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MANUAL CINEMA RETURNS TO BOSTON WITH ITS INNOVATIVE AND  
CINEMATIC STORYTELLING

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ARTSEMERSON PROUDLY PRESENTS

**FRANKENSTEIN**

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**SIX SHOWS ONLY**

EMERSON PARAMOUNT CENTER

ROBERT J. ORCHARD STAGE

FEBRUARY 22 – 26, 2023

**[Boston, MA – Wednesday, February 1, 2023]**– ArtsEmerson, Boston’s leading presenter of contemporary world theater and film and the professional presenting and producing organization of Emerson College, announced the return of Manual Cinema with a thrilling version of the classic Gothic tale, **Frankenstein** from February 22 – 26, 2023. After captivating Boston audiences with **Ada/Ava** in 2018 and **The End of TV** in 2019, the ingenious artists of Manual Cinema’s **Frankenstein** will bring animation, puppetry, live music, and a gothic twist that electrifies Mary Shelley’s classic novel for a new generation to the Emerson Paramount Center’s Robert J. Orchard Stage.

Using more than 500 handmade puppets, old school projectors, as well as live actors, a music ensemble and cinematic elements, the Chicago-based performance collective imaginatively stitches together the classic tale of *Frankenstein* with the biography of its author, Mary Shelley, to create an unexpected story about the beauty and horror of creation. The real-life and fictional narratives of Shelley, Victor Frankenstein, and Frankenstein’s monster expose how family, community, and education shape personhood – or destroy it by their absence.



Sarah Fornace as Victor in **Frankenstein**

*Photo Credit: Drew Dir*

“There’s the *Frankenstein* that many know, and then there is Manual Cinema’s version,” says ArtsEmerson Executive Director David C. Howse. “Chicago’s Manual Cinema does something completely fresh and visually stunning. Our audiences will know that ArtsEmerson’s relationship with Manual Cinema goes back many years. With every production our audiences are amazed by the work of Manual Cinema and **Frankenstein** does not disappoint. Through impressive puppetry and projections, their take on this well-known tale and on its author’s life is as timely as ever, zeroing in on the importance of community and connection in shaping who we are.”

“Manual Cinema is thrilled to return to ArtsEmerson with **Frankenstein!**,” says Manual Cinema Co-Artistic Director Sarah Forance. “This is our third show here, and we had an incredible time when we brought **Ada/Ava** in 2018 and **End of TV** in 2019. The audiences at ArtsEmerson are also so smart, curious, and welcoming. We think that everyone will love **Frankenstein**, which is our biggest and most complex show with robot percussionists, shadow puppetry, silent cinema, dark comedy, and a sweeping score performed by a live chamber ensemble. However, like **Ada/Ava** and **End of TV**, the heart of the show is its emotional storytelling about empathy, love, loss, and the ways in which humans need to take care of each other (and, in the case of **Frankenstein**, what happens when there is a failure of care and empathy).”



Musicians from **Frankenstein**  
*Photo credit: Meta Antolin*

Tickets for **Frankenstein** may be purchased 24/7 at [ArtsEmerson.org](https://www.ArtsEmerson.org), or by calling 617-824-8400 (Tue-Sat from 12:00PM ET - 6:00PM ET). The Paramount Center Box Office (559 Washington Street, Boston) is open for walk-up service Thu-Sat from Noon - 6:00 PM ET. Tickets start at \$25. Groups of 10+ attending a performance save up to 30%.

Thanks to generous support from Rockland Trust, a limited number of \$10 Mobile Rush tickets will be available at 10:00 AM ET each performance day on a first-come, first-served basis, exclusively through the TodayTix mobile app. For more information, please click on “General Public” when you visit [ArtsEmerson’s Offers web page](#).

**For production stills and other media kit assets, click [here](#).**

**LISTINGS INFORMATION FOR FRANKENSTEIN**

**Dates:**

February 22 – 26, 2023

**Venue:**

Emerson Paramount Center  
Robert J. Orchard Stage  
559 Washington Street  
Boston, MA 02111

**Performance Schedule:**

Wednesday, February 22, 2023	7:30PM ET
Thursday, February 23, 2023	7:30PM ET
Friday, February 24, 2023	8:00PM ET
Saturday, February 25, 2023	2:00PM ET
Saturday, February 25, 2023	8:00PM ET
Sunday, February 26, 2023	2:00PM ET

**Ticket Information:**

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**Content:**

Recommended for Ages 13+

**Running Time:**

70 minutes, no intermission

**Access:**

Audio Described Performance – Sunday, February 26 at 2:00PM ET

**Public Health Information:**

Masks covering mouth and nose are mandatory inside all Theatres of Emerson College venues at all times (except for speakers, performers, and musicians while actively participating in a performance or presentation.) Based on most recent scientific findings, we are recommending N95, KN95, or well-fitting 3-ply surgical masks; however, any mask with at least 3-ply construction is permissible. No gaiters, bandanas, or masks with vents are allowed. [Click here to review full Public Health info.](#)

**CREDITS**

ADAPTED FROM THE NOVEL BY  
Mary Shelley

CONCEPT AND STORYBOARDS BY  
Drew Dir

DEvised BY

Drew Dir, Sarah Fornace and Julia Miller

ORIGINAL MUSIC AND SOUND DESIGN BY  
Ben Kauffman and Kyle Vegter

SHADOW PUPPET DESIGN BY  
Drew Dir with Lizi Breit

PROJECTIONS & SCENIC DESIGN BY  
Rasean Davonte Johnson

COSTUME & WIG DESIGN BY  
Mieka van der Ploeg

LIGHTING DESIGN BY  
Claire Chrzan

3D CREATURE PUPPET DESIGN BY  
Lizi Breit

PROP DESIGN BY  
Lara Musard

VIDEO MIXING & LIVE SOUND EFFECTS BY  
Kyle Vegter

LIGHTING TECHNICIAN  
David Goodman-Edberg

#### PUPPETEERS

Sarah Fornace (Victor, Mary Shelley); Kara Davidson (The Creature, Elizabeth); Leah Casey (Percy, Vocals); Sara Sawicki (Alphonse, Lord Byron); Myra Su (Ensemble)

#### MUSICIANS

Peter Ferry (percussion); Jason Gresl (clarinets, aux percussion); Robin Mieksin (flutes, aux percussion, piano); Lia Kohl (cello, aux percussion, vocals)

#### **Manual Cinema**

Manual Cinema is an Emmy award winning performance collective, design studio, and film/ video production company founded in 2010 by Drew Dir, Sarah Fornace, Ben Kauffman, Julia Miller, and Kyle Vegter. Manual Cinema combines handmade shadow puppetry, cinematic techniques, and innovative sound and music to create immersive stories for stage and screen. Using vintage overhead projectors, multiple screens, puppets, actors, live feed cameras, multi-channel sound design, and a live music ensemble, Manual Cinema transforms the experience of attending the cinema and imbues it with liveness, ingenuity, and theatricality. The company was awarded an Emmy Award in 2017 for "The Forger," a video created for The New York Times and named Chicago Artists of the Year in 2018 by the Chicago Tribune. Their shadow puppet animations are featured in the film remake of "Candyman," (2021) directed by Nia DaCosta and produced by Jordan Peele's Monkeypaw Productions.

Manual Cinema has been presented by, worked in collaboration with, or brought its work to The Metropolitan Museum of Art (NYC), BAM (NYC), Arts Emerson, Yale Repertory Theatre, The Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago, The Kennedy Center (DC), Under the Radar Festival (NYC), La Monnaie-DeMunt (Brussels), The Noorderzon Festival (Netherlands), The Kimmel Center (Philadelphia) The O, Miami Poetry Festival, The Tehran International Puppet Festival (Iran), Davies Symphony Hall (SF), The King Abdulaziz Center for World Culture (Saudi Arabia), The Ace Hotel Theater (LA), The Hakaway International Arts Festival (Cairo), The

Edinburgh Fringe Festival, and elsewhere around the world. They have collaborated with StoryCorps (NYC), Erratica (London), The Belgian Royal Opera (Brussels), Hubbard Street Dance (Chicago), Pop-Up Magazine (SF), Nu Deco Ensemble (Miami), NYTimes best-selling author Reif Larsen (NYC), three time Grammy Award-winning eighth blackbird (Chicago), NPR's Invisibilia, Topic Magazine, Grammy Award winning Esperanza Spalding and The New York Times.

In 2020 Manual Cinema celebrated their ten year anniversary and had their South American premiere (at the Santiago a Mil festival).

## **PRESENTER INFORMATION**

### **ArtsEmerson**

ArtsEmerson is the professional presenting and producing organization at Emerson College, and its mission is to bring people together to experience powerful performances that delight, provoke, and inspire, celebrating both our differences and common humanity. Founded in 2010 by Robert J. Orchard — the year the U.S. Census confirmed there was no single cultural majority in Boston — ArtsEmerson is committed to building a cultural institution that reflects the diversity of our city. Our imaginative and globe-spanning live and virtual performances, films, and conversations invites each of us to be part of a Boston that is more creative, equitable, and connected. ArtsEmerson is led by Executive Director, David Howse. For more information visit [ArtsEmerson.org](http://ArtsEmerson.org).

### **Emerson College**

ArtsEmerson and HowlRound Theatre Commons both operate from within the Emerson College Office of the Arts. Based in Boston, Massachusetts, opposite the historic Boston Common and in the heart of the city's Theater District, Emerson College educates individuals who will solve problems and change the world through engaged leadership in communication and the arts, a mission informed by liberal learning. The College has 3,700 undergraduates and 1,400 graduate students from across the United States and 50 countries. Supported by state-of-the-art facilities and a renowned faculty, students participate in more than 90 student organizations and performance groups. Emerson is known for its experiential learning programs in Los Angeles, Washington, DC, the Netherlands, London, China, and the Czech Republic as well as its new Global Portals. The College has an active network of 51,000 alumni who hold leadership positions in communication and the arts. For more information, visit [Emerson.edu](http://Emerson.edu). For media inquiries specific to Emerson College, please contact Michelle Gaseau (E: [Michelle\\_Gaseau@emerson.edu](mailto:Michelle_Gaseau@emerson.edu), O: 617-824-3547, C: 617-429-2624).

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