



Left to Right- Dr Steve Jones, Dr Kate Egan, Dr Johnny Walker, and Dr Russ Hunter.

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Video Shop Horrors exhibition to open in time for Halloween

A terrifying new exhibition featuring a series of rare movie posters for horror films of the 1980s will be installed at Northumbria University's Gallery North in time for Halloween.

The *Video Shop Horrors* exhibition, led by the University's new Horror Studies Research Group of academics who specialise in the history of the genre, will include copies of posters from the group's own archive and original artefacts from the period. Original video cassettes and collectable items collated by

members of the group during their research, will also feature.

[Dr Johnny Walker](#), the event organiser, is an expert in the industrial contexts of horror film production, and author of a recent book-length history of video shops and culture, *Rewind, Replay: Britain and the Video Boom, 1978-92*.

“Videocassette technology – chiefly, VHS and Betamax – revolutionised how consumers accessed moving image entertainment in the late 1970s and early 1980s,” Dr Walker explained. “Feature films were the major draw, and one of the most popular genres was horror. In Britain, video was controversial, as moralists feared that children now had free access to uncensored films such as *The Driller Killer* and *The Evil Dead*.

“The so-called ‘video nasties’ moral panic came and went, but its legacy, the types of film it encompassed, and the video distribution companies that released such films, lives on. This exhibition captures the dynamism of this hugely significant technological moment, pooling from original archival materials, to showcase the promotional strategies employed by video companies to attract consumers and, in some cases, to whip up controversy. The significance of video to the development and enduring popularity of horror films cannot be understated.”

In addition to Dr Walker, the Horror Studies Research Group’s core team includes:

- [Dr Russ Hunter](#), editor of the book *Italian Horror Cinema*, whose research focuses on horror film festivals and European horror cinema.
- [Dr Kate Egan](#), author of *Trash or Treasure? Censorship and the Changing Meanings of the Video Nasties* and *The Evil Dead*, who also conducts research on horror audiences, horror and performance, and horror and censorship.
- [Dr Steve Jones](#), author of the forthcoming book *The Metamodern Slasher Film*, whose work focuses on contemporary American horror subgenres.

Also involved in the exhibition are horror specialists Professor Stacey Abbott and Dr Damien Pollard, both of whom join the University in January.

Together they make up one of the largest collectives of horror researchers in the world and are using the exhibition to launch the new Horror Studies Research Group, which they hope will help them to spearhead a series of follow-up events and major research projects.

Steve Gilroy, acting Head of Arts adds “Since re-opening after a refurbishment last year, Gallery North has continued to showcase excellent research and this latest exhibition is a wonderful example of how we’re able to bring this research to the wider public in a really engaging way.

We expect *Video Shop Horrors* to be more of an ‘experience’ than exhibition. It should make an exciting addition to anyone’s Halloween plans this year.”

The exhibition, which is advised as suitable for over 18s only due to some of the materials on display, will be open to the public on selected dates from Thursday 26 October for two weeks. The opening night will include a short presentation from the Horror Studies Research Group at 5:30pm. The *Video Shop Horrors* exhibition will be open at Gallery North, Sandyford Building, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 8QE, until Saturday 11 November.

Opening times: Thursday and Friday, 12pm - 4pm. Saturday, 10am - 2pm.

Halloween opening hours on Tuesday 31 October: 12pm - 7pm.

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Contacts



Rik Kendall

Press Contact
PR and Media Manager
Business and Law / Arts, Design & Social Sciences
rik.kendall@northumbria.ac.uk
07923 382339



Andrea Slowey

Press Contact
PR and Media Manager
Engineering and Environment / Health and Life Sciences
andrea.slowey@northumbria.ac.uk
07708 509436



Rachael Barwick

Press Contact
PR and Media Manager
rachael.barwick@northumbria.ac.uk
07377422415



James Fox

Press Contact
Student Communications Manager
james2.fox@northumbria.ac.uk



Kelly Elliott

Press Contact

PR and Media Officer

kelly2.elliott@northumbria.ac.uk



Gemma Brown

Press Contact

PR and Media Officer

gemma6.brown@northumbria.ac.uk