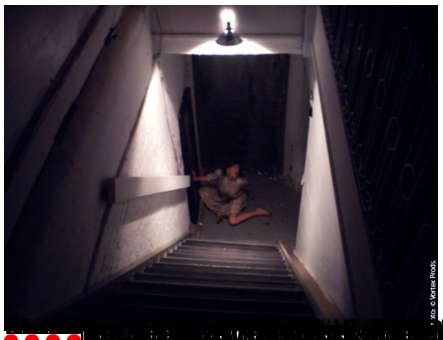
The month of October is a frightening one indeed: ghosts, ghouls, goblins, breast cancer awareness. And contrary to popular belief, the festivities of the month only get better with age, like a fine wine. As kids we went door to door, trick-or-treating and bobbing for apples while donning the disguises of our favorite Saturday-morning anthropomorphic animal fighting teams. As we transitioned into adulthood, we've donned the outfits of promiscuous maids and zombie versions of celebrities who have died in the past year, and are all the better for it. In recent years, the time-honored tradition of the Halloween haunted house has shifted its appeal toward an older demographic, offering suggestive themes and graphic entertainment geared toward adult audiences—and in New York City, it's no exception. Among the best offered this year is Vortex Productions' new Blackout.

Blackout Haunted House (located on 54 West 39th Street between 5th and 6th Avenues) is the latest horror-themed attraction to be offered by the creators of A Midsummer Nightmare and last year's NYC Halloween Haunted House, and is unique in its ability to toy with taboos, play on your paranoia, strip you from your comfort zone and embellish on your imagination (not to mention your gag reflex)—which, when compared the sterile existence of everyday life, are all positives and should not be shied away from. The house (see its website here) has a unique set of rules that set it apart from other haunted attractions. All participants must walk though alone (mostly in dark-to-pitch-black conditions) with no exceptions, you must be over 18, you must stay on the marked path, etc.



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