

the Lutrinae

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Otter Media's 'Monte Mash' was a graveyard smash

By Daisy Sanchez

Staff Writer

Twas the night of Monte Mash, and all through North Quad, all the students wore costumes, and danced through thick fog ...

Otter Media brought North Quad to life Thursday night with their annual Halloween extravaganza, Monte Mash. The event featured a stacked bill of performances from local artists, as well as a collection of creative activities for students such as pumpkin and face painting, caricature drawing, and more.

"So I would say Monte Mash is like our festival, in a sense, because nothing really goes on on the campus, so we just have our own thing that we like to do," said Christopher Malone, second-year business administration major, and frequent volunteer and participant in Otter Media.

Malone also said that Monte Mash is not only a fun annual Halloween event that the club puts on, Monte Mash was also but a chance for Cal State Monterey Bay (CSUMB) students to show off their creative talents. "It just shows that there's still students who want to do, like, singing and bands and stuff like that and show off their band, show off their creative output and just have fun," said Malone.

The night kicked off with a performance from CSUMB student-led band June Smoke, followed by local rock artist Desdemona, who delivered a bone-jolting performance. Next up was CSUMB student and singer Miss Fortune, who is no stranger to CSUMB stages. The final performer, and arguably the crowd's favorite from the night, was 831 legend, The Mystic Souls. The crowd collectively moved closer to the stage as The Mystic Souls performed songs that aligned with their signature indie-rock sound, influenced with Latin flare.

Bryan Gutierrez, the band's singer and fourth-year hospitality major, spoke on the difference between this year's Monte Mash versus last year's, which the band had also performed at.

"[It's] bigger, the vibe was cooler, and we had a bigger band too. The sound was more full, so it was just super, super sick. It was all good vibes," said Gutierrez.

Gutierrez also spoke on his experience of not only watching Monte Mash evolve, but also his experience watching his own band and music evolve throughout his time as a CSUMB student.

"It's crazy, we used to play in my dorm room in Yarrow on the third floor, and only my friends would come into my dorm... So it's just really cool to see," said Gutierrez. "I'm very grateful. That's all I can say is I'm very grateful," said Gutierrez.

All throughout the night students piled onto the North Quad grass and sported their creative costumes, with three fitted-up students winning prizes in Otter Media's costume contest. Otter Media also had their very own merch table selling shirts featuring the winning design from their recent art contest.

Other CSUMB clubs tabled on the outskirts of the North Quad lawn as well, including the Esports club, which projected a game of Wii Sports onto the side of Vineyard Suites for students to play during the event.

"I would just say, like, give it a chance. Dress up with your friends, like, bring them out here," said Astrid Berg, and Otter Media member and first-year marine science major. "You don't have to stay for very long if you don't want to, but like, I don't know, it's pretty fun."



Students take in live music at Otter Media's Monte Mash event on North Quad.

PHOTO BY Elliot Rowe

the Lutrinae

The Lutrinae is a weekly campus newspaper covering CSUMB and its neighboring areas. Here at *The Lutrinae*, our goal is not only to educate and inform the public, but to entertain, to spark creativity, to encourage diversity of opinion, and to build a sense of community on campus and with the neighboring cities.

The Staff Editorial Policy

Editor-In-Chief

Layna Hughes

mehughes@csumb.edu

Production Manager

Zoe Kapp

zkapp@csumb.edu

Webmaster

Liam Willey

lwilley@csumb.edu

Assistant Editor

Keira Silver

ksilver@csumb.edu

Photographers

Elliot Rowe

erowe@csumb.edu

Social Media Manager

Maddie Honomich

mhomomich@csumb.edu

Visual Editor

Amanda Richman

arichman@csumb.edu

Staff Writers

Jocelyn Corona

joccorona@csumb.edu

Paige Francis

pfrancis@csumb.edu

Eli Heck

heck@csumb.edu

Hayley Matto

hmatto@csumb.edu

Daisy Sanchez

daisysanchez@csumb.edu

Sean Tubo

stubo@csumb.edu

Adviser

David Kellogg

dkellogg@csumb.edu

Operations Manager

Monica Conner

mconner@csumb.edu

Contact

Office Phone

831.582.4066

General Inquiries

thelutrinae@csumb.edu

Advertising Services

advertising@thelutrinae.com

Mailing Address

Wave Hall

100 Campus Center,

Seaside, CA 93955

Website

www.thelutrinae.com



@thelutrinae

Igniting connection through art: Take Up Space

Eli Heck

Staff Writer

Soft candlelight and quiet chatter filled the room as students and community members gathered for Take Up Space, an open mic night put on by two of Cal State Monterey Bay's creative collectives: the LitMatch feminist literature club and In the Ords, literary journal.

Ali Jones, an HCOM professor and director of the Writers From the Edge program, hosted the event; bringing together poets, musicians and writers to share their work in relation to the semester's theme: ignite.

Held in the library's Makerspace room, Take Up Space returned for its second event since its debut in April. The series continues to offer a platform for creative expression rooted in community and social awareness: "Whatever it is, I want to make sure we look at creative writing through this lens of social action," Jones said.

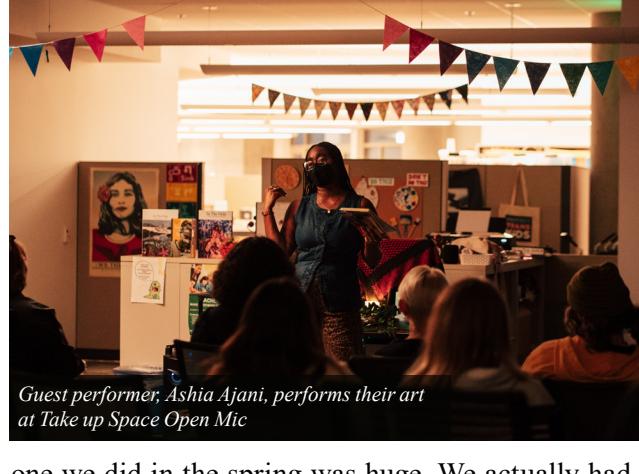
The room's dim lighting and flickering candles made for an intimate setting where 33 attendees listened closely to performers' pieces ranging from poetry and prose to songs and short stories.

Some speakers presented readings from handwritten pages, others performed works from memory. Each piece explored themes of identity and belonging, centered on the question of what ignites individual purpose.

Several performers shared poetry and prose that explored personal and collective experiences, from relationships to childhood and upbringing, and even social justice, blurring the line between art and advocacy.

Audience members nodded along, snapped after lines, and clapped hard and cheered loudly between performances. "Thinking beyond just the writing," Jones said, "moving into what we care about more deeply but also seeing ourselves in each other."

Jones added that the strong turnout shows a growing interest for creative expression on campus. "The



Guest performer, Ashia Ajani, performs their art at Take Up Space Open Mic

PHOTO BY Elliot Rowe

one we did in the spring was huge. We actually had to turn people away because we hit capacity."

The event also featured guest speaker Ashia Ajani, a poet, activist, and environmental advocate whose work explores the intersections of identity, place and resilience.

Jones said she hopes to continue to invite guest speakers to future events, creating space for dialogue and collaboration that extends off-campus. "It'll be nice to have them in conversation as people and also as writers," she said.

Ajani went on to present several of her pieces from various literary works, including her most recent book and collection of poems, "Heirloom." Her poems centered around concepts like spiritual nourishment, physical and emotional sacrifice, environmental injustice and Black migration and history.

Ajani is also an environmental conservationist, sharing her work in places such as Sierra magazine, Atlas&Alice magazine, Sage magazine, and several more.

"One thing I always encourage folks writers and folks who love the creative word, I always encourage them to pursue an interest outside of writing, because often times that feeds your writing," Ajani said while addressing the attendees.

Jones and many of those involved said the night served as another reminder of how creativity and social advocacy can meet in meaningful and impactful ways.

With Prop 50, Californians weigh pros, cons of fighting fire with fire

Tom Nolan
Contributing Writer

When it comes to redistricting, many would argue that California didn't start the fight. But supporters of Prop 50, which seeks to temporarily replace redistricting laws in the state, claim the nation's most populous state has an opportunity to even the scales this election season - by embracing the very tactics that tipped them in the first place.

Students passing the Alumni and Visitor Center Parking Lot in recent weeks may have noticed banners advertising a ballot drop box there. This resource has enabled members of the campus community to do their part in a special election on Prop 50. The voting period is currently ongoing and concludes on Tuesday, Nov. 4.

Also known as the "Election Rigging Response Act," Prop 50 was drafted by Gov. Gavin Newsom with support from the Democrat-led state legislature. The measure is intended as a response to redistricting efforts in Texas, which passed earlier this year.

Those efforts allegedly began with urging from the Trump administration, which fears losses in the 2026 midterm elections could cost the GOP its narrow majority in the U.S. House of Representatives. That would create a significant "doorstop" to the White House's agenda, forcing the GOP to rely on bipartisan support to pass legislation and even leaving the president vulnerable to the dreaded impeachment proceedings that marred his first



Visual by Amanda Richman

term. In response, he has directed Texas and other red states to begin redrawing their congressional districts in order to give his party an edge in future elections.

Texas Gov. Greg Abbott signed the new maps into law in August, a move that constituted successful gerrymandering - a process of deliberate redistricting to benefit one class or political party over another. In Texas's case, the maps are expected to flip five blue-leaning districts, replacing Democratic representatives there with Republicans during next year's midterms.

While the theory of negating those gains with retaliatory redistricting in blue states seems simple, the process is far more complicated in practice. Unlike Texas, where state legislators enjoy broad power to redraw congressional districts, California has historically maintained more strict protections against gerrymandering. The 2008 Voters First Act created the California Citizens Redistricting Commission, an independent, nonpartisan committee to oversee redistricting in the state.

The governor and Democratic lawmakers, however, argue

that desperate times call for desperate measures. Prop 50 would temporarily sideline the Redistricting Commission, restoring state legislature's authority to redraw districts for the 2026, 2028 and 2030 election cycles. After that, redistricting power would purportedly return to the Commission.

In accordance with the stated goal of cancelling out Texas GOP gains, the redrawn California congressional maps are also expected to yield up to five flipped seats. While the Democrats are still likely to be at a disadvantage going into next year's midterms - redistricting has mostly stalled in other blue states, while Missouri, North Carolina and other red states have already begun drawing and approving their own gerrymandered maps - passing Prop 50 would allow them to avoid the worst-case scenario, whereby flipping the House would become nearly impossible. Proponents of the amendment include former President Barack Obama, who said that "democracy is on the ballot" in the special election.

County election officials began mailing ballots to registered voters on Oct. 6, with delivery status for ballots available through the state-run "Where's My Ballot?" online tool. For those who have not yet received their ballots, an in-person voting center at the Embassy Suites in Seaside will also be open from Oct. 31 until 8 p.m. on Election Day, Nov. 4.

Dancing into a New Era: Otter Dance Team's Rebrand

Jocelyn Corona
Staff Writer

A recent change in the partnership between Otter Athletics and Otter Dance Team has granted the team permission to use the rebranded logo on new uniforms.

The Otter Dance Team has been sharing their spirit with Cal State Monterey Bay (CSUMB) for over 16 years now. The Sports Club Council (SCC) oversees the governance of sports clubs, providing guidelines and funds for the various organizations, including the Otter Dance Team.

"The dance team falls under a club, meaning we have to pay for everything ourselves," said Kaitlyn Ball, president of the Otter Dance Team. "We just get a certain amount of money from the SCC board."

The Otter Dance Team is not considered an official athletics team on campus, so they are not automatically granted usage of the new Otter Athletics logo.

The Otter Dance Team board members (Ball, Kelcey Simic, Giuliana Landzaat and Naia Concepcion) and their coach (Grace Sanchez, an alumni of the team) have been working throughout the spring and summer in order to get the correct licensing of the new logo.

"I would say, the longest part (of the process) was the licensing, mak-



Otter Dance Team is now considered an athletic team at CSUMB

ing sure everything was right since we are mainly student run," Ball said.

"We're one of the first clubs to initiate this usage of the new brand. We were kind of really putting ourselves out there to try to figure it out on our own, but I would say that was the hardest part, like, where to start and how to build that connection with athletics."

The new uniforms have contributed to a more cohesive look at sports performances club members say. Additionally, the partnership has contributed to the Otter Dance Team, "gaining traction with other teams," said Ball, with new performance opportunities in the works for the future, possibly with the Monterey Bay Football Club.

A close connection to the Otter Dance Team is the women's volleyball team says Ball, "They've been super awe-

especially as a fully student-led organization it can become a lot to balance.

"We are all putting in a lot of hours outside of those designated eight hours of practice," Ball said. "Usually that takes place on a Sunday, and we can be in the studio from anywhere from, like 3 to 6 hours on Sundays, where we're just choreographing routines or planning what fundraisers we're going to do next."

These hours and dedication aren't just within the fall and spring semesters, "Also throughout the summer, we actually meet, about once a week for on average two hours, and we just try to plan as much as we can for the year, so that not as much is on our plates during the semester," Ball said.

A way to support the Otter Dance Team is by participating in the workshops they hold twice a semester. These workshops are open to all experience levels, anyone can come, warm up, stretch, and learn a choreographed routine. The workshops cost \$5 directly supporting the team. The best methods to keep in touch with the Otter Dance Team is through their Instagram @otter_dance_team and MyRaft.

"I think that's what makes the club super special, too. It's run by people who are super passionate," Ball said, "and they want to create a space for other students to feel comfortable and welcome."

"The members of Otter Dance Team are more than just teammates, Ball said, "We also feel comfortable to talk about all the issues that come up being a student because it's not easy. And we found a good community to come to and lean on each other when we need to."

This team dynamic and community isn't held up by itself, the leaders on the team put in a lot of time and effort in order to keep the team successful,

Meet the monsters behind Hollywood's horror classics

HAYLEY'S
HOT TAKES

Hayley Matto

Staff Writer

Taking a break from the reviews in honor of Hallo-Week, I decided to switch off the lights, hit the couch, pop some popcorn and dive into the four vintage films that started it all. Each one set the scene and created the blueprint for our classic monsters, horror movies, books and television-shows for decades, perhaps even centuries to come.

The monster to start it all was of course none other than Count Dracula, played by Bela Lugosi. Lugosi would go on to play many more horror characters, and forever be known as Bela "Dracula" Lugosi. With no sound track and minimal special effects the question is where the film's large budget of \$355,000 all went. Nonetheless without this film it's likely the massive explosion of spooky films would have never happened! "Frankenstein" may not have been made if not for "Dracula's" success.

The Universal Studios production "Dracula" was not only the catalyst for Hollywood's jump into the horror genre but also produced one of the most influential characters and stories to inspire generations to come. The movie – set up the tropes we all recognize now as synonymous with vampires, holy water, crucifixes, bats, mind control and stakes. It influenced movies and shows like "Buffy the Vampire Slayer," the entirety of the "Twilight" series, "The Vampire Diaries," "Nosferatu" (both the 1979 film and the character in 2024's "SpongeBob SquarePants"), "Interview with a Vampire," "Van Helsing," "Dark Shadows," "Hotel Transylvania" and countless other retellings of Dracula's origins, most popular being the Bram Stoker's adaptation.

Moving onto "Frankenstein" this film starred our second horror icon, Boris Karloff, as Frankenstein (the creature) and was also a Universal Studios production. Riding those coat-tails from "Dracula," director James Whale made the creative decision to open the film with a verbal disclaimer in a very "Twilight Zone" like fashion stating, "it may shock you, it may even horrify you" gearing the audience up for a tale sure to send shivers down their spines. For a Mary Shelley diehard like myself, this film didn't so much knock my socks off in thrills and chills, but it certainly hit a few of those tropes and themes I had hoped for. Plus the special effect makeup done on Karloff was incredible for its time, honestly, putting to shame some of the CGI and not so practical effects we see in films today. Scares aside, I think this film was successful in setting up future Frankenstein-inspired films,



laying out the groundwork for themes around life and death, God and creation and emotional intelligence to be explored. Most notable were the iconic lines of "He's alive!" followed by "Now I know what it feels like to be God" being spoken just moments after the monster is reanimated. A few films that have taken this story and ran with it in all kinds of directions while still holding true to the themes presented are, sequel films "The Bride of Frankenstein" and "The Son of Frankenstein," "Lisa Frankenstein," "Edward Scissor Hands," "Rocky Horror Picture Show," animated film "Frankenweenie," "Poor Things" and even "The Terminator." The re-tellings don't end there as there are release dates set for November for Guillermo del Toro's genre bending horror sci-fi film adaption of Mary Shelley's Victor Frankenstein.

Up next we have what I'd like to call our honorable-mention, "The White Zombie." The only one on our classics list instead coming from Halperin Productions, not Universal. However, upon doing further research it turns out they used Universal sets to film for all 11 nights of filming and star Bela Lugosi as the zombie master "Murder" Legendre. Despite it not being my favorite on the list, it does hit some incredible milestones within the horror genre. It's considered the first feature-length zombie film making it a key part of horror cinema history. Its budget was far smaller than the Universal pictures, at just \$50,000.

That being said, this film did a few things the larger productions didn't. It incorporated special effects not yet seen, floating eyes, transposing images on top of certain scenes, giving the illusions of mind control or hallucinations and it had a sound track! Something we had yet to see be done in either "Dracula" or "Frankenstein."

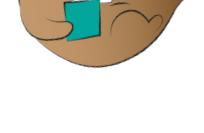
Most importantly to me was what this film would later inspire, unironically giving life to the character of the Zombie. We've seen them depicted in so many ways since this film in shows and movies like, "The Walking Dead," "Warm Bodies," "Zombieland," "28 Days Later," "28 Years Later," "Dawn of the Dead," "Shaun of the Dead," "World War Z," "The Evil Dead" and even in video games like "The Last of Us" later receiving its own television series. Without the Halperin brothers taking on this unique and never before seen creature, it's very likely none of these fantastic zombie flicks would have made it onto our big screens.

Finally, our fourth iconic monster "The Mummy." My personal favourite of all the films, seemed to learn a lot from its predecessors. It balanced the plot, starred Karloff and balanced its soundtrack with its on-set mics to create a cohesive not jarring blown-out soundscape for the film. This one, I believe, did more for teaching future horror films what successful suspense and stakes feels like, versus just telling us a story. It kept me hooked and rooting for various characters for different reasons, sometimes even feeling co nflicted in these feelings. The makeup, much like what we saw in "Frankenstein," was flawless and really showcased Karloff's ability to mold into whatever character he is given to portray.

This was a film with such a strong plot, that it set up a successful series of remakes and a few original takes, using anthropology and Egyptian histories. "Indiana Jones," "The Mummy" (1999), "The Scorpion King" and believe it or not even "X-Men: Apocalypse" took inspiration from this 1932 movie.

So if you find yourself in a rerun rut, or curious about some of your favorite halloween monsters origin stories, maybe consider hitting your own couch at home and tune in to just over four hours of early Hollywood's 1930s horror flicks. Get your education and your scare on all at once this Halloween, by watching these four classics; then rewatch your horror favorites with a new sense of appreciation - knowing where it all began.

4 Spooky reads to get you in your Halloween fears



Eli Heck
Staff Writer

If you're looking for a read to send chills down your spine and set the eerie tone for Halloween here are four of my favorites that cover everything from classic monsters to psychological mind games. Whether you want old school horror or something that hits a little closer to home, each of these stories brings its own fright.

"Carrie" by Stephen King
It's hard to talk about horror without mentioning Stephen King, and "Carrie" is one of his most iconic works for a reason. The story builds an atmosphere of dread from the start, slowly pulling you into the psychological torment of its main character. It's striking, emotional and ends with one of the most unforgettable climaxes in horror fiction. A classic King experiences unsettling and deeply human all at once. I am not the biggest fan of Stephen King's writing, but I was captivated throughout the entire story and seeing Carrie's decent and eventual undoing was thrilling at every step.

"And suddenly it didn't seem to matter any more, nothing would matter if she could turn over, turn over and see the stars, turn over and look once and die."

"Frankenstein" by Mary Shelley
Before modern horror, there was "Frankenstein." Mary Shelley's masterpiece remains one of the most important novels in the genre, blending gothic atmosphere with philosophical depth. It explores themes of abandonment, prejudice and the dangers of unchecked ambition, raising questions about what it means to be human. Both the scientist and the monster linger long after you turn the last page, proving that true horror often lies in the consequences of our own creations. Especially upon the recent release of Guillermo Del Toro's new Frankenstein film, this is a perfect novel to pick up and read one of the greatest classics of horror.

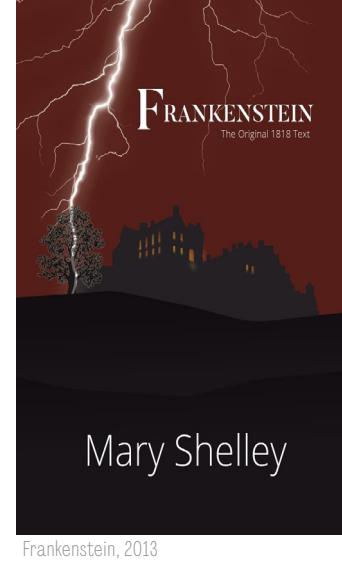
"I was benevolent and good; misery made me a fiend. Make me happy, and I shall again be virtuous."

"The Intruder" by Frieda McFadden

For a taste of the newer novels and authors within horror, Frieda McFadden's "The Intruder" delivers masterfully crafted suspense and mystery, leaving you questioning the characters and your own eyes while reading between its covers(?). Released earlier this month, it's the kind of story that makes you think you've solved the mystery, until it flips everything upside down in the last 50 pages. McFadden has a talent for suspense that feels modern, fast-paced and perfectly suited for a late-night reading session.

"I probably won't die tonight. And if I do, the good news is that nobody will miss me."

"I Have No Mouth, and I Must Scream" by Harlan Ellison
Last but not least is my favorite short story of all time. Ellison's post-apocalyptic short story, written in 1967, is to this day one of the most famous examples of dystopian horror.



Frankenstein, 2013

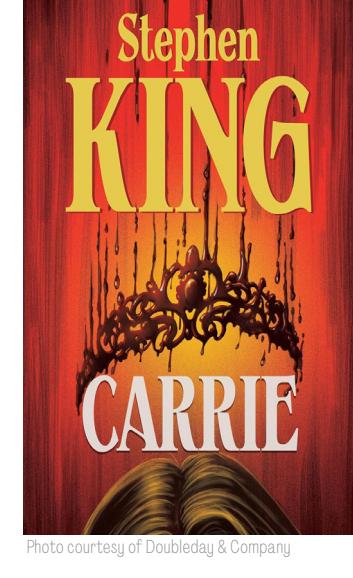


Photo courtesy of Doubleday & Company

The tale follows remnants of humanity trapped and tortured by a supercomputer with godlike control of the world they live in. Beneath the science fiction, body horror and psychological thrills lies something much deeper: an exploration of existential dread, human resilience and the dangers of technology without mortality or regulations. It's bone-chilling, brilliant and lingers with the terrifying thought of what if eternal suffering is worse than death?

"Surrounded by madness, surrounded by hunger, surrounded by everything but death, I knew death was our only way out."

Whether you're looking for classic monsters, mind games or philosophical nightmares, these reads are perfect for finishing out the Halloween season.

Photo of the Week

Looking to showcase your photography? Enter our ongoing photo contest throughout Volume 9 for a chance to have your work featured in our weekly issues. Check out our Instagram @thelutrinae for more details!



Peace Amongst Chaos

Ben Grivetto



**The Lutrinae
wants to hear
your voices!**

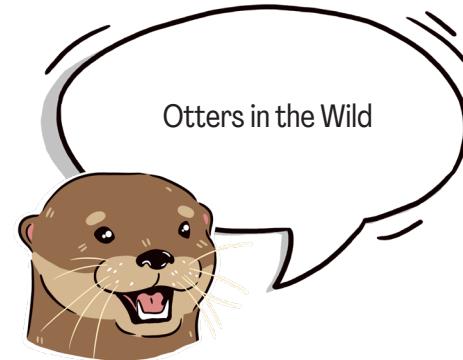
Want to showcase your work in the student newspaper?

Email mehughes@csumb.edu to have your work considered for our next issue.

We love to see your:
illustrations • short stories • poems • opinions

What is your biggest fear or phobia?

Maddie Honomichl
Social Media Manager



What's your biggest fear—spiders, heights, or something even scarier? Check out @thelutrinae Instagram page Mondays to see how on-campus Otters responded.

Happy Hallo-week Otters!

Upcoming Events

Thurs, Oct. 30

Don't miss the last AS Farmers Market of the semester from 2 to 6 p.m. in Lot 71. Closing the Fall semester off with a bang, this week's theme is Halloween!

Thurs, Oct. 30

Join the Otter Cross Cultural Center in the OSU Ballroom from 5 to 8 p.m. for a night of art and cultural festivities at the Dia De Los Muertos Ceremony.

Thurs, Oct. 30

Let's do the time warp again! The Performing Otters will perform their annual Rocky Horror Picture Show in the OSU Ballroom from 7 to 10 p.m.

WORD SCRAMBLE

Can you unscramble this list of popular Halloween costumes?

pmrvei

wwleerfo

chwti

taprspo

surhereop

ilnlavi

lnekteso

ehlsrsa

eemm

hcacatrer

Fri, Oct. 31

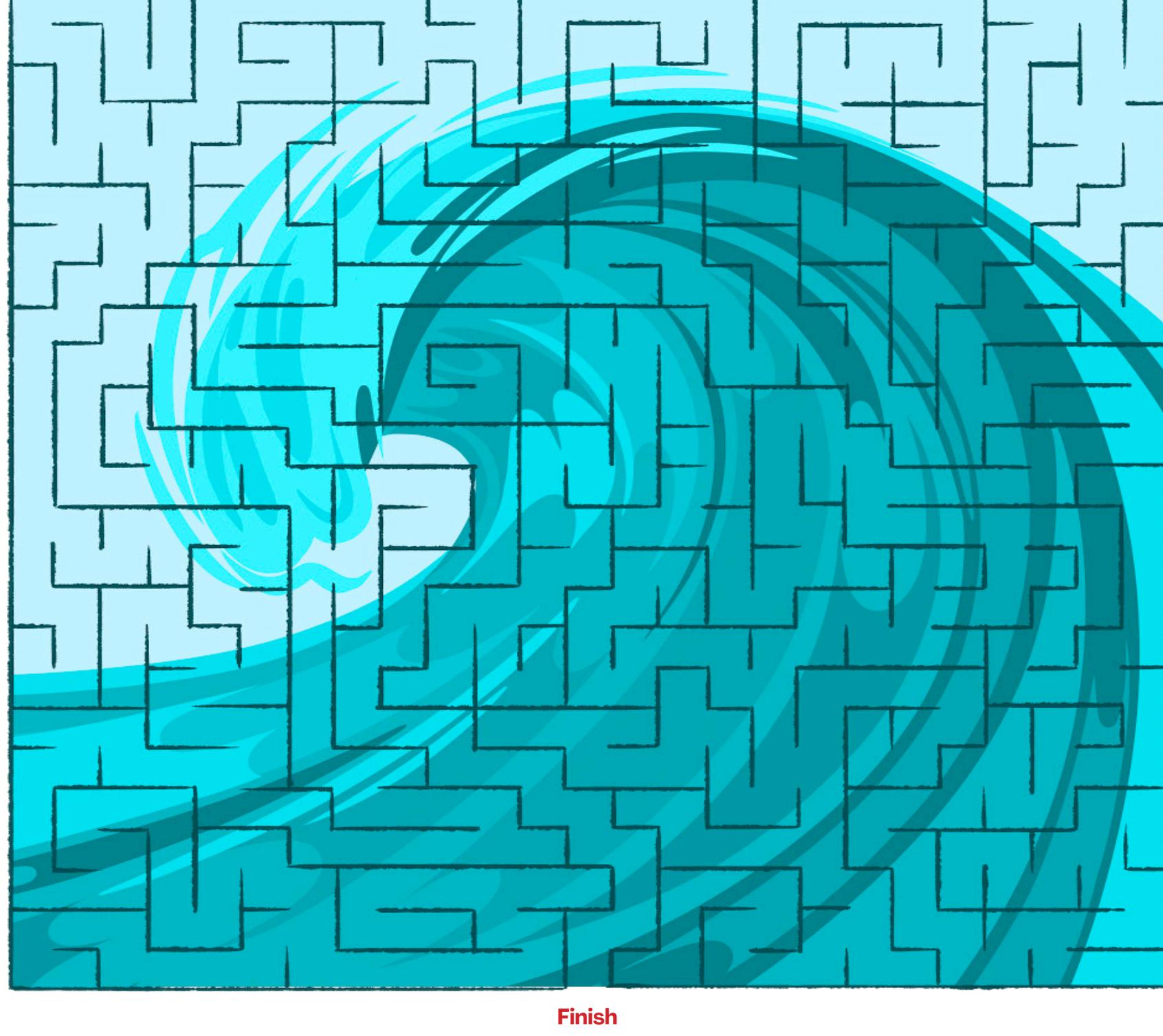
First Year Eats Events will be holding a DIY Murder, Munchies and Mystery night from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. at the Otter Express. From slime making to a mini murder mystery game, this event is sure to spark Halloween-night fun..

Fri, Oct. 31

Looking for Halloween plans? Dance the night away with your best ghoul friends at Rainbow Raft's Halloqueer Night! From 7 to 10 p.m. in the OSU Ballroom, engage in music, food, photo booth pictures and a costume contest.

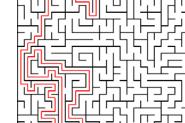
Start

Finish



ANSWERS:

Vampire, witch, superhero, skeleton, mume, werewolf, pop-star, villain, slasher, character



Vampire, witch, superhero, skeleton, mume, werewolf, pop-star, villain, slasher, character