

NIGHTMARE 26

"If our lives are already written, it would take a courageous man to change the script" - The reciprocal relationship between horror cinema and video games

Thursday 2nd April 2026

9.00am – Registration [Refreshments Provided] (Student's Union, Church Square)

10.00am – Conference Opens

Opening Comments –

Dr John Waddington (Vice Principal, Higher Education, The Northern School of Art)

Dr David Edwards (Conference Convener, Reader, The Northern School of Art)

"In my restless dream, I see that town. Silent Hill" – The Legacy of Silent Hill

10.30am – 12.00pm (Church Square Theatre)

Chair: Dr David Edwards (The Northern School of Art)

- **The Horizontal Cellar: Fog, Domesticity and the Inversion of Urban Space in *Silent Hill*** (Dr Andrew Wedgbury, University of Staffordshire)
- **The Legacy of a Non-Game: *PT* and the Power of Early Access** (Meghan Hewitt, Independent Scholar)
- **Changing Values in Horror Game Re-releases** (Dr Connor Jackson, Liverpool Hope University)
- ***Rule of Rose* – Why Female Darkness Scandalizes Us** (Kira Blankenship, North Carolina State University) *Virtual*

1pm – Lunch [Provided] (Student's Union, Church Square)

"Your mind and your body don't belong to you" – Body Horror and Concepts of the Self

1.00pm – 2.30pm (Church Square Theatre)

Chair: Dr Reece Goodall (University of Warwick)

- **Body Horror Apotheosis** (Jenny Batchelor, The Northern School of Art)
- **Beyond the Dark Sea: Identity, Body Horror and Ecological Disaster in *Still Wakes the Deep*** (Sejuti Bala, The English and Foreign Languages University, Hyderabad) *Virtual*
- **Italian *Giallo* and *Rural Gothic* Tropes in Video Games: The Intertextual Case of *Saturnalia*** (Federico Gorziglia & Mario Monopoli, Sapienza, University of Rome)
- **No More Happy Endings: Cruel Princesses and Twisted Fairytales in *Rule of Rose*** (Dr Catherine Pugh, Independent Scholar)

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2.30pm – Break [Refreshments Provided] (Student's Union, Church Square)

"Find a way to crack open the door and let the light back in" - Recontextualising narratives between mediums

3.00pm-4.00pm (Church Square Theatre)

Chair: Dr David Edwards (The Northern School of Art)

- **The Mechanics of Silence in *A Quiet Place: The Road Ahead*** (Calvin Goh, University of Edinburgh)
- **Frozen Awake: Translating Sleep Paralysis into Horror Form in *Mara*** (Clive Tonge, Birmingham City University)
- **Analogue 'Reality' in the *Fears to Fathom Games*** (Dr Reece Goodall, University of Warwick)

Keynote

4.00pm (Church Square Theatre)

Press X to Insert Shoggoth: Quickfire Rules for Doing Horror Well in Gaming – Dan Pinchbeck (Founder of The Chinese Room and writer/director of *Still Wakes the Deep/Everybody's Gone to the Rapture*)

The Northern School of Art Short Film Screenings/Gaming Posts

5.00pm (Church Square Theatre)

- ***Tender*** (2024) - Level 5 Acting for Media Film Project (Shortlisted for Best Student Short at the London Horror Film Festival, 2025)
- ***Solivigant*** (2026) (Level 5 Acting for Media Film Project)
- ***Hysteria*** (2024) – dir. Oscar Fitchett (Graduate of The Northern School of Art)

Film Screening – Hosted by Bob Fisher & Dr David Edwards

6.30pm (Church Square Theatre)

The Thing (1982) followed by a live Q&A with actor Sandy Batchelor (*28 Years Later/Still Wakes the Deep*) and writer/director Dan Pinchbeck conducted by Bob Fischer (*Fortean Times/Scarred for Life*)

Closing Comments – Bob Fischer/Dr David Edwards

9.00pm - **Conference Closes**

Announcement of the **Nightmare '26 Illustration Prize** and post-conference reception at The Owl, Scarborough Street