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EMPAC Announces First Free Community Halloween Party, *Beneath the Hudson: An Immersive Halloween Adventure*

One-night-only haunted ship experience anchors an afternoon and evening of films, DJs, costume contests, trick-or-treating, artmaking, and more

Friday, October 30, 2026 | 3 p.m. – 10 p.m.

Free and open to the public

Everyone in Troy knows the river. Few know what lies beneath it.

TROY, NY—This Halloween, the Experimental Media & Performing Arts Center (EMPAC) at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute transforms into a supernatural world inspired by Troy's maritime past. Taking place Friday, October 30, from 3 p.m. to 10 p.m. as part of Troy Night Out, this free community event brings together a haunted ship, movies, DJs, costume contests, trick-or-treating, artmaking, and plenty of strange encounters throughout the building.

At the center of the night is an **immersive haunted ship experience** created inside EMPAC's Studio 1—Goodman venue. Guests become part of the story as they journey through the remains of a vessel lost somewhere beneath the Hudson River, encountering its history—and what may still be living aboard—along the way. Designed for ages 9 and up, the experience puts EMPAC's theatrical spaces and technical production capabilities to spooky new use.

Beyond the ship, the adventure takes over the building. Guests can trick-or-treat at pop-ups hosted by RPI student clubs and local businesses including **Nerdy by Nature**; pose among a treasure trove of theatrical props from the historic **Proctors Theatre**; and enter costume contests judged by special guests from the Troy, RPI, and EMPAC communities. Prizes come courtesy of regional businesses including **Saratoga Candy Co.**, **Candy Kraft**, and **Krause's Candy**.

Troy's **FlagSSSDay Collective** joins the festivities with regalia from its legendary Crow Procession and a hands-on mask-making workshop. Guests can make something to wear that night—or save their creation for the Collective's next Crow Procession on December 12. Spooky snacks will be available for purchase throughout the event in Evelyn's Café, located at EMPAC on Level 5.

From **3 p.m. to 7 p.m.**, the party welcomes families for trick-or-treating, mask-making, a kids costume contest, and a 5 p.m. screening of the gloriously weird pirate adventure **Muppet Treasure Island (1996)**.

Then the kids go home and things get stranger.

From **7 p.m. to 10 p.m.**, the lights go down for an after-dark party featuring a cash bar in Evelyn's Café at EMPAC, an adult costume contest, and **Hellseeker Club DJs Rachel Rave + 100 Psychic Dreams**. FlagSSSDay Collective's "crows" will flock through all levels of EMPAC while its theater venue turns toward creature-feature territory with an 8 p.m. screening of *Lake Placid* (1999).

ALL DAY | 3 p.m. – 10 p.m.

HAUNTED SHIP EXPERIENCE

Studio 1—Goodman
Ages 9+

SPOOKY SNACKS + DRINKS

Evelyn's Café
Beer and wine sales begin at 7 p.m.

PROCTORS PHOTO BOOTH

Evelyn's Café

TRICK-OR-TREAT

Level 7 Lobby + Evelyn's Café

CHILL-OUT SPACE

Studio 2

FAMILY HOURS | 3 p.m. – 7 p.m.

3 – 7 p.m. | MASK-MAKING

WITH FLAGSSSDAY COLLECTIVE
Mezzanine

4 p.m. | KIDS COSTUME CONTEST

Theater

5 p.m. | MUPPET TREASURE ISLAND (1996)

Theater

AFTER DARK | 7 p.m. – 10 p.m.

7 – 10 p.m. | HELLSEEKER CLUB DJs: RACHEL RAVE + 100 PSYCHIC DREAMS

Evelyn's Café

7 p.m. | ADULT COSTUME CONTEST

Theater

8 p.m. | LAKE PLACID (1999)

Theater

Beneath the Hudson is free and open to the public. Families are welcome from 3 p.m. through 7 p.m. After-dark festivities run from 7 p.m. until 10 p.m.. The haunted ship experience is recommended for ages 9 and up.

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EMPAC at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute

Troy, New York