

DESIGN

Discover the other side

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Featuring books, comics, graphic novels, movie posters, and magazines, *The Other Side* is an exhibition that celebrates the bizarre and unearthly. Each room is dedicated to a genre (sci-fi, horror, or gothic fiction), particular character, or prominent author.

If you enter the H.P. Lovecraft room, you will find a thorough documentation of the author's legacy – from the cheap pulp magazines he published in while he was alive and virtually unknown, to the graphic posters of the blockbuster movies inspired by his work. Lovecraft was a recluse who tended to only leave his house after sunset and was never able to support himself through his writing. He died in poverty at the age of 46. After his death, his imaginings of the otherworldly – characters far more surreal than the human-like aliens described by other sci-fi writers – captured people's imagination and inspired numerous works, from 'Day of the Triffids' to 'The Thing'. The graphic art displayed in the collection captures the diversity of his bizarre creations.

The arrangement of the collection helps us to follow concepts and characters as they appeared in popular culture and evolved over time in the hands of different writers and artists. We encounter a variety of incarnations

of Dracula, from early comic-book depictions to the more modern and familiar impersonations by actors like Christopher Lee or Bela Lugosi. A particularly striking piece is a French poster from 1958 by artist Guy-Gérard Noël, advertising Terence Fisher's first *Dracula* film.

Curated by Prof. Saviour Catania, Dr Fabrizio Foni, and Ray Vassallo, and featuring the collection of Carmel Bonnici, the exhibition contains many rare items. Some of these treats are the first appearance of Dracula in a comic book from 1951, or an aged copy of *The Castle of Oltranto: A Gothic Story* by Horace Walpole, published in 1765 and considered to be the first example of a Gothic novel. Two oil paintings by Maltese artist Joseph Bugeja portraying the Valletta vampire add some local flair.

The Other Side is rich in nostalgia and intrigue. It is also a thought-provoking demonstration of our fascination with mystery and the possibility that lies in the unknown. Whether it is under the ocean in Atlantis or beyond our universe, the exhibition showcases the ideas which have captured the imagination of people for generations. **T**

The exhibition is hosted by the Storm Petrel Foundation:
stormpetrelfoundation.org