

Headline: A Nightmare on Franklin Street: The Tampa Theatre host their annual Halloween film screening

Caption: From Oct. 19 to 23, The Tampa Theatre is hosting their sixth annual Halloween film screening, A Nightmare on Franklin.

Spooky season is upon us and in order to fully embrace the Halloween spirit, watching scary movies is a must. There's no better place to see all of your favorites than The Tampa Theatre. The Tampa Theatre is hosting their annual Halloween film screening called A Nightmare on Franklin Street. From old-school slasher films to cult classics to recent horror movies that were in theatres over the summer. Whether you're a lover of scary movies or a scaredy cat there is something for everyone.

The Tampa Theatre, known for its historic value, has been around since 1962 and has been rumored to be haunted, which makes watching a scary movie there even better. Destiny Greer, junior musical theatre major, works at the theatre as a patron service lead and says there are indeed several ghosts floating around while she's on her shift, especially during this time of year.

"I am very excited for all of our Halloween movies but most specifically *Rocky Horror Picture show*, *Psycho* and *Hocus Pocus*," Greer said.

Jill Witecki has worked at the Tampa Theatre for six years as Director of Marketing and is responsible for all aspects of promotion and publicity for any event or film screening that they have. While the Tampa Theatre has always celebrated Halloween in some way Witecki was the one who came up with idea of having a Halloween Film event and even came up with the name, A Nightmare on Franklin Street, a play on words of the classic movie *Nightmare on Elm Street* and the address of the theatre. There are months of planning that goes into Nightmare on Franklin Street, starting as early as March.

According to James Deford, Marketing Department manager, things start getting serious in June. They start compiling all of the film ideas, polling co-workers on their favorites films, reaching out to prospective partners who help them with special events, blocking out times and dates and by August, the movie selections are ready to announce. Both Witecki and Deford agree that the most time consuming part was securing the movie rights to the films.

To properly market the event and ensure its effectiveness it is important to appeal to as many people as possible by having a variety movies, which is what Witecki and Deford say that they try to do. By including kid-friendly and family movies, monster movies, Hitchcock movies, cult movies, slasher flicks and suspense films which is only a touch on the spectrum of Halloween-themed films. Since horror fans are loyal, consistency is key.

"Coming to a movie at Tampa Theatre is a social experience, so people want to bring their friends," said Deford. "Word of mouth is always our most powerful marketing tool."

When it comes to the movie picking process it's clear that there are several options to consider. Witecki said that she gets dozens of emails and social media comments filled with requests. After a long consideration process, picking the obvious classics that everyone expects like *The Shining* or *Halloween*, they look into movies that could add to a possible theme, then they take a poll around the office and see what they are interested in. Lastly they book the movies, which according to Deford can be difficult because the rights aren't always available.

During this time Halloween fans can take part in a ghost tour of the Tampa Theatre for \$12 from Oct.19-30. People can also attend PAUSE-O-ween which is a special free event where you can enjoy specialty cocktail drinks, free shots and two dollars-off popcorn, from Oct. 19-31 on select dates.

"I also lead most of the ghost tours personally, which is my absolute favorite part of the series," Witecki said. "It's an honor to be the keeper of the Tampa Theatre ghost stories and to share them with folks who want to learn more about this amazing building's incredible history." Witecki is excited to see some of the more obscure movies that were picked, *The Cat and the Canary* and *The Brides Wore Blood* because they were shot in Florida. Deford on the other hand can't wait to see how The Nightmare on Elm Street marathon goes, especially since it's never been done before.