

ATLANTA ZOMBIE SYMPOSIUM

DATE: AUGUST 13, 2009
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
UNTIL: OCTOBER 15, 2009

SUBJECT: THE ATLANTA ZOMBIE SYMPOSIUM WILL PRESENT A SCHOLARLY PANEL DISCUSSION, CLASSIC FILMS, AND A ZOMBIE THEMED DANCE PARTY; ALL ON SEPTEMBER 12, 2009



Night of the Living Dead (1968),
directed by George Romero

For More Information Contact:
Stan Woodard
404 734 4353
stan@stanwoodard.com
<http://stanwoodard.com/zombie/>

On Saturday, September 12 the Atlanta Zombie Symposium will present: a scholarly panel discussion, *The Zombie Perceived: Religion, Media, and Society*; a double feature film screening of *Night of the Living Dead*, directed by George Romero and *Return of the Living Dead*, directed by Dan O'Bannon; and *Dance of the Undead*, a dance party with Zombie Transformation Chamber. Area partners will participate through presenting other interpretations of the idea of the "zombie".

Saturday, September 12, 2009

- ***The Zombie Perceived: Religion, Media, and Society***, Panel Discussion, Clary Theater, Bill Moore Student Success Center, Georgia Institute of Technology, 1 – 3:45 PM, Free
- ***Night of the Living Dead + Return of the Living Dead***, Films at the Plaza Theater, 1049 Ponce De Leon Ave., 5 – 9 PM, \$9 for one, \$12 for both
- ***Dance of the Undead - Dance Party, with Transformation Chamber***, Graveyard Tavern, 1245 Glenwood Ave., East Atlanta Village, 10 PM – 2 AM, \$2

Panel Discussion, 1 – 3:45 PM

The Zombie Perceived: Religion, Media, and Society is a panel discussion, in the form of three twenty minute papers followed by audience Q&A, will focus on various ideas of the "zombie". Dr. Dianne Stewart, Associate Professor of Religion and African American Studies at Emory University, will present on the origins of traditional ideas through African derived religions, specifically Voodoo. Dr. Andrea Wood, Marion L. Brittain postdoctoral fellow in the School of Literature, Communication, and Culture at The Georgia Institute of Technology, will present on contemporary ideas as seen through literature and film. Laszlo Xalieri, an independent researcher, will present on the persistence of the zombie as seen through information technology, economics, biology, etc. Stan Woodard will introduce the panelists and will moderate the discussion. An informal reception, hosted by the School of Literature, Communication, and Culture will follow the discussion.

Films, 5 – 9 PM

Night of the Living Dead and Return of the Living Dead, will be screened at the Plaza Theater, Atlanta's oldest continually operating cinema. *Night of the Living Dead*, directed by George R. Romero is the classic film that set the stage for contemporary ideas of zombies as the unrelenting, all consuming undead. *Return of the*

Living Dead offers a comic take on the ravenous horde. Atlanta Zombie Symposium films are presented in collaboration with Gorehound Productions.

Dance of the Undead, 10 PM – 2 AM

This dance party will be the final official event of the Atlanta Zombie Symposium, and will take place at the Graveyard Tavern in East Atlanta Village. Featuring a Zombie Transformation Chamber, wherein participants will be transformed into zombies through theatrical makeup, a DJ, and bands. The dance party will give participants the opportunity to interpret their own thoughts on what it means to be a zombie. *Dance of the Undead* is presented in collaboration with Gorehound Productions.

A number of other events are being presented in conjunction with the Atlanta Zombie Symposium. The online journal *Perforations* is accepting submissions for an Issue 32: *Zombie*. For information on submissions please visit www.stanwoodard.com/zombie. For the community based public art program, *le Flash*, artist Carl diSalvo will present his multi channel video work *We Are Survival Machines*, on October 12 in downtown Atlanta. *We Are Survival Machines* was previously exhibited at the Warhol Museum, Pittsburg, PA. For more on the project, originally presented at the Warhol Museum, Pittsburg, PA, please visit <http://tinyurl.com/lnckvu>.

The Atlanta Zombie Symposium is created and organized by Stan Woodard, with participation from School of Literature, Communication, and Culture, Georgia Institute of Technology, and Gorehound Productions. This program is funded in part through the generous support of Mr. Robert Brawner, Mr. Louis Corrigan, Mr. Gene Hooff, and Ms. Louise Shaw, and additional funds are sought. Donations are tax deductible. Public Domain Inc., a 501(c)3 organization, is the fiscal sponsor for the event.

ABOUT THE PARTICIPANTS

Dianne Marie Stewart was born in Kingston, Jamaica, and grew up in Hartford, CT, USA. She is currently Associate Professor of Religion and African American Studies at Emory University, where she teaches courses in the graduate and undergraduate curricula. She earned a B.A. degree from Colgate University in English and African American Studies, a M. Div. degree from Harvard Divinity School and a Ph. D. degree in systematic theology from Union Theological Seminary in New York City. Prior to Emory, she taught at The College of the Holy Cross in Massachusetts and at Macalester College in Minnesota. Dr. Stewart's research and teaching interests include theologies and religious practices of the African diaspora with particular emphases upon African-derived religions in the Americas and the Caribbean; Black, Womanist and Caribbean liberation theologies; theory and method in Black religious studies; and interreligious dialogue among communities in the African diaspora. Dr. Stewart is the author of *Three Eyes for the Journey: African Dimensions of the Jamaican Religious Experience* (Oxford University Press, 2005). She has also written a number of articles and essays on various subjects in her field. Dr. Stewart has studied and lectured in a number of African, Latin American, and Caribbean countries, including Nigeria, The Benin Republic, South Africa, Mexico, Guatemala, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Trinidad, Jamaica and Bermuda.

Andrea Wood is currently a Marion L. Brittain postdoctoral fellow in the School of Literature, Communication, and Culture at The Georgia Institute of Technology. She holds a PhD in English from the University of Florida (2008), a Master's in English from the University of Edinburgh (2001), and a BA in English from McGill University (2000). Her research interests include contemporary literature and film, popular genres, comics and animation, and feminist and queer theory. She has published articles in *Women's Studies Quarterly*, the forthcoming edited collection *Over the Rainbow: Queer Children's Literature* (University of Michigan Press, 2010), and the forthcoming anthology *Global Visual Cultures: Representation, Place, Power* (Blackwell, 2010). At present, Dr. Wood is working on a book about zombies in popular media.

Laszlo Xalieri is a Georgia Tech alum and a published author of speculative literature and nonfiction essays on dozens of topics including politics, religion, sociology, ethics, and old and new media. He's been a professional in the information technology industry for more than twenty years and has lately branched into the world of business startups, incubators, and capital investments.

Gorehound Productions, LLC specializes in horror and rock & roll themed productions, including event production and promotion, theatrical makeup, special effects, and more. Gorehound Productions include Atlanta Horrofest, Atlanta Zombie Walk, and Splatter Cinema.

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