

Call for Papers

Haunted Cities: Spaces, Spectres, and Urban Hauntologies

Edited Collection

Marko Lukić, Irena Jurković

Cities are palimpsests of the living and the dead, spaces where, as Derrida's concept of hauntology reminds us, the past continues to loom over the present, unsettling linear time. At the same time, these urban spaces illustrate what Henri Lefebvre calls the production of space as an always-unfinished process of conflict and memory. These spectral tensions find some of their most creative and thoroughly -explored expressions in the realm of fiction. In works such as Henry James's *The Jolly Corner* (1908) and China Miéville's *The City & the City* (2009) imagined haunted urban spaces reveal what David Harvey describes as spaces of uneven development, where suppressed histories seep back as phantoms. By contrast, Mark Z. Danielewski's *House of Leaves* (2000) transforms a suburban home into an unnavigable space—an infinite labyrinth that echoes Jameson's postmodern urban disorientation.

These literary haunted spaces establish a narrative and conceptual framework that cinema both inherits and expands. Film, as a visual medium, transforms abstract urban anxieties into embodied and sensory experiences, intensifying the spatial logic of literary hauntings. From the stigmatized Cabrini-Green in *Candyman* (1992/2021) to the cursed Tokyo apartment blocks of *Ring* (1998) or *Dark Water* (2002), cinematic cities stage Foucault's heterotopias, hosting parallel realities that rupture everyday geographies. Digital and alternative media intensify these hauntings with narrative forms that blur the boundaries between fiction, film, and real-world space. *Silent Hill*, a horror video-game franchise, reimagines rust-stained streets as psychic cartographies of guilt; urban-exploration channels like *The Proper People* and *Exploring with Josh* broadcast real-time descents into abandoned malls and hospitals, creating participatory hauntologies; Instagram "ruin porn" and TikTok ghost-hunting micro-videos circulate affective geotags that turn everyday viewers into curators of the uncanny.

Drawing on Anthony Vidler's architectural uncanny, Mark Fisher's weird and the eerie, and Judith Butler's notion of grievability, this collection asks how such literary, cinematic and digital spectres animate contemporary cities, mediate collective trauma, and reconfigure the politics of place—inviting scholars to map these restless urban phantoms. We seek proposals from interested scholars from across the disciplines that critically engage with haunted and/or haunting urban spaces from the modernist period to the present-day metropolises, including imagined urban spaces of the future. Submissions may explore cities across diverse global and transnational contexts, engaging with a variety of media—from literature and film to video games and other digital platforms.

Essays may explore but are not limited to the following topics:

- Urban Hauntologies: theorizing spectral temporalities, ruins, and palimpsestic geographies
- Media & Mediation: film, television, podcasts, video games, VR/AR, and YouTube series that (re)construct urban hauntings
- Literary Ghostscapes: gothic, weird, speculative, or realist narratives that map haunted streets and buildings
- Spectral Infrastructures: abandoned transit lines, sewers, data centres, smart-city dead zones, and digital afterlives
- Memory & Trauma: post-conflict or post-disaster ghosts, memorial architecture, dark tourism circuits
- Sound & Haunting: sonic ecologies, urban field recordings, auditory hauntings
- Embodied Haunting: flânerie, psychogeography, paranormal investigations, affective mapping of fear
- Decolonial & Queer Hauntings: counter-memories, suppressed histories, marginalized presences in the city
- Climate & Eco-Hauntings: rising waters, toxic ruins, and environmental spectres in urban futures
- Methodologies of the Uncanny: digital humanities (GIS, XR), ethnography, archival excavation, art practice as research

We invite all interested scholars to send their proposal (400-500 words) and short bio (max. 200 words, including author's academic affiliation) to hauntedcityspaces@gmail.com . Full-length essays should be 6000-8000 words (including references, notes, and citations) and follow the Harvard style guide. University of Wales Press has expressed interest in the volume as part of their Horror Studies series.

Deadline for abstracts: July 1st 2025

Notification of acceptance: July 15th 2025

Deadline for essay submission: October 15th 2025