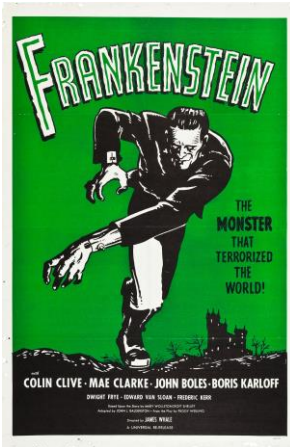


Short Review: “Frankenstein” (1931) by Dr. John L. Flynn



Frankenstein (1931). Universal Pictures, b/w, 71 min. Director: James Whale. Writers: Mary Shelley (novel) and Peggy Webling. Producer: Carl Laemmle, Jr. Cast: Colin Clive, Mae Clarke, Dwight Frye, Edward Van Sloan, and Boris Karloff.

Dr. Henry Frankenstein (Clive) has been experimenting with the reanimation of dead tissue, and while he has been so busy body snatching and then stitching together the corpses of criminals, his poor suffering fiancée (Clarke) has been busy playing with herself. Thanks to a stroke of luck and a bolt of lightning, Frankenstein’s monster (Karloff) comes alive. The monster is so scary that it frightens the neighbors, upsets life on the domestic front, and incites the villagers to march on the castle. Though the monster tries to act human, he just doesn’t get it right. Like us, we just know he’s going to spend his prom night alone, too. Loosely based on Mary Shelley’s novel, Whale’s “Frankenstein” was the first to appear with sound and inspired a host of imitators. It is also a very good film that established the “mad scientist persona.” What we didn’t know for many years, until we saw Bill Condon’s “Gods and Monsters” (1998), was that James Whale was gay, and that he secretly hungered for Brendan Fraser. Who knew?

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