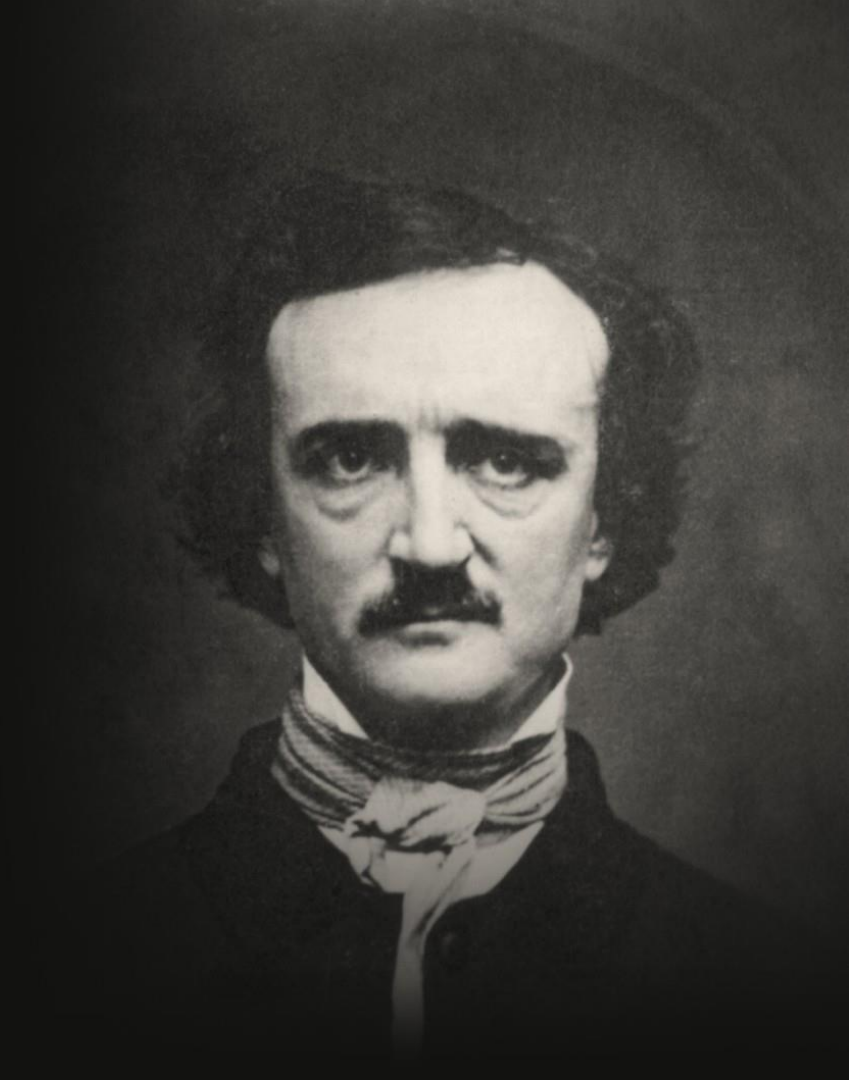
Edgar Allan Poe

American writer and poet, 1809–1849

Roman Stanec



What I will talk about

1. His childhood — 1809–1827
2. Life as a writer and his famous works — 1827–1845
3. His wife Virginia — 1836–1847
4. His mysterious death — 1849
5. Why he is still important

Childhood and youth

1809–1827

1809

Born in Boston

His parents are travelling actors.

1811

An orphan at two

His mother dies. John Allan, a rich merchant, takes him in, but never adopts him.

1826

University

Allan sends too little money. Poe gambles and loses.

1827

On his own

Deep in debt, he leaves after less than a year.

Life as a writer

1827–1838

Edgar A. Perry	The fake name he used when he joined the army.
50 copies	His first book of poems. His name was not on it, only “by a Bostonian”.
The Tomahawk Man	His nickname as a critic, because his reviews were so harsh.

He wanted to live only from writing, which was very unusual at that time. He was poor all his life.

His most famous stories

1839–1843

1839 — **The Fall of the House of Usher**

A man visits an old friend in a dark old house. In the end, the house falls into a lake.

1841 — **The Murders in the Rue Morgue**

Detective Dupin solves a murder just by logical thinking. The first modern detective story.

1843 — **The Tell-Tale Heart**

A man hides a body under the floor and then hears the dead man’s heart beating.



The Raven

1845

“Quoth the Raven, ‘Nevermore.’”

A man sits alone at night, sad because his love Lenore has died. A raven flies into his room and answers all his questions with one word.

The poem made Poe famous all over America.

He was paid only about **$9** for it.

His wife Virginia

1836–1847

1836 Marries his cousin Virginia. She is 13, he is 27.

1842 She falls ill with tuberculosis.

1847 Virginia dies, aged 24.

"The death … of a beautiful woman is, unquestionably, the most poetical topic in the world."

Edgar Allan Poe, The Philosophy of Composition (1846)



His mysterious death

1849

3 Oct	Found in a Baltimore tavern, confused, in someone else's clothes.
7 Oct	Dies in hospital, aged 40. His medical records are lost.



Possible causes: alcohol, an illness, or election fraud

On election days, gangs sometimes kidnapped men, changed their clothes and made them vote again and again.

Why he is still important

“Where was the detective story until Poe breathed the breath of life into it?”

Arthur Conan Doyle, author of Sherlock Holmes

Detective stories	Dupin solved crimes more than 40 years before Sherlock Holmes.
Horror	Many horror writers after him learned from his stories.
Pop culture	The Baltimore Ravens are named after his poem, the Edgar Award after him.

Thank you for your attention

Questions?

