Preface

The following collection explores a number of Alan Moore's works in various forms, including comics, performance, short prose and the novel. It presents a scholarly study of these texts that examines the ways that Moore's work draws upon, and intervenes in, what can loosely be described as 'the Gothic tradition'. Though the project was originally conceived through conversations with other scholars who, predominantly though not exclusively, specialise in the Gothic, it has expanded to those working in Comics Studies and other cognate disciplines. Accordingly, the chapters below adopt a range of methodologies and vocabularies, some more readily associated with a specific discipline or school than others, giving rise to a plurality of voices that express the variety of ways in which Moore's work is being received at the present moment.

Though there are a range of connections across various chapters, for ease of reading the collection has been grouped into four parts. Part I, 'Monstrous politics', overtly explores the political dimension of Moore's works. In the first chapter, I highlight the collection's overarching themes, drawing on material from each of the subsequent chapters and presenting additional readings to argue for a politically charged sense of Moore's position within the Gothic tradition. Chapters 2 and 3 flush out this argument, through Tony Venezia's investigation of the sociohistorical context of *The Bojeffries Saga* and Maggie Gray's examination of *Swamp Thing's* environmentalism.

The investigation of Moore's deployment of three specific Gothic devices occupies the chapters in Part II, 'Gothic tropes'. This part opens with Jochen Ecke's discussion of the doppelgänger in *Swamp Thing* and *From Hell*, relating this to a close reading of Sheridan Le Fanu's novella,

Carmilla, followed by Christian W. Schneider's treatment of the apocalyptic in *Watchmen*, which analyses the use of atmosphere and fragmentation as well as the intersection of form and intertextuality. Markus Oppolzer's discussion of *V for Vendetta* closes the section with a reassessment of the significance of liminality in this text and others from the Gothic tradition.

The penultimate part, 'Inheritance and adaptation', explores the relationship between Moore's work and broader textual traditions, placing particular emphasis on the political and cultural significance of intertextual relationships and adaptations. Michael Bradshaw situates Moore's work within a larger post-enlightenment tradition, arguing that the work uses intertextuality to enhance the aesthetic and political sensibilities of the readership, while Monica Germanà provides an historically sensitive reading of *From Hell* that connects Moore's concern with the urban environment to his engagement with a range of historical discourses. Brad Ricca and Claire Sheridan situate Moore's treatment of the superhero in relation to key novels from the Gothic genre, with Ricca providing a compelling reading of *Superman Annual*, 11 in relation to Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto*, while Sheridan combines an informed reading of William Godwin and Mary Shelley in their historical context with a careful analysis of the nexus of group politics and survival in *Watchmen*. Laura Hilton's chapter completes this part by directly addressing the adaptation of Mina Harker in Moore and O'Neill's *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen* and Stephen Norrington's cinematic adaptation of *The League*.

The final part of the collection – 'Art, magic, sex, other' – turns attention to Moore's recent work in different genres and media, while at the same time engaging with his theories of art and magic and considering the significance, in this respect, of his representations of violence and sexuality. Christopher Murray and Julia Round provide extensive discussions of the intersection of magic and the Gothic in Moore's comics, performance pieces and the novel *Voice of the Fire*, while my closing chapter explores the insight that Moore's adaptations of Lovecraft can yield for broader understandings of his forays into the occult.

By examining Moore's diverse and longstanding engagements with the Gothic tradition, the chapters in this collection contribute both to Gothic Studies and Comics Studies. The underlying premise of the

collection is that Moore, and the artists with whom he works, engage in a process of dialogue with a diverse array of source material. Accordingly, the chapters outlined above address two interrelated topics: how an understanding of the Gothic can enhance our understanding of Moore's work and, conversely, the ways in which the ideas and reading practices engendered by Moore's work might impact on a reflexive analysis of one or more of the traditions out of which it emerges.

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