

# Prepare, Humans ... and Beware: NecronomiCon returns to provide all the existential horror your real life doesn't

Every other year it descends, creeping in from the shadowed corners of the unhallowed and ancient city, seeping into the minds and souls of the willing, drawing forth horrors of indescribable and inescapable grotesqueness, culminating in the great and pervasive corruption of all we know by an idea, a philosophy, more accurately — a fear — as powerful and apathetic as a god, complete with those who worship with mad zealotry.

It is the dreaded NecronomiCon Providence!

The stars are right yet again for PVD to honor one of its favorite obscure celebrities, H.P. Lovecraft, through NecronomiCon Providence. On odd-numbered years, the H.P. Lovecraft Arts and Sciences Council puts together one of the biggest niche conventions in the world. If you're a fan of horror, science fiction, dark fantasy or even comic books, chances are you've run across works influenced by Lovecraft. The ideas of cosmic horror, weird fiction and otherworldly influence have slowly pervaded our modern media, and it all comes from the warped imagination of a single don of Providence. And from August 22 through 25, we pay tribute to him.

H.P. Lovecraft wrote for a number of pulp magazines almost a century ago and quickly gained a reputation for his wildly inventive and darkly cosmic works. Initially inspired by his idol Edgar Allan Poe, Lovecraft's work began with the macabre, but soon blossomed into something more. He is credited with inventing an entire mythos and a pantheon of ancient and terrible gods and nightmare creatures, all sharing an amorphous and ominous ever-present threat to mankind. From the more well-known Cthulhu to the lesser-known Night Gaunts, his inventions were unlike anything that came before. While most horror writers of the era were concerned with gore and pain, the dead rising and seeking revenge, Lovecraft's terror came from the unknown, the vast expanses of human ignorance and the ancient nightmares that lurked within that ignorance, waiting to be discovered and unleashed by the luckless academic or too-curious adventurer.

Lovecraft formed a friendship with many other writers and authors of the time, who added to and borrowed from the mythos he was creating. With each writer adding their own spin and flair to the mythos, it quickly grew into something unique, a collaborative work of sorts that each of them drew from to tell their fantastic tales. But none of that would have been possible if not for Lovecraft.

As with many artistic figures, Lovecraft's work wasn't fully appreciated while he was alive, but every major horror and science fiction writer and artist cite Lovecraft as a dedicated influence, like H.R. Giger, whose work was the basis for the titular Alien in the *Alien* franchise, and of course, authors Stephen King and Clive Barker and filmmakers John Carpenter and Guillermo Del Toro. Even *Ghostbusters* has a little Lovecraftian influence in it. Lovecraft's most widely known and accepted themes had to do with ancient gods and godlike beings, secretive cults, madness and the transition beyond normal perspective to horrible worlds of alien perspectives that leave most characters either dead or incurably insane. This is most evident in his stories "Shadows over Innsmouth," "From Beyond"

and “Call of Cthulhu,” though my personal favorite is “The Color Out of Space.”

If you’re new to Lovecraft, NecronomiCon Providence is a fantastic opportunity to learn more. If you’re already part of the cult, then you’ll find endless entertainment and fun, from author and artist panels to vendors with offerings of the weird and wonderful to films and beer! Narragansett Beer, made famous in the aquatic horror movie *Jaws* (ed. *I thought it was a docudrama about RI beaches in 2019*), fittingly has a series of specialty beers in honor of H.P. Lovecraft and his works.

The convention sprawls around PVD, slipping into different locations and spreading its shadowy influence. Events, both official and unofficial, pepper downtown with the awesome and awful. Conventional convention-goers might find NecronomiCon Providence a bit of a culture shock. There are still all the usual fun things to do — gaming, readings, film screenings — but they all have that trademark dark undertone and hints of madness. It’s difficult to capture the tone of the convention, as it’s dedicated to the very idea of something chaotic and impossible to describe, much like Lovecraft’s work.

Local authors and artists who often grace these conventions. Noted artist (and *Motif*’s current cover artist) Bob Eggleton will be there, along with familiar faces such as Cody Goodfellow and Thomas Broadbent. You’ll even find some local RI authors with their works, showing the continuing tradition of literary might in our humble Ocean State.

The main attractions are, as always, the famed Armitage Symposium, author readings from local favorites, the Eldritch Ball on Friday night at the Biltmore, tabletop gaming, live podcasts, an outdoor party, appearances by the wonderful monsters of Big Nazo, film screenings, trivia, book release parties and more.

As a huge fan of horror, it has been my great honor and privilege to attend NecronomiCon Providence in previous years. Sometimes as a guest, sometimes pushing my own humble writings, but always eagerly and with great zeal. Whether you worship the Old Ones, the King in Yellow or your own madness, NecronomiCon Providence has something weird and wonderful for you to enjoy. I hope to see you there, in one form or another.

*NecronomiCon Providence takes place August 22 - 25 at various locations. For more information, go to [necronomicon-providence.com](http://necronomicon-providence.com)*