




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### The Eroticism of Artificial Flesh in Villiers de L'Isle Adam's *L'Eve Future*

Patricia Pulham

#### Abstract

*Villiers de L'Isle Adam's L'Eve Future* published in 1886 features a fictional version of the inventor Thomas Edison who constructs a complex, custom-made android for Englishman Lord Ewald as a substitute for his unsatisfactory lover. Hadaly, the android, has a number of literary and cultural precursors and successors. Her most commonly accepted ancestor is Olympia in E. T. A. Hoffmann's 'The Sandman' (1816) and among her fascinating descendants are Oskar Kokoschka's 'Silent Woman'; Model Borghild, a sex doll designed by German technicians during World War II; 'Caracas' in Tommaso Landolfi's short story 'Gogol's Wife' (1954); a variety of gynoids and golems from the realms of science fiction, including Ira Levin's *Stepford Wives* (1972); and, most recently, that silicon masterpiece - the Real Doll. All, arguably, have their genesis in the classical myth of Pygmalion. This essay considers the tension between animation and stasis in relation to this myth, and explores the necrophiliac aesthetic implicit in Villiers's novel.

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