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by Mike Ryan

# NECRONOMICON RISING

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So what happens at a NecronomiCon? The weekend of August 22-25 looks to be chock full of events related to HP Lovecraft – some more tangentially than others – with some items aimed at the hard-core fan, and others at the casually curious.

Let's start with the name. It has nothing to do with necrophilia. Well, not directly, anyway.

The *Necronomicon*, also known as the *Book of the Dead*, is a tome invented by Lovecraft, in which all the deepest, darkest underpinnings of the universe were revealed. In a Lovecraftian universe, learning how things really work – by reading that book, for example – is inevitably maddening. I don't mean frustrating maddening. I mean eyeballs rolling in different directions maddening. Makes you want to sell your soul to whomever will take it and blow up the world maddening. In other words, not a great beach read, unless you want something to crawl up on said beach and eat you.

Although it makes only brief appearances in Lovecraft's stories, the Necronomicon name has surfaced, often only by obscure reference, in countless other tales of horror, video games, films (like the *Evil Dead* and *Friday the 13th* series), TV shows and comics (some are explored by other articles in this very tome).

As fate would have it, the word "con" is conveniently contained within the name of this fictitious opus. That makes it a fitting name for a Con inspired by its creator's visions. Lovecraft, no doubt, foretold this double meaning – he had a way with words.

NecronomiCon used to happen annually in Providence, but has lain dormant for some years now. Its revival this August will include:

A fancy dress ball at the Providence Biltmore

A (sold-out) Cthulhu Prayer Breakfast

A concert that includes Neurosis and Lustmord at Lupo's

Games – of knowledge and luck, as well as horror-inspired role-playing games like the classic "Call of Cthulhu" RPG

Movies

Art exhibits, including paintings, drawings and sculptures by prominent artists in the horror field, at the Providence Art Club and other local venues

Poetry readings, including Lovecraft's work, contemporaries like Edgar Allan Poe, and more recent work inspired by them

A Waterfire walkabout, creepy-style

An historical tour of Providence by the Rhode Island Historical Society

An augmented-reality game enabling smartphone guided walking tours of "Lovecraft's Providence"

Astronomical observations from the Ladd Observatory

The bust unveiling at the Athanaeum of a newly commissioned bronze bust of HP Lovecraft. Not that kind of bust – get your mind out of the gutter!

Drink specials at numerous local bars

Wide-ranging panels, which will include 1920s New England culture and history, horror topics galore, filmmaking tips for horrorpreneurs, and special talks focusing on the "the rational and the supernatural" – or, where science and superstition overlap, agree to shake hands and politely disagree.

Some favorite talk titles include "Xenophobia, Atheism, and Tentacles," "The Failed Promises of Rationality," "Lovecraft and the Great Altar Stones of New England," and "Religion, Philosophy and Cosmic Horror in HPL."

You can find all the juicy details and updates at [Necronomicon-providence.com](http://Necronomicon-providence.com)