

Why I Love Halloween

a little CRC

The CRC, in partnership with Southern Forest Arts, just held our second annual Halloween Party. We had games, lollies, dress-ups, face painting, followed by a screening of the Tim Burton film “The Nightmare Before Christmas.” We set the new record for a film event at Northcliffe’s Beanbag Cinema with 32 kids plus 11 adults. Thanks to everyone who joined in the fun.

Halloween means All Hallows Eve, and is the evening before the Christian holy days, All Hallows’ Day and All Soul’s Day (“Day of the Dead”).

When I was growing up, the fear of US cultural imperialism was high, including a disdain for all things Halloween. As an adult I adopted the stance of my elders uncritically, and didn’t pay much attention to how much those same elders enjoyed the Halloween content and dark themes in the films and TV shows they watched.

Instead of just passively consume this Halloween fuelled media wouldn’t it be better to embrace the community oriented, creative and ritualistic elements of Halloween?

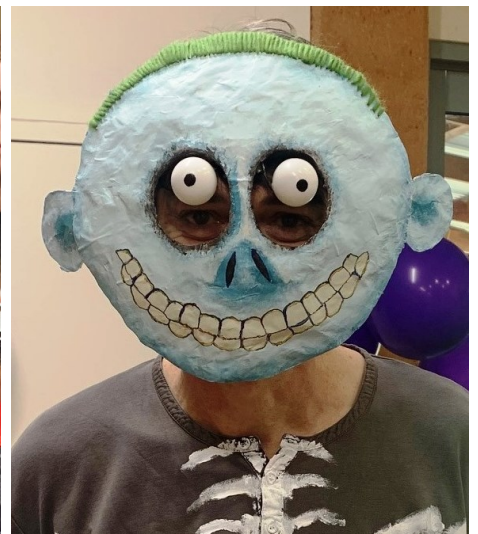
The USA is not alone in creating an event to recognise and ‘stare into the dark’. The most obvious origins of modern Halloween traditions are the Gaelic Samhain festival, St Martin’s Day (celebrated across Europe and also called “Old Halloween”), and Latin American versions of the Christian “Day of the Dead” festival. China increasingly celebrates Halloween, but has always had “days of the dead” such as the Hungry Ghosts Festival.

Rejecting cultural imperialism doesn’t mean automatically rejecting cultural imports. To me, cultural autonomy means adopting and adapting traditions which suit us.

Australia was lacking a celebration of the mysterious and the dark, but young parents around Australia are now flocking to Halloween. Modern Halloween doesn’t require a common religion and seems perfect for an increasingly diverse Australia.

by Graham Evans

Clockwise from top left, adults and kids got into the spirit of Halloween: Emmalyn; Ken, Hediye and Dora; Johnny the vampire viking; Graham as Barrell from the Nightmare movie; Ocean getting a mystical make-over from Tammy Messer, and; Catrin as Sally from the Nightmare movie.



Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday 10am to 5pm | Thursday, Friday 10 am to 6pm