



## **The Year of the Dragon**

**1916, 1928, 1940, 1952, 1964, 1976, 1988, 2000, 2012, 2024**

“Dragon,” from the Latin *Draco*, Dracul, Dracula... in the etymology of these words lies a tale.

### **Happy Chinese New Year, 2024**

In Chinese tradition, the dragon is a symbol of royalty, embodying power, nobility, and good fortune. The dragon holds a unique distinction as the sole mythical creature within the Chinese Zodiac calendar, with individuals born under its sign believed to possess exceptional qualities of strength and leadership.

However, our Western perception often casts the dragon in a different light, associating it with malevolence and darkness. Yet, within the Chinese culture, the dragon emerges as a symbol of imperial authority and prosperity, representing a force of benevolence and auspiciousness.

### **The Connection**

As we all know by now, Bram Stoker’s breaking Gothic novel, “Dracula,” emerged as a seminal work that not only spawned an entire genre of literature and film but also captured the imaginations of readers worldwide. And to breathe life into his immortal antihero, Count Dracula, Stoker drew upon a diverse array of influences.

While Central European folklore provided a rich tapestry of tales about the undead, it was the historical accounts of the 15th-century Romanian prince Vlad Tepes, or Vlad the Impaler, that imbued the character with a sense of realism and depth.

Vlad Tepes, born in Transylvania as the second son of nobleman Vlad II Dracul, became known as Dracula, meaning "son of Dracul," upon his induction into the secretive Order of the Dragon. This order, composed of Christian knights, held a prominent position in Romanian history and folklore, intertwining the imagery of dragons with Vlad's legacy. The Romanian word "Dracul" carries a dual connotation, signifying both "dragon" and "devil," adding layers of complexity to the name and the character it represents.

If you want to learn more, click here: <https://www.history.com/news/was-dracula-a-real-person>



### **Our Ballet**

In BV's rendition of Dracula, our costume designer, Jane Wood, skillfully intertwines these dragon motifs, evoking a sense of power, intrigue and the heraldic history of Dracula. As the vampire brides take the stage adorned with these tattoo like symbols, they embody the timeless struggle between light and darkness, passion and redemption.

Immerse yourself in the eyes of the dragon. Get your tickets to Dracula now:

<https://www.balletvictoria.ca/dracula-2024/>