

Invitation to lecture:

**Poe Reimagined: Exploring Contemporary
Critical Perspectives in the Netflix series
*The Fall of the House of Usher***



The Fall of the House of Usher (2023) © Netflix

Alexandra Urakova

Lecturer (University of Helsinki)

Organizer: Stefan L. Brandt (University of Graz)

Moderator: Lisa Buchegger (University of Graz)

Tuesday, January 23, 3:30-5:00 p.m.

SR 34.D2, Attemsgasse 25 / DG, 8010 Graz



Alexandra Urakova is a literary scholar and currently holds the position of a lecturer in North American Studies at the University of Helsinki. She is also a Kone fellow affiliated with Tampere University from 2021 to 2024, specializing in nineteenth-century American and comparative literature. Her recent publications – *Dangerous Giving in Nineteenth-Century American Literature* (2022) and *The Dangers of Gifts from Antiquity to the Digital Age* (co-edited with Tracey A. Sowerby and Tudor Sala, 2022) – explore the dark side of gift exchange in literature and beyond. She

has published in journals such as *Nineteenth-Century Literature*, *New England Quarterly* and *Edgar Allan Poe Review* as well as in numerous collections. Her current research interests encompass the theory and history of the gift, property relations and exchange, sentimentalism and sentimentality, nineteenth-century book and periodical history, and material culture.

ABSTRACT: Edgar Allan Poe continues to captivate our imagination, and the recent much-discussed Netflix series *The Fall of the House of Usher* is evidence to this. In my talk, I will discuss how this show mirrors the ways Poe has been (re)imagined nowadays. On the one hand, Poe has long gained a popular image of “the Master of the Macabre” (Scott Peeples) that owes to the tradition of the horror genre and famous Hollywood adaptations of his stories starring Bela Lugosi. On the other hand, in the past decades much important critical work has been done to debunk Poe’s symbolist image of an outlandish “mad genius,” restore him to the national canon, and test the newest theoretical approaches, from postcolonial studies to queer theory, in his work. Mike Flanagan’s 2023 mini-series seem to combine the popular, stereotypical take on Poe with more sophisticated and elitist interpretations of his legacy as it (re)invents a fictional Poesque world in the contemporary United States, creatively using allusions to his stories and poems.

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