

The Scariest Halloween Ever!

31st October 2019

What would you do if you were walking home late at night, and suddenly a clown jumped out at you? Well, in 2016, this might just have happened to you...

In 2016, police all over the world received reports of multiple **sightings** of people disguised as evil "killer" clowns in **incongruous** settings, such as near forests and schools, first in the United States and Canada, and later in several other countries.

The first incident to be reported took place in Green Bay, Wisconsin, where a **creepy** clown was seen **roaming** an empty car-park under a bridge in the centre of town at night.

Five photos of him started going viral on 1st August, 2016, and a Facebook page was created shortly afterwards, **claiming** the clown was named 'Gags'. In the days that followed, the pictures ended up being discussed on numerous important news channels. Suspicions of the character being related to a horror film were confirmed when a Wisconsin filmmaker Adam Krause announced the pictures were a **publicity stunt** for a **then** unreleased short film entitled *Gags*. A full-length film was produced based on the short film and premiered in 2018 with a wide release planned for September 2019.

The phenomenon later spread to many other cities in the US, most notably Greenville, South Carolina, where

a 9-year-old boy told his mother that two suspicious men dressed as clowns had tried to **lure** him into the **nearby** woods. By mid-October 2016, clown sightings and attacks had been reported in nearly all US states, 9 out of 13 provinces and territories of Canada, and 18 other countries. British communities were described as "horrified" and a lot of pressure had been placed on police resources.

The World Clown Association president Randy Christensen spoke out against the current trend of people dressing up as clowns to frighten others. Naturally, circuses and other clown-related businesses were affected. In fact, in October 2016, McDonald's decided that Ronald McDonald would keep a lower profile as a result of the incidents. A sociologist referred to 2016 as "a bad time to be a professional clown". While some shops even banned the sale of clown costumes, the killer clown **craze** saw a significant increase in sales of clown suits in and near Glasgow, Scotland.

To make things worse, news reports warned of a series of clown-initiated attacks to take place on 31st October that same year. During Halloween, some Floridians decided to go **armed** while **trick-or-treating**.

Thankfully, there were no widespread **assaults** as threatened, but one family from Florida were attacked by a group of approximately 20 people in clown masks. However, no arrests were made.

➡ Adapted from wikipedia.org by ECP coach Alison Keable

Before you read the article, find this vocabulary in the text:

sighting: an instance of seeing something, typically unusual or rare
incongruous: out of place
creepy: scary
to roam: to walk aimlessly (with no aim)
to claim: to say
then: at that time
a publicity stunt: a planned event to attract public attention
to lure: to tempt someone to go somewhere or do something
nearby: close by, in the area
a craze: temporary widespread enthusiasm
armed: carrying a weapon
trick-or-treating: going from door to door asking for sweets at Halloween
an assault: an attack



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Photo by Andrés Gómez on Unsplash

Let's chat about that!

Write your opinions in an email and send them to your ECP coach!

Did you find this article funny or disturbing?

Do you think the publicity stunt for *Gags* was a success?

Why do people find clowns so scary?

If you saw a clown at night, would you report it?

What's the scariest film you've ever seen?

Dates for your diary!

Coffee Saturdays:

5th Oct ✓
2nd Nov
7th Dec
11th Jan
1st Feb
7th Mar
4th Apr
2nd May
6th Jun

Cinema Nights:

25th Oct ✓
29th Nov
20th Dec
31st Jan
28th Feb
27th Mar
24th Apr
29th May
26th Jun

LIVE!English presents:

COFFEE SATURDAYS!

Come and socialise in English!

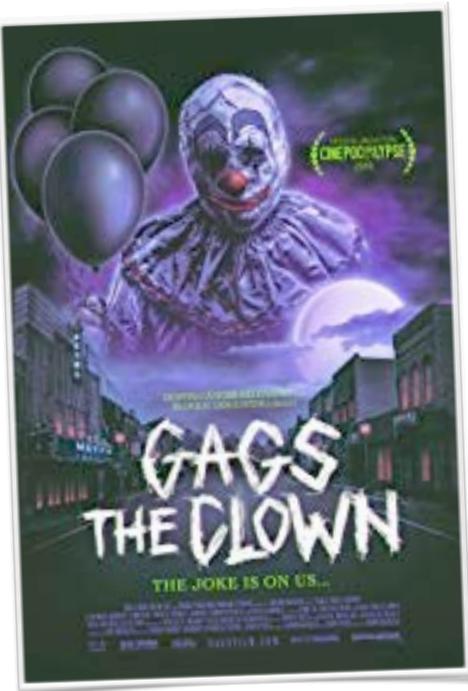
First Saturday of every month

Coffee Saturdays!

Next date: Saturday, 2nd November

Time: 11:00 to 12:30

Place: Panadería Bertiz, C/Francia 23



Let's chat a bit more...



Watch the trailer for the movie 'Gags the Clown'

Click [here](#)

Would you enjoy a film like this? Give reasons for your answer.

English can be *scary stuff*...

Are you familiar with these frightening expressions?

(as) blind as a bat

unable to see well

I'm as blind as a bat without my glasses.

dead and buried

completely finished and not to return

That relationship is dead and buried.

dead centre

the exact middle

She hit the target dead centre.

dead on your feet

very tired

I was dead on my feet after work on Monday.

to dig your own grave

to do something that will cause you problems later

He's digging his own grave by quitting that job.

(as) pale as a ghost

exceptionally pale (white), due to nausea or fear.

He was as pale as a ghost upon hearing the news.

to have a skeleton in the closet

to have a secret which, if revealed, would damage your image

Michael Jackson had a few skeletons in the closet...

