations**



In a film version of *Frankenstein*, Boris Karloff portrayed the monster. His makeup showed the creature with a surgically altered skull, scars, and bolts protruding from his neck, which deeply affected audiences.

Boris Karloff as the Monster in *Frankenstein*, 1931

**Courtesy Universal Studios Licensing LLC**