

# Halloween attractions: virtual reality and interaction

October 5 2016, by Beth J. Harpaz

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This undated image provided by Eastern State Penitentiary in Philadelphia shows a scene from the site's "Terror Behind the Walls" Halloween attraction. The building was a real prison, built in the 19th century. It's now a historic site and

museum that hosts a variety of tours, exhibitions and attractions throughout the year, including its freaky Halloween haunted house event. (Eastern State Penitentiary via AP)

Virtual reality, spooky Airbnb rentals and the start of a final season for Disneyland's Twilight Zone of Terror are all part of this Halloween's freaky fun.

Here's a sample of what's happening around the country. Check with individual venues for dates, times, prices and ages.

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## DISNEY

It's the final Halloween season for Twilight Zone of Terror at Disneyland in Anaheim, California. If you visit after twilight, you'll get a chance to free fall in the haunted elevator shaft in total darkness. The tower closes for good Jan. 2.

Also at Disneyland this season is the "Frightfully Fun Parade" at Mickey's Halloween Party, featuring grinning ghosts, Disney villains and the headless horseman from Sleepy Hollow. Two other attractions have been given holiday makeovers: Space Mountain is Space Mountain Ghost Galaxy and Haunted Mansion is now Haunted Mansion Holiday, combining themes from Halloween and Christmas.

In addition, there's a giant Mickey Mouse jack-'o-lantern on the theme park's Main Street, U.S.A., and the Mexican "Dia de los Muertos" tradition is celebrated with a skeleton display in Frontierland, near Rancho del Zocalo restaurant.

In Lake Buena Vista, Florida, Walt Disney World hosts Mickey's Not-So-Scary Halloween Party, Mickey's Boo-To-You Halloween Parade and a green-and-orange fireworks display called HalloWishes.



This undated photo provided by Disneyland in Anaheim, California, shows The Twilight Zone Tower of Terror at night. It's the final Halloween season for the attraction. A new attraction, Guardians of the Galaxy-Mission: Breakout! is planned for the site for summer 2017. (Paul Hiffmeyer/Disneyland via AP)

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## UNIVERSAL

Halloween Horror Nights at Universal Studios Hollywood in Los Angeles include the transformation of the theme park's famous tram ride into a "Terror Tram," themed on the story of a celebrity clown turned murderer, created by horror-genre filmmaker Eli Roth. The Hollywood

park also features a "Walking Dead" attraction that opened this past summer.

New for Halloween at Universal Orlando Resort is The Repository, a virtual reality experience in which participants undo an ancient curse by following clues through rooms in an old warehouse.

Halloween Horror Nights at Universal parks on both coasts also feature haunted houses, scare zones and freaky mazes. Many attractions are themed on horror films like "The Exorcist" and "The Texas Chain Saw Massacre."

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## ZOMBIES, VIRTUAL REALITY AND MORE



In this Sept. 27, 2016 photo provided by Universal Orlando, an unidentified

woman, left, experiences the new immersive interactive experience, "The Repository," at Universal Orlando Resort in Orlando, Fla. "The Repository" attraction is available on select nights through Oct. 31. (Octavian Cantilli/Universal Orlando via AP)

According to the Haunted Attraction Association, technology and interactive experiences are playing a bigger role in Halloween than ever before, with escape rooms, virtual reality monsters and zombie battles.

It's Fright Fest season at Six Flags parks. At Six Flags Over Georgia in Austell, Georgia, in addition to mazes, scare zones and more than 400 zombies and monsters, guests can don VR headsets to experience an interactive virtual reality roller coaster, Rage of the Gargoyles at Dare Devil Dive, that includes a simulated helicopter ride and a futuristic battle with gargoyles.

At Eastern State Penitentiary in Philadelphia, the "Terror Behind the Walls" attraction challenges guests to become part of the story of escaping what was once an actual prison. Guests can either explore the prison and watch, or they can mark themselves for interaction with the freaky prisoners.

At Creepy Hollow Haunted House outside Houston, guests can play a [virtual reality](#) zombie first-person shooter game wearing VR headsets. The Fear Factory in Salt Lake City offers a VR haunted house. Lake EERIE Fear Fest at Ghostly Manor Thrill Center in Sandusky, Ohio, offers five haunted houses including "The Haunted Mine Ride," a motion-theater experience using VR technology to create a roller coaster with 4-D effects.

Derailed Haunted House in Ramer, Tennessee, is offering a new

technology that lets users control colors, flickers and strobe lighting they see.

Zombie laser tag is part of Shocktoberfest in Sinking Spring, Pennsylvania. In Pittsburgh, at "The Basement" at the Scarehouse, guests 18 years and older must sign a waiver allowing themselves to be touched, restrained and blindfolded.

For those who don't mind being scared silly all night, the Wisconsin Fear Grounds in Waukesha are offering an overnight event called "Night Terrors: 13 Hours of FEAR!" on Oct. 8, complete with tents, fright trail, bonfire ghost stories and scary movies.



This undated image provided by the Milwaukee Art Museum shows the Ernst Stern and Paul Leni poster for "The Burning Soil (Der brennende acker), 1922.

The poster is part of the museum's upcoming "Haunted Screens" exhibition. (Ernst Stern/Paul Leni/La Cinematheque Francaise/Milwaukee Art Museum via AP)

Nashville Nightmare in Tennessee is offering Night Terrors Haunted House, billed as "an industrial horror complex."

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## HAUNTED SCREENS

If you prefer Halloween with an artsy veneer, the Milwaukee Art Museum is hosting a show called "Haunted Screens: German Cinema in the 1920s." The traveling exhibition, opening Oct. 21, looks at a groundbreaking period in filmmaking during the Weimar era in Germany after World War I. The display of art and artifacts from the Expressionist movement includes set design drawings, photos, posters, documents, equipment and film clips. The aesthetic is very much in keeping with Halloween sensibilities, including what the museum describes as dramatic lighting, shadows, off-kilter framing and distorted perspectives. Classics explored in the show include "The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari" and the murder mystery "M."

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## AIRBNB

Airbnb hosts are offering some spooky accommodations for Halloween. Listings include a 600-year-old dwelling in Yorkshire, England, billed as a "madness chamber"; a rental in New Orleans' Parks-Bowman Mansion that the owners advertise as "The Haunted Bedroom"; and a Victorian

home in the "Haunted Castle House" in Brumley, Missouri, that cheerfully claims to have more than "a century of paranormal activity."

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