

Don't go into the lights!



As I was taking (bad) photos of my rapidly progressing Dead Thing Driveway, I experienced a moment of profound reflection.

No, gazing upon all those skeletons didn't have me ruminating about life and death, the afterlife and other such metaphysical and spiritual considerations. This was Halloween, for goodness sake, not a time at all for spiritual meanderings!

What struck me in that moment was the extraordinary transformation – it might not even be too bold to say metamorphosis – from a display based primarily on lights to one based on design.

Let me interject here that I feel no shame or embarrassment for my earlier Halloween decorations. All of my attempts to attract unwary kiddies to my nightmarish home (where I would give them goodies and fun stuff, so I guess it wasn't that nightmarish) were imaginatively conceived and, if I may be forgiven a moment of immodesty, executed with style and fervor.

Still, as I look back on previous years' displays, which grew in size and complexity each succeeding Halloween, the concept and execution recently is markedly different.

It's tough to say which vision is more difficult to realize. The lights and inflatables required massive amounts of extension cords and battles with fuse-tripped overnight

deflations. Plus, there was much ladder use and my fear of ladders is well documented on this blog.

The new displays, though, require weeks of prep work in painting (fumes) and laying out (bending and lifting). The adventure with the 400 pounds of mulch alone put the new displays in a class of hurt all their own.

Which is better? Which is more fun? Well, as much as I enjoy the cornucopia of color and variety from all those lighting objects, the "scene setting" I'm doing these days is definitely taking my freak to a whole new level for Halloween.

I face a quandary on what to do with the hundreds of unused Halloween lights. It's possible I may never return to that type of display and they do take up considerable room inside my storage closet. That's room I desperately need now, with the massive expansion of Dead Things this year (not to mention dozens of styrofoam blocks and more edging stones).

No matter the decision, I'm going to have to move all my party accessories (folding chairs and tables) onto the patio, exposing them to elements and (more annoyingly) bug and lizard home construction. Conceivably, I can run a tarp over them to minimize the destructiveness of nature, but there goes a chunk of the patio.

It was probably inevitable, though. In my constant search for new ideas and attempts to "up my game" each Halloween, sooner or later I was going to have to evolve my displays. Even the current design pattern with stones and blocks will one day (health permitting) give way to new and (hopefully) more cool ideas.

I'm pretty happy with the Dead Thing Driveway idea so far and I've already got next year's design mapped in my head (what can I say...it's a disease!).

For all the logistical issues I may have with Halloween, I

can't help feeling comforted in knowing that while my space may continue to be limited, my imagination suffers from no such constraints!