

Costumer's Quarterly

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Costumer's Quarterly is brought to you by.....

Carl Mami, Editor
Dora Buck, Assistant Editor
Darla Kruger, ICG President
Zelda Gilbert, ICG Publicity
Elaine Mami, Roving Reporter
Heather Buck, Roving Reporter

c.mami@verizon.net
dfbuck@hotmail.com
devinedwk@aol.com
ZBLGilbert@aol.com
ecmami@hotmail.com
hjbuck84@hotmail.com

Or write: CD Mami
85 W. McClellan Avenue
Livingston, NJ 07039
Attn: Costumer's Quarterly

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Table of Contents

Table of Contents.....	3
Editor's Message.....	4
Who We Are	6
Creating A Successful Workshop.....	9
Lorgnettes and Folding Glasses.....	12
Doll Making Class with Wendy Froud.....	17
Peggy Kennedy	20
Embroiderers Gather No Moss	21
Long Live The Queen	23
Budget Costume Illumination.....	26
Budget Costume Electronics.....	29
Did you know –.....	32
The Ultimate Costumer's Experience:	33
Acting in a Major Hollywood Movie	33
Fabricholic's Will.....	41
Where I Shop, and Why (Part II).....	43

Editor's Message

So Long and thanks for the fish

One more time.

As much as I dislike the CQ and the problems it has caused me, I am sorry to see it die. When I took over I had great hopes for this child like any parent. I knew that if I gave it love and time and did what needed doing it would grow to be what I knew it could be,

I was wrong.

This child needed more than even I or my staff could give it. It needed you folks out there, and that never was to be.

Understand I am not talking about the fact no one would send articles. Yes that was a part of this. I am talking about the need and desire to see the CQ become something we could be proud of. Silly, right, proud of 40 odd pages of things most other people would not look twice at and I expected everyone to be proud of what it represented, US the costuming community it was ours, not much to look at I admit but ours none the less.

Oh well with this last issue a era is over and the new newsletter will soon be upon us small, fast, full of what ever fits its size, and cheap. You will not have to pay for it; it will be part of the dues.

I am told the newsletter will serve the needs of the community better in every way, and maybe it is true (as true as new and improved is on a soapbox).

The line from the poem reads "tear her tattered ensign down long has it waved on high" the truth she never was as proud as the ship that poem was written for, she was slow and a problem and I cursed her each day I was in charge. Yet I wonder if we had taken the time we spend on the net each day and gave her something could she have been the belle of the ball.

I guess we will never know will we.

But enough tears on with the show and we have a really big show for you tonight.

Kevin Has 2 fine articles in the issue and Bruce Adams wrote something special. A view I think we can all enjoy. Toni gave us something about our costuming cousins in the SCA. Also some other things I know you will enjoy.

Dora worked extra hard making this final issue one any one would be proud of, she has given each issue her special touch with great care and love and this one got no less.

This has never been a one-man show it is a one-woman show with the rest of us doing as needed to be done. My name is on the door marked editor but Dora has been the moving force to make sure it gets done. In fairness all of us have done something but she makes it work each time when I get mad and yell or curse, she just fixes it

One more note. In Dec of 2000 Peggy Kennedy past away her farewell was to have been in the first quarter of 2001 I forgot it, we placed it here.

With all that having been said

"Goodnight Mrs. Calabash wherever you are"

Carl Mami

Editor

Dora Buck

Person in Charge

Elaine Mami & Heather Buck

Staff

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- Science Fiction and Fantasy Costumers
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- SCA and Pirates
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- And You!



Want more information contact:

Jess Miller, Corresponding Secretary,

7348 Milwood Avenue, #1,

Canoga Park CA 91303-3426

Who we Are

Dora's Comments: I was really wondering who did make up the ICG. I know we have a WEB site, we have the archeives, but Who Are WE. Okay so I went to our WEB site and clicked on all of the links concerning our chapters. Below is the list that I could come up with by visiting. I apologize up front if your name was on your WEB page and did not see it. I am not sure what will happened with the CQ but even as recording secretary of the ICG, I do not know who we are.

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Creating A Successful Workshop

By Lisa Ashton

Costume Cons, and to a lesser extent, regional cons, are fertile ground for both workshops and demonstrations to exhibit and teach costume skills and techniques. Almost any costuming method can be successfully explained and demonstrated in small groups, and have the attendees leave with even greater enthusiasm than they started with. These are often very popular time slots, with a good mix of beginners and more advanced levels of costumers, and should have elements geared to both groups.

Most of my experience with presenting various workshops (beads, foam carving, airbrush painting for costumers, making masks or footwear, quilting--both intrinsically and as a costume technique) also applies to teaching these techniques in any setting, not just at cons. I have also taught classes held at bead shops, and done small groups at my home to teach quilting, making Halloween costumes for kids, etc.

Planning is an essential component--especially at a con, where space and time are at a premium. How much time to allot? For example, a workshop teaching beaded embroidery basics probably needs about 1 1/2 to 2 hours. One hour is just not enough (experience speaking here). Also, adequate workspace is required--nice big tables so people can spread out a bit. I usually try to limit hands-on workshops to 10 to 12 people, if I am the only instructor. Often, though, at least one other person has some expertise, and can help coach the less experienced.

Obviously good lighting is a requirement, especially when working with tiny beads, or anything that requires color identification. As far as materials, supplies and equipment go, I make up little "bead starter kits" that I sell for about \$5.00 each at my beading workshops. These consist of a long and a short beading needle, a bobbin of thread, bugle and seed beads (about 6 grams total), and two pieces of 6"x 6" fabric, with fusible already ironed on to the back. I also bring lots of extra small scissors and needle-threaders. Most people sign up or appear at the workshop without prior planning (despite requests to pre-register), so extras are always welcome. If special supplies are needed, people don't mind a small fee (**small** being less than \$5). Generally it's easier and quicker for me to get the supplies together than the Program Director who's requesting the workshop. If the con doesn't give me a budget to pay for it, participants buy the kits from me. For foam carving, I will bring several large bags of foam chunks and usually an eggcrate mattress to cut up.

Usually, I will be asked the maximum number of people I would like to have, and the Program Director will take pre-registrations or post a sign-up sheet for attendees and alternates. It will be advertised as "limited registration". For hands-on activities, it's hard if not impossible to teach more than 10 people at a time. For demonstrations, in which skills are exhibited but is not a hands-on activity, as long as people can see clearly and ask questions about the technique, there's no particular limit. This works better when the

technique requires equipment that is too complex to provide within the limits of a con (my demo on airbrush painting, for example--it's bad enough to drag my own little air compressor around, but to try to find 6 others!?). Also, I know then how many kits and hand-outs to provide.

I have developed fairly detailed hand-outs for my most frequent workshops, and refine them frequently. This is extremely helpful for the participants: they can just observe, and will have all the information RIGHT THERE. I hate taking notes myself, but sometimes I really want to remember a particular point. This way, you can just highlight a section you want to go back to. Also, I usually don't have time to do much other than teach the techniques, step by step. So, with the hand-out, I know they have something to refer to with more background about how to utilize the technique and integrate it into other methods of decoration. The hand-outs also will have line diagrams, where appropriate. And people like to have something to take home.

I usually begin a workshop with a basic explanation of tools needed and materials (i.e. types of beads, types of foam, types of paint, where to find them, etc.--obviously this will all be in the hand-out). For the beading workshop, I generally limit it to teaching three embroidery stitches and one edge-beading technique, and this easily fills up the entire two hours. I'll often bring a few costumes or pieces of completed work with me, as well as photos, to demonstrate the points I want to make about design, color, and use of the technique. Participants love to have pieces they can touch and pass around--it makes the technique much more desirable to learn. Then I'll show a few books, catalogs, and other sources of information about the subject. With almost all processes there are a number of steps, and it's nice if you can show examples of the work in each of the various steps, at least by photographs, if not actual pieces. People are often amazed that you made that finished product out of this piece of simple looking materials (foam, beads, feathers, fabric).

I'll teach my first basic technique, and usually the folks who master it immediately will help the others. One thing I've learned: with beads, it helps to provide already-threaded beading needles, as people often have the most trouble with that, and it can waste time trying to get started. At this point, people will often still be trying the first technique, and I'll move on to the next.

Generally, I end the presentation with mentioning sources for supplies again, and how to organize materials. If the room is not immediately occupied afterwards, I usually stay afterwards for questions and additional pointers. Otherwise, I clean up and rearrange chairs.

I find that it's generally easier to give a workshop solo, unless you have someone you've worked with regularly, or can meet prior to the time and plan how you will each introduce your methods. Otherwise, working with someone with whose work you are unfamiliar with can be self-defeating, unless you get together beforehand and decide who is going to teach what and how. On the other hand, if I've worked with someone previously on a

costume technique, one of us can discuss the techniques while the other demonstrates. This can be an excellent exhibition.

A costuming partner with whom I've worked on several very large complex presentations has worked with me on demos of our carved foam techniques at both regional cons and Costume Con. We have developed a working technique which translates well into our demonstration method; first we take turns showing some of our projects. He is better at explaining the basic 3D creation of the objects, how to design it on paper and "rough out" the foam; he's excellent with the scientific background material. I'm more attuned to the "finishing" techniques: the fine carving, surface decoration, painting techniques. Then we both work with the hands-on component. The workshops have been very popular.

I tried something I've never talked about at the latest CC--giving a demonstration of tanning small animal skins. I didn't think anyone would come, but people did and seemed interested. For this one, I made up a photo board, with photos of the early steps of the process mounted on posterboard with titles. I also had a hand-out. But I think people were most interested in watching me go through the actual messy process of washing the skins, scraping them, tacking them down and applying the tanning chemical. By the following morning I had 4 skins dry and ready to be filed down.

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Lorgnettes and Folding Glasses

Collectors Set Their Sights on . . .

Lorgnettes and Folding Glasses

by Lilian Baker Carlisle



LORGNETTE: as defined by the unabridged English dictionary: "a pair of eyeglasses provided with a long ornamental handle which is used for a sheath for the glasses when not in use; also an opera glass, especially one with a long handle." A turn-of-the-century French dictionary defines the word as a "little magnifying optical instrument to enable one to see objects far away" and it unites lorgnette with telescope, explaining that both these contrivances exaggerate the size of the object. The word derives from the French *lorgnon* meaning peep or spy. *Lorgnon* is also the French word for monocle or "eyeglass for one eye."

Whatever its definition or derivation, the word lorgnette connotes elegance. Over the years before invention and popularization of contact lenses, lorgnettes served as charming accessories for near-sighted 19th and early 20th century women. Apart from its practical value, the lorgnette acquired an added distinction as a fashion adjunct. The possibilities of charming hand manipulations and flirtatious gestures soon appealed to stylish women, even those with 20-20 vision. Society writers of the period spoke knowingly of the "cult" of the lorgnette and accorded highly complex meanings to the various positions and movements of the lorgnette, just as they had interpreted (or invented) the "language of the fan" and the "language of the handkerchief." The lorgnette became a player in the amusing social games of the period, although its rituals remained largely confined to aristocratic circles. Men also joined the cult when diplomats and army officers adopted the monocle at the same time, but the monocle never gained favor among men that the lorgnette did among women.

Lorgnettes are remembered today as Victorian fancies, but their ancestry can be traced much farther back in history. Eyeglasses or spectacles are mentioned in a manuscript dating from 1289. Thirteenth century tradition recalls they were invented to "aid the sight when impaired by age or otherwise." By 1482 several spectacle makers practiced their craft at Nuremberg and London; produced spectacles with rigid side pieces as early as 1727. Benjamin Franklin in 1785 invented the bifocal glasses by cleaving a far-sighted lens in half and substituting a near-sighted lens in the lower section of the frame. Prior to the early 19th century the tortoiseshell or horn mountings for the glasses were exceedingly clumsy and heavy and so they remained until the light metal frame was introduced.

In 1840 the *pince-nez* (literally "pinch nose") appeared. A tight spring kept these eyeglasses on the nose and they can be found with a pivot that allowed them to be folded, as well as the more common permanent bridge piece. On the side of the frame they usually featured a small open circle to use as a handle or through which to thread a ribbon or chain to permit the glasses to hang from the neck or be pinned to the bosom. Later in the century the "shooting" or "scenery" spectacles gained popularity. The lenses were tinted and sanded except for a little polished circular space in the center. The amber tinted ones were advertised as "soothing to the eyes in a bright light." Jewelers sold these and other tinted glasses and recommended them to students who studied under the "intense white light" of the newly-installed gas lights. Again when the incandescent electric light bulb appeared, these colored lenses gained another spate of popularity. In the author's

collection are examples of amber, blue and green lenses, as well as a bright aqua pair. Most incorporate fixed ear pieces, but folding pince-nez frames were also available in tinted lenses.

Pictured above.

Winter fashions in a blue jersey with vest, collar and cuffs embroidered in several colors of metallic threads, Harper's Bazar, December 18, 1888 issue.



Winter costume, black velvet cape with Russian sable collar, embroidered with gold laps and small cape. Harper's Bazar, November 25, 1893 lorgnette in right hand

By the 1840's one begins to find illustrations and engravings incorporating lorgnettes as fashion accessories, but they continued to be regarded as luxurious adjuncts. An 1857 contemporary fashion writer pointed out that they were indeed costly and were "set with gems and pearls or set in jet — some are made of sculptured rose-wood with medallions set round with pearls — beautiful as works of art and wholly distinct from the ebony or ivory type of lorgnette we have been so long accustomed to."

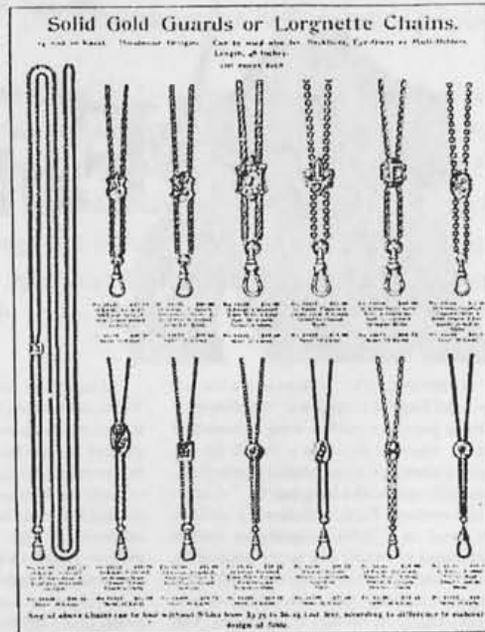
Harper's Bazar shows many engravings featuring lorgnettes and folding eyeglasses and treats them, along with fans and parasols, as tasteful fashion accessories. On October 23, 1875 one finds an "elegant Parisian costume for visiting" where the model in the engraving holds in her hand a long chain from which is suspended a sheathed lorgnette. An 1883 English tailored suit of checked brown cloth with velvet collar and cuffs contains "a single breast pocket for watch or eyeglasses made inside, with only a slit visible outside." This model carries a pair of folding glasses in the unlocked position. An illustration of a model dressed in a blue jersey vest with collar and cuffs embroidered with varicolored metallic threads in a December 18, 1888 engraving peers through a slim handled lorgnette held in her left hand and another haughty model in a "picturesque wrap cape of black velvet falling in full folds with a high flaring collar of Russian sable" holds in her right hand a lorgnette. Enormous leg-of-mutton sleeves decorate the cloth jacket of the model with lorgnette, but it is her new 1896 spring hat, "a sailor shape trimmed with accordion-pleated changeable taffeta with bunches of violets and roses and an aigrette formed of violets" that captures one's attention. Her friend, also with lorgnette, wears an "indescribably light and dainty straw hat covered over with tulle in which are placed ostrich tips and bunches of roses." The hour-glass figure of the model in the new severely tailored cloth gown with square epaulettes and stitched satin bands is well corseted to achieve the fashionable silhouette of 1897. Her long-handled lorgnette completes the fashion plate. *Harper's* August 20, 1898 cover girl walks on the beach at the seashore and her black-braided demi-season gown from Paris scrapes the sand. Her enormous hat trimmed with plumes, feathers, rosettes and more perches on her up-swept hairdo and the gloved right hand casually holding the handle of her lorgnette look quite out of place at the seashore to our modern eyes.



Fashion illustration of an 1883 English tailored suit, velvet collars and cuffs from the *Harper's Bazar*, September 22, 1883 (*Harper's* originally spelled *Bazar* with only one "a"). Model carries folding glasses in right hand.

After the Civil War America's upper middle class expanded, and with increasing style consciousness they eagerly copied customs and costumes of European royalty. With its carefully detailed engravings, *Harper's Bazar* between the years 1867 and 1898 provided illustrations mirroring the mode and lived up to its purpose of being the "repository of Fashion, Pleasure and Instruction that would bring to American women the very latest European and American fashions." It should be noted that the lorgnette appears as one of the preferred fashion accessories with outfits designed for morning hours, dinner gowns, sporting costumes and apparel for special occasions.

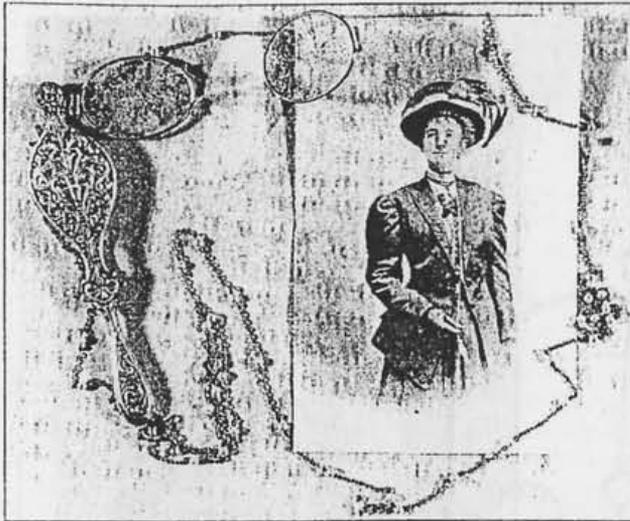
Mrs. Walker, an 1837 fashion reporter, writing in



Photocopy of S.F. Myers advertisement in "The New York Jeweler," 1900.

"Female Beauty" prescribed the ornaments required for each toilette and mentioned that coral, ivory and semi-precious materials were suitable for morning wear, but "in promenade or carriage dress jewels are out of place and nothing should be worn round the neck but a plain or watered ribbon about half an inch broad or a chain of silver or gold as a guard to suspend the watch or eyeglass if the wearer be shortsighted, for wearing an eyeglass without occasion for it is a piece of impertinent affectation." That same year another publication noted that a "minute gold or hair chain, to which the eyeglass is suspended is more frequently seen than a necklace." In 1839, the *World of Fashion* noted that chatelaines were newly fashionable and "the watch, the smelling-bottle, and eyeglass, suspended from the chatelaine are all of modern and elegant workmanship."

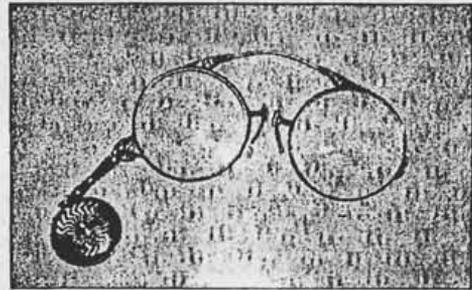
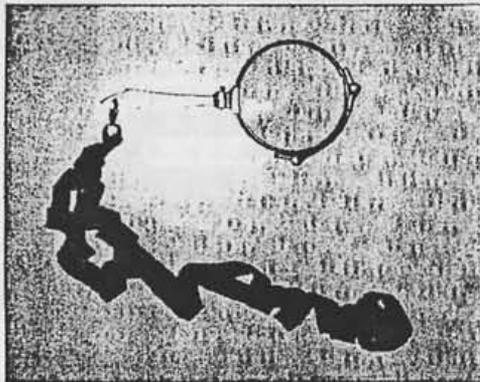
The lorgnette also helped to popularize the long neck chain or guards and in 1890, the *Young Ladies' Journal* took note, "The great novelty in the way of jewelry this winter is the long narrow gold chain with pearls inserted every two inches; it is passed round the neck and falls a good deal below the waist." These chains were called *sautoirs* and *Harper's Bazar* duly illustrated a *sautoir* around the neck of the model wearing the Walking Dress, ca. 1901. She has tucked the end of the chain into a narrow belt and hung a pencil and a folding eyeglass from the tip.



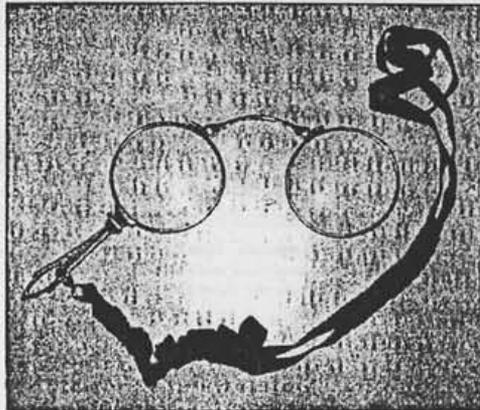
Filigree lorgnette on silver sautoir interspersed at one-inch intervals by small pearls. The lorgnette is marked "STERLING;" gold-washed, and with trade-mark of Brule & Tinkler, Newark, New Jersey, wholesalers of sterling silverware and jewelry from 1896 to 1922. Photo shows Susannah Spafford of Baltimore, Maryland wearing the lorgnette (and an elaborate New Guinea bird of paradise hat) on the Boardwalk at Atlantic City ca.1900

Occasionally sautoirs terminated in tassels, and their presentation varied, sometimes hanging loose, caught in the belt or pinned to the bosom.

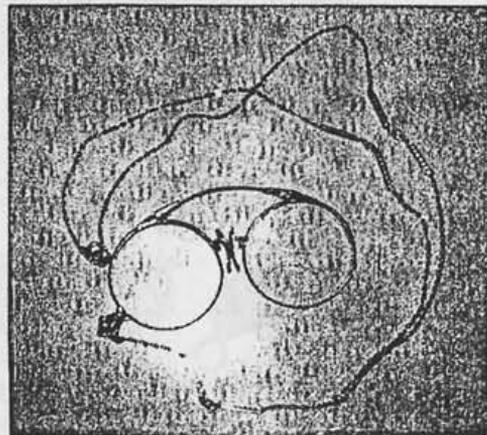
The fancier gold chains incorporated jeweled slides set with diamonds, a carnelian or agate bead, these set at intervals of one or two inches along the whole length. Alexandra, wife of Edward VII, in 1894 when Princess of Wales, was painted by Sir Luke Fildes wearing several narrow bracelets, a pearl dog collar and a long necklace of pearls. It fell far below her waist with the end tucked into the cleavage of her diaphanous dress. With publication of this painting, the seal of approval by royalty had been set on sautoirs and long necklaces. In the *New York Jeweler* S. F. Meyers, a local jeweler, in his 1900 advertisement pictures 13 "solid Gold Guards or Lorgnette Chains" which he also noted "can be used for necklaces, eyeglass or muff holders." Measuring 48 inches long, they were available in either 14 or 10 karat gold, but they were not inexpensive. The finest cost \$75 and was fabricated of flattened trace wire and featured a slide set with an opal and ten inlaid pearls. The least expensive one, woven of 14K Roman gold, priced at just under \$20, contained a single pearl inlaid in the slide. Chains without slides sold for \$3.75 to \$6.25.



Folding bifocal spectacles with eyeglass holder. Engraved spectacle frames marked "1110 12K SP" and with trade-mark of Jules P. Goldstein Company, Providence, Rhode Island. Attached device for securing eyeglasses has retractable chain in decorative engraved case, pin back. Patented by Hugh McDougall in 1894. Marked "KETCHALL KETCHAM & McDOUGALL, EAST ORANGE N. J."



Lorgnette with black silk ribbon guard, marked "STERLING" and with trade-mark of Frank Krementz Company of Newark, New Jersey, listed in *Jewelers Circular* 1915-1950 "manufacturer of eyeglasses, handy pins, child's sets, lorgnettes, pocket knives and bar pins."



Folding bifocal spectacles with silver guard chain. Engraved silver frames marked "1110 12K DEL.SPC TP (in a shield) SH, FL." Guard chain unmarked.

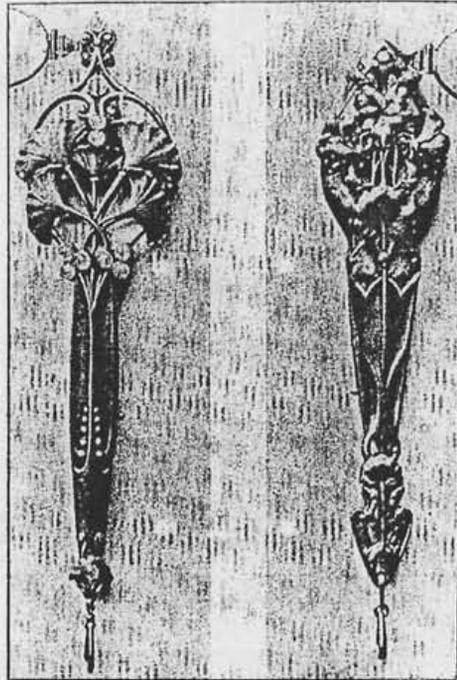
The greatest popularity of the lorgnette coincided with the Art Nouveau period and contemporary designers of exquisite jewelry lavished attention on these fashion accessories. Lalique, ca. 1900, designed a gold enamel lorgnette with lizard handle and diamond-shaped frames encircling the lenses. This lorgnette is now owned by Gulbenkian Foundation of Lisbon, Portugal and forms a part of the collection considered to be the most spectacular group of Art Nouveau jewels in existence. René Jules Lalique, born in France, a renowned jeweler, silversmith, glassmaker, artist and decorative designer is considered the greatest French jeweler of the Art Nouveau period. He pioneered in introducing new materials in his jewelry, including horn, precious and semi-precious stones.

Two other truly fabulous jeweled handles designed for lorgnettes during the Art Nouveau period are those executed by Boucheron of Paris. Frederic Boucheron founded his atelier at the Palais Royal in Paris; he later became internationally famous in London and Biarritz, as well as in New York City where he established another jewelry store. Since 1858 this business has been conducted by three generations of Bouchérons who succeeded one another and who continue to conduct their business personally.

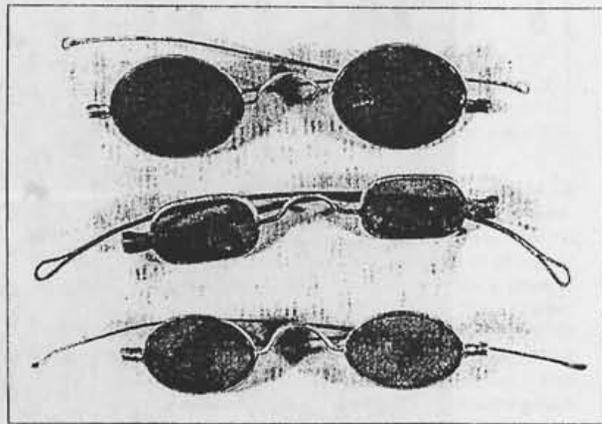
Lucien Hirtz designed one of the *lorgnons* (*lorgnons* have shorter handles than lorgnettes) in chased gold. It incorporates sensuous nature motifs in rich profusion and achieves a perfection of symmetry. Cauvin designed the other one, a stunning lorgnon in chased gold and chryso-prase, a light green quartz or mineral which he used as a precious gem. The juxtaposition of the translucent green buds with the golden fan-shaped leaves of the ginkgo tree is an ordered and balanced design that is both unusual and innovative.

Lorgnettes feature the eyeglasses that fold into a long handled sheath, lorgnons present a shorter handle, and the folding spectacles show only the vestigial remains of a holder device. They exhibit, however, a bewildering display of folding mechanisms. Some swing open on a pivot in the middle of the nose bridge; more frequently they open and pivot when a push button at the side is activated. Others simply lap one lens over the other using a spring hinge arrangement.

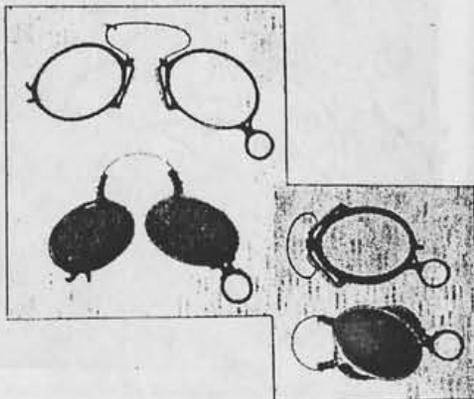
The fashion for glasses that folded lasted almost half a century, but after World War I the style went into a decline and today the lorgnette and its cousins can usually be seen only as a prop in a stage play or movie. And even then it is presented as a ludicrous comical affectation of an unsympathetic or dotty character. So much elegance to have vanished in a caricature of its former function. A pity!



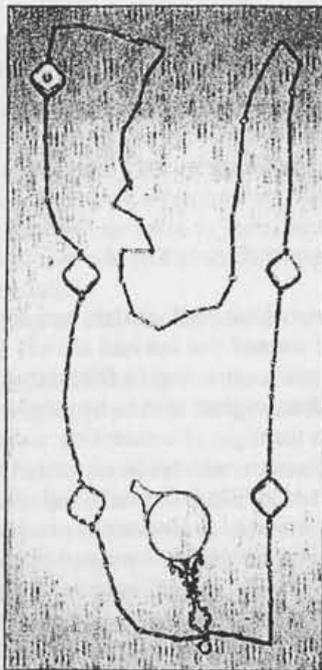
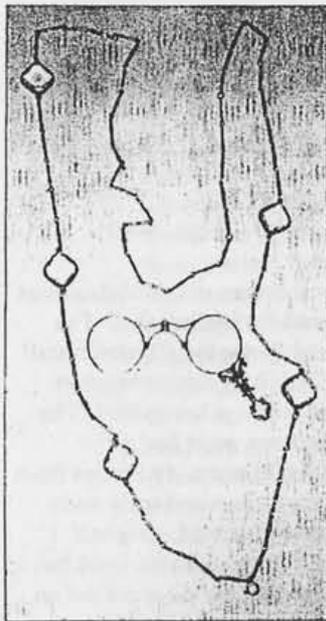
Art Nouveau lorgnon handles: (left) chased gold and chryso-prase (semi-precious apple green variety of chalcedony) designed by Cauvin for the Paris firm of Boucheron, and (right) lorgnon in chased gold designed by Lucien Hirtz, also for Boucheron. Illustration from *Art Nouveau Jewellery & Fans* published ca. 1898.



Colored lens eyeglasses. Upper pair convex cobalt blue, unmarked; center square aquamarine, unmarked; and lower "shooting" or scenery spectacles, amber, unmarked. All date from the third quarter 19th century.



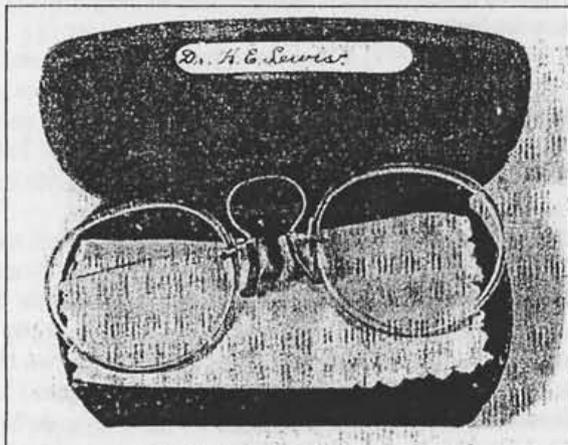
Folding glasses in composition frames. Blue steel nose bridge. Pincer-type of spring. Cobalt blue glass lens; clear lens with cork-lined nose piece.



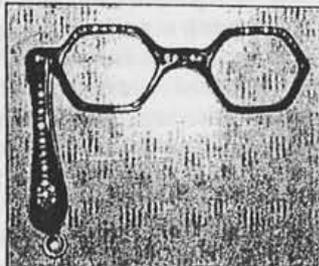
Lorgnette with gold-plated lorgnette chain or sautoir; interspersed with five square-cut faceted crystals set in rope border frames. Unmarked. Lorgnette marked "STERLING," gold-washed.



"Tortoiseshell" lorgnette, 10" long, molded composition with filigree designs; push-out hook to extend spectacles. Unmarked.



Gold pince-nez spectacles owned by Dr. H. E. Lewis. With tortoiseshell frames; marked "14K," in velvet lined leather case, marked "Victor N. Nanes Company, Opticians, 34 East 42nd Street, New York." Nose pieces marked "AITCHISON," ca. 1922.



Modern composition "tortoiseshell" lorgnette set with clear and colored crystals. Silk damask case with woven gold and red floral designs; red cord edges. Made in Hong Kong.

Doll Making Class with Wendy Froud

My Doll Making Class with Wendy Froud – by Zoe Morrow (Sept. 2000)

Last Philcon (1999), one of the book dealers had signed copies of "A Midsummer Night's Fairy Tale" for sale. I wanted one but had already spent my budget alas! I've been an admirer of Wendy Froud's work since a friend took me to see the 'Dark Crystal' after hearing my soon to be born daughter was to be named Kira (long story, the short version is I met her in a dream the night of conception and she told me her name). The Los Angeles Craft and Folk Museum, which I lived near at the time, even had a wonderful show called the Art of the Dark Crystal - full of dolls, puppets, and props from the movie. So I had the chance to see her wonderful creatures up close and truly study them (they even had some you could touch). I wanted the book! I wanted it signed! I didn't get it, well not until the next spring and only an unsigned copy. But the book has a web site on the cover flap (since changed to www.worldoffroud.com) and I went out on the web to find both Wendy and Brian Froud were doing workshops at the Omega Institute (within drivable range). I had never heard of it before, it's a very healthy new-age holistic place mostly, but friendly and beautiful (the food's great too!). I called up and after a month of being on a waiting list, got into Wendy's doll making class. And for the first time since I became a teacher spent the time from the end of May waiting for September 29th like it couldn't come fast enough.

The Omega Institute is in Rhinebeck NY, a long drive but lovely at the end, twisting through the wooded hills above the Hudson River valley. The campus is very hilly and car free (those with walking problems beware!). It's landscaped with gardens – flowers, vegetables and quiet meditative spots. There are movement, yoga and Tai Chi extras to drop in on if you wish and the food is great, mainly vegetarian but with one fish or egg dish at each meal.

Wendy Froud is both a wonderful person and a wonderful teacher. I had tried creating dolls from polymer clay before and had problems with the media and sculpting the head to my liking. Between her tips and instruction I learned so much. Little things like working in layers: baking each layer to build up smaller nudes so the perfectly formed leg doesn't melt and misform in your hot hands while you're working on the arms. To a way to build up the face so the lips aren't pursed out (a big problem I had had). To using a soldering iron to cut out leafy fabric for dresses on the fairy dolls – the heat melting the edge to stop fraying.

It was beyond wonderful – a weekend of art, of craft, of fairies and magic, and if anyone of you enjoys doll making, or even wishes to learn – check out the Froud's web page, she said she was thinking of coming back somewhere in the NY area next year. Or if you can't wait, I had such a great time I'd love to share it. If any Sick Pups out there would like (hey, I'm an art teacher after all) I'd be happy to share and teach what I learned. I'm not at Wendy Froud's level, but I'm one of yours.

And Wendy and Brian both signed my books so I got what I wanted in the beginning and more!

Wendy began with a guided meditation that led to sketching the first evening. And the next day we started doll making. Here are notes on the process we followed.

Peggy Kennedy

Doll Making – soft body with head, hands and feet in polymer clay.

- 1) Cut a piece of armature wire (1/8 inch) to height of doll, cover with masking tape.
- 2) Bend wire into hook and wrap a piece of foil (about 12x12" for palm sized head) around it – press tight, roll on table to form into solid skull form.
- 3) Cover the skull in a layer about 3/8" thick of polymer clay – wire can be bent to form a stand for the head.
- 4) Roll out a thick worm of clay for the jaw and a ball for the forehead, add to the head and blend in.
- 5) Add teardrop of clay and blend in for the nose.
- 6) With a clay tool or a finger push in for eye sockets – remember eyes are halfway down on the skull.
- 7) Add two small worms (a bit thicker in the center) for lips – bottom lip is smaller (Here's the part I had problems with before the class) – The top lip isn't a lip, it's the bone and skin between the nose and mouth opening, the lip is only a slight dip and color change at the edge so the top lip piece of clay is a lot larger and blended flatter than you may first think. And if the lip looks too big and pursed out you need to add more clay to fix it, as weird as it seems more clay added under the nose looks like less lip, then add cleft to lip with tool.
- 8) Add two teardrops to each side, pointed end towards the eye, and blend in for cheeks.
- 9) Add an egg shaped ball into each eye socket, and blend. Eyes start asleep.
- 10) Draw in a sleeping eye – drawing with a clay tool the line of the lower eyelid.
- 11) Then take the tool and cut into the line and push up as you redraw along it to pull up the upper lid.
- 12) Add in a ball for eyeballs between the eyelids, blend lightly.
- 13) For moveable ears, take masking taped armature wire (1/16 inch) and form a "V" with wings, put the V down the back of the head (or spear wire through the skull), add clay to hold in place and build ears out to sides on the V's wings. For non-moveable ears add a tear shape (more fairy-like pointed ear) or a question mark shape of clay to sides of head, remember the distance from mid eye to chin is equal to the distance from the front plane of the face to the back of the ear, and bottoms of ears are in line with the bottom of the nose. Blend and shape – finish features – do you want to add small ball to sides of the nose for nostrils or press into the teardrop with a tool to create them. – do you need to build up more on the brow line or the top of the head.
- 14) Add a ball of clay for the back of the skull and blend in.
- 15) Check features for symmetry by looking the face upside down and in a mirror and fix it if needed.
- 16) Hands – Start with flatten chalice shape for palm and wrist – roll sausage shaped fingers – remember to size the hand to the head (use your own hands and face to measure proportions, and not all fingers are the same length of course.
- 17) Add in the three bends of fingers and draw on nails and joint wrinkles lines with a clay tool.
- 18) Blend on fingers, add a small worm to form knuckle line or palm muscles if wanted.

Doll Making Class with Wendy Freud

- 19) Add small sausage with a ball end at inside base of palm for the thumb and bend and you blend and draw on wrinkle lines with a clay tool.
- 20) Push taped armature wire into end of wrist to create hole where hand and wire will be glued together later after the body is made.
- 21) Feet, or Shoes – Remember to make these large enough to support the completed doll, 1 ½ times hands maybe. For bare feet take large roll of clay, add ball to top for ankle – blend and then press up for arch and with clay tool, lightly shape out toes. Push taped armature wire into end of ankle to create hole to attach the feet to the body later.
- 22) Bake head, hands and feet to direction on the clay package being used.
- 23) Body – Cut arm and leg wires to size and add 3” to length needed for the doll’s height and wrap in masking tape.
- 24) Rub down lightly the polymer clay with nail polish remover on a cotton ball, this breaks down the surface so the paint doesn’t peel off.
- 25) Paint with acrylic paints. Layers of thin washes, blending with makeup sponges for best finish, add a layer of sculpty glaze over eye to give a realistic shine to the eyes.
- 26) Bend wire from head up at the end of torso (size to head).
- 27) Bend leg wire tight in half and then out at hip, 1 ½” down of top bend. Hook into torso and bend and tape overlap 1 ½” of leg wire to torso wire.
- 28) Bend arm wire tight in half and then out 1 ½” from bend for arms, hook into torso wire and bend torso wire down again towards legs, tape together – option: add short dowels to arms and legs to keep them from bending where you don’t want them to bend.
- 29) Cut extra torso wire or use as armature for a soft stuffed tail
- 30) Cut or rip quilt stuffing/batting into 4” strips, and wrap torso first then arms, legs and tail wires to desired thickness. Leave ends of wire open.
- 31) Cut and patch covering the body with stretch fabric (best done in good underwear color for your choice of later costume).
- 32) Glue with superglue hands and feet to wire and glue stretch fabric at end of arms and feet to their edges.
- 33) Add hair (we used dyed wool fibers) starting at the back of the skull and glue down in small layer or clumps at a time – as you get to the tops of the head add on building up from sides towards center to form a part.
- 34) Costume your doll.

Peggy Kennedy

Peggy Kennedy

December 16, 1929 – December 13, 2000

by Tina Connell

How can anyone sum up Peggy Kennedy without it starting to sound like "How do I love thee? Let me count the ways . . .?"

She was a Class Act; a Lady of infinite dignity and of amazing breadth of both knowledge and character, yet not stuck up or stuffy. Just as Pat was a prince among men, she was a queen. She wasn't a beauty in the classic sense, but she was something better – she was elegant. She didn't have a cozy personality; she was even a bit prickly at times. It took a little while to get to know her, but once you did – oh, yes, once you did! – you knew that you had discovered a jewel – a "keeper," as they say.

In the more than 20 years during which it was my privilege to know her and be counted among her friends, she enriched my life in more ways than I can begin to tell. With her as a living example, one didn't need any of those "Life's Little Instruction Books" that have proliferated in the bookstores. Nor did one need some mawkish bumper sticker asking "What would Jesus do?" because for real-life people, no-one who knew her could do much better than to ask "what would Peggy do?"

I never knew her to hurt anyone gratuitously, by either word or deed (although some costumers seeking ego gratification have been taken a bit aback on occasion when they asked for her honest opinion, and she actually gave it to them). Her own sense of self-worth wouldn't let her lie to people and say she liked something if she didn't, but she always tried to temper her comments to say so as gently as possible. She despised poseurs and phonies, but she didn't waste her time putting them down; she simply chose not to associate with them. She didn't suffer fools gladly, yet would take infinite pains to be helpful and supportive (but never condescending) with those less knowledgeable or skillful who asked for her help. She was always generous with her time, knowledge and resources.

She had a sharp, even cutting, wit, and could sink a barb or perpetrate a pun with surgical precision. In fact, just as did Pat, she loved low puns and risqué jokes. No one who saw her at a notorious Tacky Con, dressed in a black trench coat and boots and accessorized with red and black armband and blond wig, as a "Klaus Barbie Doll" could ever possibly doubt just how low she would stoop in pursuit of a good pun.

Her example and discourse taught me so much: to always keep growing and learning; to constantly polish and hone the skills one already has; to be tolerant of others, but not be a doormat for anyone; to step beyond gender stereotyping; to prize the excellent above the merely acceptable, especially in one's own work; to strive always to be true to one's-self; to help others when possible, but try to know when it is better to stand aside and let them help themselves – the list is endless.

So here we are, gathered to remember Peggy – "we happy few, we band of brothers" – (she also taught me to steal only from the BEST). Peggy, we're going to miss you. The world is a poorer place without you, but you've left behind some wonderful memories. It was a rare delight and privilege to know you.

Read at the memorial service for Peggy in Portland, Oregon, on January 6, 2001.

Editor's note: Permission was given to reprint this article.

Embroiderers Gather No Moss

S·T·I·T·C·H·E·S

M A G A Z I N E

Volume 7

Number 6

From **Dracula** To The *Rolling Stones*

Entertainment Industry Embroiderers Gather No Moss

by Laura Engleman

What we want is a museum-quality 16th-century lace collar, but it must be washable because our client has a tendency to spew a little blood... Yes, excuse me?

Not your typical embroidery order. But then again, the company that filled it, Penn & Fletcher Inc., New York, isn't your typical embroidery shop.

Neither are the handful of businesses that cater to the music and entertainment industry. Whether we're talking vampirewear, thimblestones for Dan Aykroyd in the movie "North", bomber jackets for the Rolling Stones or denim caps for Woodstock '94, few orders are alike and the word "deadline" doesn't even apply.



A jacket back sample from Prime Time Merchandise/Backstage Embroiders.

Billy Koorse, president of Prime Time Merchandise/Backstage Embroidery, Paterson, N.J., a 234-head shop "heavily locked into the music business," embroidered all the denim jackets and hats for Woodstock '94 and produces hats, jackets and hockey jerseys for the Rolling Stones, along with merchandise for more than 150 other rock'n'roll bands, Warner Bros., HBO, Harley Davidson and Sony.

"Right now we probably have 30 or 40 different groups that are out on concert tours that we're making merchandise for on a weekly basis," he says. "We're always under the gun. For four-and-a-half years, we've been used to doing business with people who, before they even call us, we're late."

Ernie Smith and Andrew Marlay, co-owners of Penn and Fletcher, describe their eight-year-old business as an ultra-custom embroidery house "in the European tradition of fine embroidery." The company does 40 percent of its work for the theater, both movies and stage productions.

The aforementioned lace wedding collar adorned a female vampire in Bram Stoker's "Dracula."

"What we ended up doing was embroidering on nylon filter cloth, using polyester and metallic threads, in order to make it washable," says Smith. "That was pretty tough."

Penn & Fletcher has 45 hand-guided novelty stitching machines, a computerized 12-head, a two-head, a single-head machine and 12 employees.

"We are embroiderers with a capital 'E,'" says Smith. "There is almost no form of embroidery that we cannot tackle." Such as decorating elephant blankets and museum banners, embroidering crests on handkerchief-lined curtain borders for Ralph Lauren's Polo showroom, quilting an cashmere for a high-end coat manufacturer, recreating a set of 19th-century French chair embroideries and embellishing actress Julie Andrews' dress for a publicity shot.

Rolando Fuentes, at Star Strudded Inc., Los Angeles, also caters to the whims of costume designers and celebrities, including Ann Margaret, Cher, Donnie Osmond, Lonnice Anderson and Bette Midler. He beautifies dresses, blouses, jackets and other garments with sequins, ribbons, rhinestones and appliques for movies, TV shows and stage productions. Recently he added thimblestones to Dan Aykroyd's and Reba McEntire's costumes in "North" and also worked on "Made In America" and "On Deadly Ground."

Fuentes says most jobs are wanted overnight and customers can be plenty particular, but "when it comes to



Penn & Fletcher created this elaborate "lace" collar using a multibead on clear plastic filter cloth—the plastic was transparent on film. The company punched one motif and made the collar from many repeats.

embroidery. I've never had complaints so far."

Joe Pinero, owner of LIBERTYstitch, a 45-head shop in Jersey City, N.J., has done everything from a bullet-studded coffin cover to caps for rock groups and a new line of hip-hop clothing. He created the coffin cover as a protest piece for a controversial artist who opposed a shoe company's involvement in South Africa.

"The coffin cover consisted of a whole bunch of 30-caliber bullets around the seam, so they were digitized in groups and then merged together," he says. "In the center we had outlines of a bunch of shoes and handbags and then toward the sides there were heavy-artillery weapons."

Pinero also fills orders for Brockum Merchandisers, which handles promotional items for groups including Porno for Pyros, the Lemonheads and Soundgarden. "You look at something like Metallica's stuff, a skull with something oozing out of it, and you say, 'Geez, I've got to digitize this?'" he laughs.

At times Pinero has refused to produce designs from musical groups that conflicted with his morals, he says. But that doesn't happen too often. At press time, Pinero had a messenger standing by waiting to deliver caps for a 6 p.m. Rolling Stones concert.

Koorse, too, gets his satisfaction from rock-and-roll, heavy metal, rap and hip-hop, though perhaps not musically speaking. He says his company originally was a premium business doing work for a merchandiser that owns the rights to Guns N' Roses, the Grateful Dead, Metallica and Aerosmith. "We bought a machine just to make their hats and four-and-a-half years later we've got 17 machines and we've expanded that customer base to go to other people in the entertainment business," he notes. "We embroider hats for more than 150 different rock-and-roll bands."

He says the band members themselves personally inspect samples. "Everything we do is sent to the band and has to get approval by the band or the band's manager," Koorse explains. "Most of the time it goes directly to the band. And they come back with hand drawings changing this and that. Whatever they want done, from Meat Loaf to Cypress Hill or Slayer or Metallica or Bon Jovi, we'll change it."

Judd Lilly's Allentown, Pa.-based embroidery business, Lilly daVid, is singing a happy tune as well, serving the music business in addition to auto racing and major league sports. The 52-year-old, 181-head business evolved from a women's clothing business started by Judd's father, David Lilly, his uncle and his grandfather. "Customers needed embroidery done and they started buying machines and that's how they got into it," he says. "And now all we do is embroidery."

Lilly daVid embroidered an 80,000-stitch, nine-color jacket back for the All American Rodeo's European tour and has produced garments for musical groups touring Europe and Japan, Mario Andretti and other big-name race car drivers also wear Lilly daVid's creations. "When you're big in the embroidery industry, you get your hands in a lot of different things," says Lilly.

The business specializes in appliques, with its own in-house fabric preparation and die-cutting departments, and also has two digitizing systems. Certainly gathering no moss among embroiderers, the Rolling Stones' name pops up in Lilly's business too, joining the Allman Brothers and Pink Floyd. "We do hats, shirts, jackets, socks—everything. It's amazing what these people will put their logos on," says Lilly.

The company employs 35 workers who often work overtime to fill rush orders, a problem with which Penn & Fletcher's Smith is all too familiar. He says his company can turn a Broadway show around in three weeks, but deadline pressures can be no excuse for goofs. Recently an operator made an error in where to position the embroidery on a particular job and ruined \$1,000 worth of fabric—only 3 yards' worth.

"It requires constant supervision by the designers. It is extraordinarily labor intensive. It is what I would call sudden-death work," notes Smith. "When you're working on fabrics that run anywhere from \$300 to \$500 a yard, you don't want to make a mistake."

Both Smith and Marlay have a theatrical design background, working on scenery and costumes

for Broadway and off-Broadway shows, commercials, operas and ballets for nearly two decades before starting their business. Smith says their original idea was to sell laces and trimmings to theatrical companies. The two bought equipment to add embellishments to their goods and suddenly found they were in the embroidery business.

"We both graduated as designers for the theater and one of the things about the theater is everything is custom, so it seemed natural to us to go into a business that is very ultra-custom," Smith says. "Nor just like a logo on a shirt, but where there may only be one or two items and the cost of them may be anywhere from the price of a TV to the price of a car."

Although there are days when anyone dealing with the entertainment industry wonders what he's doing in this business, the rewards tip the scales favorably. The money doesn't hurt, but the applause is nice too, when embroiderers see their work on screen or stage. Says Smith: "We really love for people to enjoy our work, to appreciate our work as an art form, not just a piece of embellishment."



Penn & Fletcher combined multihead and hand embroidery to make two curtain panels for an apartment at the Ritz Carlton in Boston. The vine and flowers were done on multi-head. The ribbons were put down by hand.

LONG LIVE THE QUEEN

By Toni Lay

My lords, my ladies, and gentles everywhere, the East Kingdom of the Society for Creative Anachronism announces to the Known World the coronation of Her Royal Highness, Princess Olivia Graeme.

What has this got to do with us? Princess Olivia Graeme is none other than Kathryn Elms, long-time costumer, and good friend. You may remember Kathryn and her husband, Duane, from masquerades and/or costume panels at Balticons, Costume Cons, Lunacons and World SF Cons. Kathryn and Duane have been members of the SCA for many, many years, and attained the titles of Baron and Baroness.

How did Kathryn get into this situation? How do you think? She volunteered! A good friend of theirs, Hanse Von Drachenklaue (Robert Pimentel), who is a good fighter, asked Kathryn if she would be his "consort" for the Crown Tourney, where fighters challenge each other for the right to rule the kingdom. The winner and his lady become Prince and Princess, and later King and Queen. Well, there was to be some very heavy competition at Crown Tourney, so both thought Hanse's chances of winning were extremely slim (but he wanted the practice). So, Kathryn said yes (silly, insane woman!). As it turned out, the "very heavy competition" never showed up, and guess what? Hanse Von Drachenklaue won Crown Tourney, and he and Olivia Graeme became Royal Prince and Princess of the East Kingdom. They will remain such for six months as they learn the functions of being king and queen, and there's a lot to learn, too, this is not an easy job. They will be crowned King and Queen of the East Kingdom on April 21, 2001 in Winsor, CT. (More about that later.) They will rule for six months and then their successors, chosen at Crown Tourney, April 28, 2001 in PA., will ascend the throne. Pella and I are definitely going to Kathryn's coronation. We're deciding whether or not to bring pom-poms.

Due to the timing, Pennsic 30 will be held during their reign, therefore Hanse and Olivia will be War King and Queen. (Oh yeah, I can just see Kathryn rallying the troops, waving her sword, and running into battle).

THE CORONATION OF HANSE AND OLIVIA

April 21, 2001

Sage Park Middle School, Sage Park Road, Windsor, CT.

Opens 10:00am and closes at 10:00pm

Come celebrate the Coronation of Their Royal Highnesses Hanse Von Drachenklaue and Olivia Graeme! This event is being co-hosted by the Barony Beyond the Mountain and the Barony of Dragonship Haven.

THE FEAST

Lord Jaji of Clan O'Choda is preparing a delectable menu designed to please all. The feast will serve 240 people. Please reserve early for the feast, as it will sell out! Dietary questions about the feast can be directed to Mistress Su'ad (Nancy L. Barrett, (860) 228-6933 before 9:30pm; e-mail: nlb@ct2.nai.net). She will pass them on to Lord Jaji. Please note that the tables are 6-person round.

ACTIVITIES

In addition to the full day of Courts, Pageantry, Feasting, and an Arts and Sciences Competition and Display, there will be space for fighting and fencing, outside if weather permits, or indoors. Also, a group of the middle school students who are studying medieval times will joins us (in period clothing) for part of the day to observe our festivities as part of their school work. A dayboard will be sold separately at the event, to feed about 400.

RESTRICTIONS

Please note that no alcohol is permitted on school property (not even as gifts) as per school regulations. No pets, except for assistance animals, are allowed. No open flames (candles inside enclosed containers are okay). The school is fully handicapped accessible, with permit parking in the lot at the front of the building.

RESERVATIONS

The fee is \$15 for all persons 9 years and older. Reservations should state everyone's mundane name (please include children and their ages). Make checks and money orders payable to: "SCA, Inc. BBM" and include a SASE or e-mail for confirmation. Send reservations to Nancy L. Barrett, 230 Wall Street, Hebron, CT.

DIRECTIONS

Find your best route to I-91 in Connecticut. If you are going on I-91 northbound, take Exit 36 (CT Route 178 / Park Road). At the end of the exit ramp, turn right onto Park Road (CT 178). Follow Park Road through a right hand curve and past a blinking light onto Sage Park Road. Drive past a wooded residential area and go straight at the Stop sign. The Sage Park Middle School will be on your left, immediately across from Windsor High School. (The school is exactly 0.5 miles from the bottom of the ramp for northbound I-91.)

From I-91 southbound, take Exit 36 (CT Route 178 / Park Road). At the end of the exit ramp, turn left onto Park Road (CT 178). Follow Park Road past I-91 North on-ramp and follow Park Road through a right hand curve and past a blinking light onto Sage Park Road. Drive past a wooded residential area and go straight at the Stop sign. The Sage Park Middle School will be on your left, immediately across from Windsor High School.

Please use the main school entrance (the second driveway) in front of the building, as this leads to the cafeteria, atrium and gymnasium. Additional parking may be reached via a side entrance just past the school building. Signs will be posted.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION!!!

If you've never been to an SCA event, know that you must wear some sort of period clothing, however it need *not* be historically accurate, just look good; preferably dating somewhere between the Fall of Rome and the death of Elizabeth I. It can be from any culture, country or continent. (You will *not* be set upon by Authenticity Nazis.)

For SCA feasts, attendees are expected to bring their own eating utensils (feast gear): plate and bowl; fork, knife and spoon; cutting knife; goblet, tankard, glass or cup; tablecloth (fabric remnant works) and napkins; candle(s) in enclosed container(s). Salt and pepper shakers are optional, but it's best to bring them. Everything need not match. Also, consider bringing dish rag of some sort. After the feast, large tubs of wash water and rinse water, both containing bleach, are set out for your dirty dishes.

VIVAT! VIVAT! VIVAT!



Budget Costume Illumination

How to make your costume glow and rotate without resorting to a soldering iron*

*(Unless you really want to)

By Kevin Roche

One of the nicer touches one can add to a science fiction or fantasy costume is illumination; glowing or flashing lights can lend a high-tech finish to your future fashion, or enhance your fantasy piece with an aura of starlight and magic. Until recently, illuminating your work required either skill with electronics or a patient friend with such skills. Fortunately, in the last few years, a number of inexpensive products have become available that make lighting a piece both simpler and affordable.

These products have two basic types (see figure). One uses light-emitting diodes (LEDs) for lamps, while the other uses miniature incandescent light bulbs (like small Christmas tree lights or even smaller *grain of wheat* bulbs). LEDs have the advantage of requiring relatively little power, but only show light in one direction. Light bulbs are brighter and shine light in all directions, but require more power to operate.

LED light kits

LED lighting kits can be found in fabric and craft stores; they originally came out for illuminating novelty sweatshirts. "Light-ables" and "Fashion Lites" are two of the numerous brand names under which they've appeared.

You can find both musical and non-musical sets. They consist of a small package holding the batteries and drive electronics, with 10 or 12 LEDs on wires radiating out from the driver package (See figure 2). Each LED is mounted on a tiny piece of circuit board, then the board is "potted" with an epoxy after the wires are soldered in place (to help *strain relieve* the wires ... more about strain relief in a minute). The lights flash when the module is switched on; if a musical set, there's generally a small pressure switch that plays the tune and flashes the lights until it ends.

To mount the LEDs on your costume, you cut a small hole in the fabric, push the LED through from behind, then hold it in place by stretching a small rubber "O"-ring over the protruding lamp (see figure 3). Besides being easy, this method leaves the lamps removable, so the garment can be cleaned. You can also glue the lamps in place with epoxy, hot glue, or a non-solvent type adhesive like E6000. In headaddresses, jewelry or other props, be sure to aim the LEDs so that the lighted portion is visible when switched on. The driver module usually comes with a piece of Velcro hooks attached to it and a matching piece of Velcro loops to put in the garment.

However you mount the LEDs, it is essential that you protect the wiring from being snagged or pulled. While the potting on the circuit boards helps, it is inadequate against a strong pull. In addition, wires hanging loose inside your costume flex and move, and the repeated bending can break them. The simplest way to protect them is to sew a lining over the wired area, protecting the circuitry from being dragged and rubbed by your body or undergarments (Figure 4). It's a good idea to baste, snap, or Velcro at least one edge of the lining piece so you can remove the lamps for laundering or repair.

Incandescent light kits

One kind of incandescent light kits can be found in craft shops in the pre-Christmas craft season (like right now!). These miniature kits are often very inexpensive (a couple of dollars) and feature a dozen steady burning lights and a battery case for a couple of C-cells. The lights are wired in a string like Christmas tree lights.

Another kind is available year round from craft shops that carry dollhouse and miniature supplies. They run on AA cells, and come in both steady-burning and flashing sets. I

have had very good success with kits under the *Miniature Collectibles* brand name, made by Mangelsen's of Omaha. Their multicolored flashing set features very bright, very small grain of wheat lamps and runs for several hours on a single set of AA cells.

The biggest drawback to incandescent kits is the weight of the battery pack. Put a pocket inside your costume to hold it, or cement it firmly in place. Do not let the pack dangle from the lamp wires. Many of the battery packs feature a combination cover/power switch; from experience I can warn you to *never* point this lid down; the batteries can and will work the cover off if you do any bouncing around.

Incandescent kits do not have the convenience of the o-ring mounting technique, but have the advantage of being visible from many angles. The lamps can get quite warm, so do not use hot- (or warm-) melt glue to hold them in place, or mount them in a base made of thermoplastic (like *Friendly Plastic*), as the heat of the lamps will soften the thermoplastic. Spending an hour getting your hair unimbedded from your overheated headdress is no fun! Use a compatible adhesive, or sew the base of the lamps in place. The mini-Christmas light sets feature replaceable bulbs, while the others generally have potted connections at the bulb end. Strain relief is as important with incandescents as it is with LEDs, especially for the very small grain-of-wheat lamps.

General notes on layout and use of lamps

Flashing sets can be set up to look random or sequenced. Turn on the set and start sorting out the lamps by when they flash. Most of these sets flash the lamps in pairs; if you want to achieve a chasing effect, line them up in your costume in order. For a random or twinkling effect, scatter the lamps out of sequence order.

If you need longer wires, you can splice additional wires into the leads provided. LEDs have a positive and negative side, so be very careful to not reverse the connections when you work on your wires. You can use twist-on wiring connectors to make the joints if you are absolutely unable to solder, but you will have a longer-lasting result if you solder the new wires in. Get some heat-shrink tubing from an

electronics store to cover the splice (figure 5).

SOURCES

I have found LED light sets at CraftMart, LeeWards, New York Fabrics, and FabricLand. Musical LED kits (with a "Button" drive module) were available at those stores and at D&J Hobby in San Jose. What kits are available when has varied widely during the year (as, of course, has the existence of many of these outlets).

I have found some incandescent kits at the fabric stores, but my best source has been the craft/dollhouse department at D & J Hobby, especially for flashing lights. Right now, you may be able to get cheap steady-burning sets at the party/craft shops like Michael's, since they are already gearing up for Christmas Crafts.

Addendum July 2000:

The "fashion lite" LED kits are much harder to find these days; in December of 1999 the Hanes T-shirt website suggested "craft store or from Cybercraft" but I have been unable to locate Cybercraft. Some of the craft chains mentioned in this article don't exist any more. D&J Hobby does mail and web ordering now, via www.djhobby.com

Dollhouse and hobby shops are still a good source for the flashing miniature incandescent sets. Another source for the steady-burning "Christmas" style light strings is MacFrugal's or similar close-out shops.

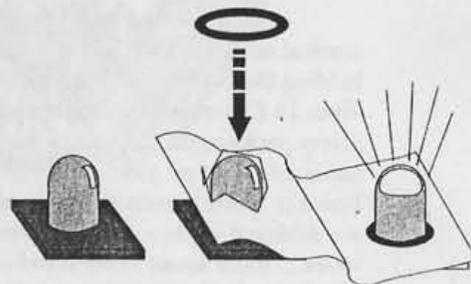


Figure 3: Poke LED through fabric from behind, then hold in place with miniature "O"-ring.

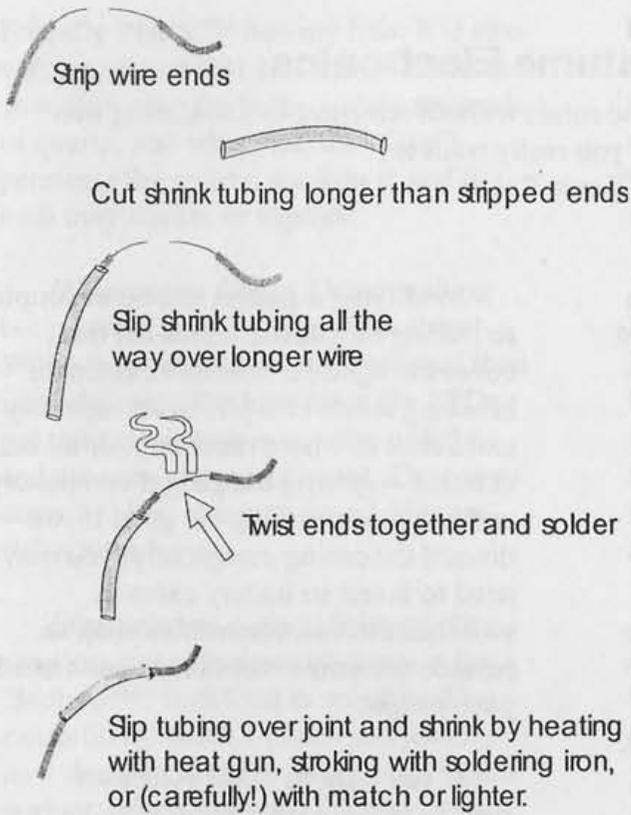


Figure 5: Splicing with heat shrink tubing

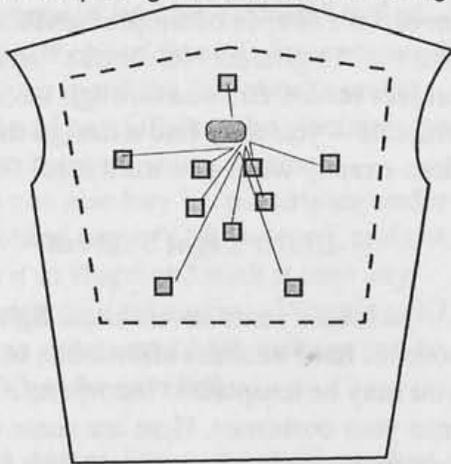


Figure 4: Apply a lining (dotted lines) over your wires to protect them from excessive wear

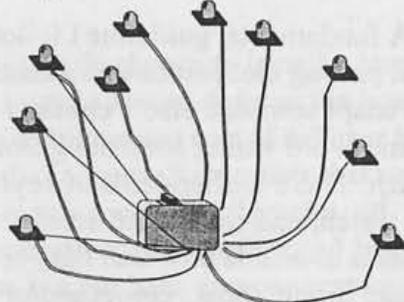
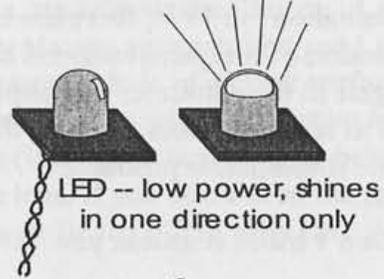
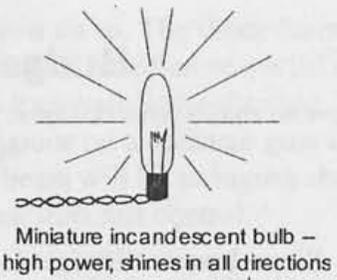


Figure 2: Driver Module and LEDs

Please note: © 1994, 2000. Originally published in 1994 in The Customers Scribe

Budget Costume Electronics

How to make your costume glow and rotate without resorting to a soldering iron*

*(Unless you really want to)

By Kevin Roche

Since I wrote "Budget Costume Illumination" in 1994, there has been an explosion of inexpensive sound and light gadgets in the consumer marketplace, as well as reduced prices on some more exotic illumination products.

Don't build it unless you have to!

A fundamental guideline I follow when putting electronics into a costume is to adapt someone else's circuitry if it lets me avoid wiring something from scratch. There are hundreds of keychain, pen, watch, and credit card-sized products available now that light up, vibrate, rotate, speak, chime and/or buzz, and most of them cost less than \$40. Some of them are already designed to fit into clothing! That may sound a little pricey, but if a prepackaged item will do the trick for you, it will probably save several hours of your time. Those hours are almost certainly worth that forty bucks.

If you are going to adapt a commercial product, buy all you think you need plus one or two extra. The market life of these products tends to be brief, and you don't want to be caught short halfway through your project.

If you can incorporate the gadget intact, all the better. A coat of paint to hide the bright plastic colors, it blends into the textures of your costume, and the wiring and battery connections all remain intact. Just be sure to leave a way to replace the batteries!

Modifying a gadget can be as simple as pulling the plastic lenses off that cover the lights, a little more dramatic -- breaking it into two pieces and splicing extra wire in where necessary, or all out extreme -- gutting the gadget completely and just incorporating the guts. If you discard the casing completely, you may need to invest in battery cases or switches from an electronics shop to replace the simple bent-brass parts inside your gadget.

If you want to build your own circuits, simple is better! If you don't have a friend who does electronics, invest in a couple of simple handbooks like the "Engineers Notebooks" series of project books. Browse through the projects -- you may find a design that does exactly what you want it to!

Exotic Light Sources

In recent years several new light sources have become affordable, and you may be tempted to incorporate them into your costumes. Here are some quick comments and caveats about their use:

Halogen lamps. Halogen light bulbs burn far brighter than ordinary incandescent bulbs, and they are a bit more energy efficient, too. They also burn a lot hotter than regular bulbs. In my first article, I mentioned the hazard of using incandescents with thermoplastics -- I learned the hard way when the halogen bulbs melted the

Friendly Plastic™ into my hair. It is also very important that you not get oil from your skin onto the bulbs -- they are made of quartz, and when hot, the oil will permeate the quartz, weaken it, and the bulb may shatter or explode.

Hi Intensity LEDs. I have nothing but positive things to say about these! While they are still more directional than incandescents, the high intensity LEDs put out astonishing quantities of light and are very energy efficient. They even come in blue, although blue LEDs are still a bit pricey.

Electroluminescent elements. The simplest example of an EL lamp is the “Indiglo™” backlight in watches. You can actually order T-shirts and jewelry now that have battery packs in an inside pocket and a multicolor EL design on the front that is animated! (Do a web search on “Light-up T-Shirts” to find them). If one of those designs can work for you, spend the forty bucks on the shirt and carefully cut the electronic part out to apply to your costume.

You can also buy EL pinstriping under the brand name “Californeon”, and cut, trim it to shape and stick it onto any reasonably rigid surface. **Warning: EL lamps can run at high voltage (up to 180V) so be careful!**

A newer, low-voltage EL product is “CoolWire” available from www.coolwireusa.com.

Lasers: It is now possible to buy small laser diode pointers for less than thirty dollars. You can even buy “build your own laser pointer kits” that give you all the pieces you need to put the laser wherever you want in your costume. **Consider very carefully**

before you do so. The diode lasers in these pointers are often powerful enough to cause irreversible eye damage, and mounting one on a costume guarantees that the beam will be swinging about under less than full control.

You can achieve the illusion of a laser by placing a superbright red LED behind a small hole in a black surface, in the base of a tube with a reflective inner surface (like diffraction foil), or behind a fisheye lens. If you don’t need the real laser to create the effect, why take the risk?

If you do choose to install a laser, be sure to use a lens to defocus the beam, or have it strike some sort of diffuser built into the costume. Remember that unless you’re in a room full of smoke, all anyone will see of a collimated laser beam is a red light on your costume and the red dot where it strikes (unless it gets them in the eye, in which case it could be the last thing that particular retina registers).

**Some Notes on Electronics --
how to get that pesky LED to light up
each and every time (with only a little
very simple math)**

LED stands for Light Emitting Diode; they come in yellow, red, green or blue. An important thing to remember about diodes (including LEDs) is that current can only flow in one direction. To make an LED work, you need a voltage supply and a resistor. If you try to use an LED without a resistor, you will probably burn out the LED. The LED has very little resistance so large amounts of current will try to flow through it unless you limit the current with a resistor. If you try to use an LED

without a power supply, you will be highly disappointed. *In other words, "Batteries not included!"*

- When you buy an LED, the package will probably tell you the maximum current it can take; this will be a number of milliamperes (mA). You don't have to run the LED at max current; a typical value for good brightness is 20-30mA. Remember that a mA is 1/1000 of an amp.
- When an LED lights up, it uses typically 1.2 to 1.8 Volts. This should also be on the package. 1.4V is a good ballpark figure.
- Your battery has a fixed voltage which is probably more than the LED needs. You use a resistor to both set the current and use up the extra voltage. Here's how to calculate the size of the resistor using a simple equation based on Ohm's Law: $R = (V_{bat} - V_{led}) / (I_{led})$,
In other words, take the voltage of your battery, subtract the working voltage of your LED, and divide the difference by the current you want the LED to run with. *For example, to run a 1.4V LED at 30 mA with a 9 volt battery, you need a resistor that is $(9-1.4)/(30/1000)=7.6/.03= 253$ ohms.*
- Think of the current like water flowing through a little pipe, and you'll realize that you can put more than one LED in a row. As long as you don't run out of volts, the same current runs through the entire line. With our 9 volt battery, that means we could run 4 LEDs in a row, but we'd need a different size resistor: the 4 LEDs will use $1.4*4=5.6$ Volts, so we now need $5.6/.03=187$ ohms. *By an amazing coincidence, you'll*

find that many of these odd little numbers are standard values for resistors. Electronics companies have been doing this for a while.

- Remember that LEDs only pass current in one direction. The longer "leg" is usually the positive one. If you are wiring several in a series, be sure that the positive leg of one is connected to the negative leg of the next, so that current doesn't get blocked.

Some very brief notes on soldering:

- Buy a decent quality soldering iron designed for electronics (30-50 watts). Soldering guns were designed for building far heavier things than solid-state electronics. Follow the instructions that come with it for "tinning" the tip.
- Use only rosin core solder for electronics.

To make a good solder joint:

1. Make good mechanical contact between the two parts.
2. With a freshly tinned tip, heat the joint. While heating it, touch one of the parts (*not the iron*) with the solder. When the solder melts, feed the solder into the joint. It should flow right into the heated parts. Take the iron away.
3. Don't let the parts move while the solder cools.
4. A good joint will be bright and shiny. A "cold" joint usually looks dull and grey.

Please note: © July 2000 August 2002, and was originally presented at Costume College 2002.

Did you know –

That the caps worn by certain units in the European armies of the mid-18th century were determined by the state religion?

Today, people think of “grenadiers” as the British army guard units at Buckingham Palace, in traditional red tunics and wearing tall bearskin hats. However, grenadiers originally were elite units within a regiment, composed of unusually tall, strong, and experienced soldiers. Instead of being armed with a pike or a musket, they were furnished with grenades to throw at the enemy. Wearing the common wide-brim hat – which became the tricorne when the brims were pinned up – was not really practical for such troops. They were issued with brimless caps, instead. Vertical extensions on the cap – like a bishop’s mitre – increased the grenadiers’ apparent height even further, adding to their imposing appearance on the field.

Usually, grenadier caps were made of either cloth or metal. Depictions of “redcoats” and of “Hessians” during the American Revolutionary War often show them wearing such caps. The front of the cap frequently displayed the sovereign’s insignia. However, as Hans Bleckwenn points out in his chapter in *The Uniforms of the World’s Great Armies*, the use of cloth was not universal. Its use correlated with states that had established Protestant or Orthodox churches, but not those that were Roman Catholic! Their caps were covered in fur.

Grenadier units in the army of the Tsar of Orthodox Russia, as well as those of Protestant Great Britain, Prussia, and other German states wore very similar cloth-covered or metal caps. In the armies of Roman Catholic Austria, France, Spain, and German states such as Bavaria, grenadier caps were made of fur, not cloth.

This distinction persisted for about half a century -- until grenadiers no longer literally threw grenades at the enemy. With the arming of elite grenadier units with muskets, the grenadier cap fell out of fashion in most armies. One significant exception was France, however. Under Napoleon, grenadiers of the Imperial Guard wore tall bearskin caps that were the stylistic descendants of the fur-covered grenadier caps of the mid-18th century – although they no longer held the traditional mitre shape.

According to tradition, regiments of the Brigade of Guards of the British Army wear such bearskin caps today because the 1st Foot Guards (today the Grenadier Guards) broke the Imperial Guard Grenadiers at Waterloo and captured the bearskin caps from the French!

Byron Connell
New Jersey-New York Costumers’ Guild

The Ultimate Costumer's Experience: Acting in a Major Hollywood Movie

By Bruce Adams

In early spring this year, (2001), a notice appeared in Princeton area newspapers – auditions would be held for background/extras, for a Hollywood movie to be filmed in New Jersey. The name of the movie was A Beautiful Mind, and would be directed by Ron Howard, formerly of Happy Days, and now a director. His most recent film was The Grinch. Russell Crowe and Jennifer Connelly would be in the lead roles, and scenes were to be shot in Princeton and other parts of New Jersey.

The newspapers briefly described the story behind the movie. A Beautiful Mind is based on a book of the same title, and relates the true story of Dr. John Forbes Nash, a brilliant mathematician and professor at Princeton University, who was plagued by severe mental illness for much of his adult life. He was committed to an institution for many years, but eventually overcame his illness. He returned to society and to his professional life, and went on to win the Nobel Prize in Economics.

The extras' auditions were held in three parts, one for Princeton students, one for teenagers and children, and one for adults from Princeton and the surrounding area. There were also casting calls in New York City. I have no idea what sort of scenes children and teenagers will be in; that will have to wait until I see the movie.

The audition for adults was held on a Saturday, at an auditorium on the Princeton campus. The day before, I asked a few of my co-workers if they wanted to go also, but they declined, saying, "There's no chance any of us would be chosen, or you either."

A Los Angeles casting agency, Bill Dance casting, held the auditions. They have been in the business for 25 years, and have an impressive list of films they have casted for, including Snow Falling on Cedars, Alien Resurrection, Jerry Maguire, and Steel Magnolias, to name just a few. When I arrived at the building, there were about 30 people ahead of me; as I entered I looked back; there were about 20 people behind me. I had expected there would be many more. The auditorium was full, however, and Mr. Bill Dance came on the stage and introduced himself; he conducted the entire proceedings.

Bill Dance is a dynamic, energetic man in his 40's who is a very fine motivational speaker. He first asked for a show of hands, of how many people belonged to the two major actors' unions: SAG, (Screen Actors Guild), and AFTRA, (Association of Film, Television, and Radio Artists). He told us some of the rules to be followed on the movie set: no asking the stars for autographs, no cameras allowed at any time, no visitors such as family or friends on the set. He talked about pay and clarified that union extras get more pay than non-union, even though they are doing the same work.

Mr. Dance also told us that this would be a very powerful, dramatic film, and he predicted that it would be nominated for several Academy Awards. You can believe that got everyone's attention! Especially when he clarified that he didn't say that at every casting call. It was not the last time I heard Oscars mentioned in regard to this movie.

There was a detailed form to be filled out, asking for name, address, and phone number as well as clothing sizes. There were several questions, such as would we do nudity, and if so, partial or total? Also, do you interact well with pet animals, such as dogs, cats, and horses? Who would have ever expected a question like that! At the bottom of the form was a space for listing "special experience or skills." I wrote only two things: 27 years in the Air Force and "Experience in Science-Fiction Costume Masquerades, such as wearing Star Trek outfits, etc." I mentioned Star Trek since it would be familiar to anyone. Listing my costuming experience certainly didn't harm my chances of being selected, and quite possibly helped.

Bill Dance has a unique sense of humor. At one point, while he was talking about his experiences in casting, he mentioned that he had done the casting for Gone With The Wind. He followed this remark with silence, and a deadpan expression. Murmurs and suppressed giggles could be heard from all of us; we glanced at the person next to us, wondering what he was getting at. He stood, deadpan, for a few more seconds, then pointed his finger toward the back of the auditorium, and called out, "Just wanted to make sure you were all awake back there!"

We were brought in small groups to rooms adjacent to the auditorium, where we were photographed, first by ourselves, then standing next to a person taller or shorter. We were informed that if selected, we could expect to be called anytime throughout the spring or summer, possibly on short notice and not necessarily for work in Princeton itself. Then we were finished.

Throughout the spring, I sometimes saw the film crew's trucks around town. The local newspapers occasionally had stories about the filming, on the campus, around town, and in other parts of New Jersey. Then in mid-June, I got a call from the Bill Dance Agency: was I available to work on Tuesday, June 19th? Of course I was! Fine, Mr. Adams, report to the following location in Newark at 5:00 A.M. or earlier....5:00 A.M.? I thought I was through with those kinds of hours when I retired from the Air Force! And would I please wear black dress shoes, and a white T-shirt, and be prepared for a long day...

So I set my alarm very early, was driving North on the New Jersey Turnpike while it was still dark, and arrived at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center at 4:30 A.M. The main auditorium would be used, to portray the location in Stockholm, Sweden, where the Nobel Prize ceremony takes place.

The sign-in area was at a hotel next to the NJPAC. I recognized a few faces from the audition in Princeton, but only a few; many of the background/extras were professional actors and actresses from New York City, mostly affiliated with the SAG

union. We were instructed on how to make out the preliminary pay paperwork, then ushered into a large holding area. I would guess that there were about 200 people altogether, equally divided between men and women.

Now we received a briefing from one of the assistant directors, about what to expect during the day (and well into the evening). We learned about the scene we would be in; we were to be the “audience” at the Nobel awards ceremony – dignitaries, VIP guests, and former Nobel laureates who would listen as Russell Crowe, portraying Dr. Nash, would make his acceptance speech.

It was emphasized that we were actors, not just faces or bodies; specifically, we were referred to as “Background Actors.” We were again reminded not to ask for any autographs; there just wasn’t time for that. We were also told of a growing problem on movie sets, which has increased in recent years – cell phones, beepers, and pagers going off during filming. Any such devices had to be turned off, left in the holding area, or have the batteries removed.

After breakfast, the first of three meals we were given, we went to wardrobing. This took place in a huge conference room of the hotel, partitioned off into two sections, one for men and one for women. Here, the men were fitted with tuxedos, the women in a variety of beautiful gowns; the kind you see advertised in the Sunday magazine section of the New York Times. Most of the wardrobers were women, in both sections, and they made sure everything fit perfectly. I have rarely worn a tuxedo, so it had definitely the feeling of costuming.

Our next stop was makeup. It was like nothing I’ve ever seen in a masquerade green room; it had to be seen to be believed. This was one time I wished I could have taken pictures, to show to other costumers later. Adjacent to the wardrobing area, a huge row of tables were set up, each with its own mirror, makeup supplies, and chair or stool – all evenly spaced in a seemingly endless row. As with the wardrobers, most of the makeup specialists were women, but men and women actors were mixed together randomly. I started to count the tables; I got to about 25 when a chair was vacated and the makeup woman motioned to me to take that seat. It was like being in the world’s biggest barbershop.

I was surprised at the detail, to which the makeup people went. I was in the chair for about ten to fifteen minutes; the woman working on me explained that most of what she was doing would be to reduce glare from the lighting. I think her name was Susan. After working on my nose, she said she would have to do something with my eyebrows. At my age, (64), a man can get shaggy eyebrows, but I hadn’t expected anything would be done about them with makeup. Susan first went to work with very fine scissors, then with a tiny, circular brush which she dipped into some substance before using it. I couldn’t resist asking her, “Just how close are the cameras going to be; how close to my face?” She said she wasn’t sure, only that there would be many “takes” of the scene and that it would be a long day.

She then worked on my hair, mainly just slicking it down, and I was finished. I thanked her and said goodbye, to which she replied, "Oh, you'll be seeing us again before the day's over."

Another wait in the holding room; we were told that the two stars, Russell Crowe and Jennifer Connelly, were still having makeup applied. They had already been in makeup – not the same area as the rest of us – for over two hours! For today's scene, they both had to look older, Russell in his late sixties.

Finally, at about 10:30 A.M., we were led to the main performance hall, the set for today's filming. Behind the stage was a backdrop of murals; apparently similar to the stage in Stockholm; a bust of Alfred Nobel was prominently displayed. The place was like a beehive of activity; I could only guess at what different people's jobs were. Four large, bulky cameras mounted on cranes were positioned on the stage. In the midst of all the activity, we saw for the first time Director Ron Howard, our boss for the day. He seemed to be everywhere, giving instructions to assistants, talking to the cameraman, then vanishing offstage for a minute or two.

On the stage, just behind the podium/lectern where "Dr. Nash" would make his speech, were seats with about twenty actors and actresses representing, apparently, Nobel Committee members; among them was a couple in stunning costumes portraying the King and Queen of Sweden. But so far, there was no sign of the former Gladiator, Russell Crowe.

Ron Howard's assistants began assigning us to seats, placing this person next to that person, then changing their minds and re-positioning us elsewhere. No doubt there was some method and logic to how they were seating us, but they didn't have time to explain things. I found myself sitting with a different group of people from the ones I had been socializing with in the holding area.

We received more detailed instructions, about exactly what we were to do during the scene. There was to be polite, somewhat restrained applause when "Dr. Nash" came onstage, and bland, sort of indifferent facial expressions. Then, as his acceptance speech went on, we were to show more rapt attention, ending with vigorous applause and a standing ovation.

Finally, we were ready for the first take. Little did we know that there were to be as many as fifteen more, going well into the evening! Now Russell Crowe came onstage. He walked slowly, with a stiff, halting, old-man's gait, slightly bowed and stoop-shouldered. Now I saw a real masterpiece of makeup artistry. I'm certain that if he had walked down, say, Fifth Avenue in New York City, no one would have recognized him.

Many people, including myself, have fixed ideas about what happens on a movie set just prior to filming. I had always pictured the director, in a chair, saying, "lights...cameras...action..." or something similar. It's not like that at all. I'll try to describe it as best as I recall it.

It seemed as though everyone except director Ron Howard, says something. An assistant signals us, the “audience,” to watch for her cue to begin the applause. Someone says something, in a kind of subdued voice, about the cameras running, or getting ready to run. I think they’re checking to see that a person with a clapperboard is positioned in front of each camera. Now someone calls out, in a loud and clear voice, “Speak!” At this command, still another person says, “A Beautiful Mind – 235M – Take One.”

The cameras are referred to as “marks,” at least at this part of the procedure, and they are identified by letters, not numbers. Now the person in front of each camera with the clapper board says, in turn, “A Mark” (clap with the board)...”B Mark (clap)...”C Mark” (clap)...”F Mark” (clap). A SAG actor later told me that “F Mark” meant “Final Mark” or final camera and that the last camera is always “F Mark”.

At that point, the action begins. All this takes place much faster than I have described, usually in just a few seconds.

After the first take...I’m guessing the scene lasts about 3 ½ minutes... we had a short break during which an assistant director critiqued us on our performance – less emphatic applause during the initial introduction, more at the end, etc. We then did another take, and again we tensed and got ready as the voice around the cameras called out, “Speak!”...followed by all the rest ending in “F Mark.” It would be very familiar by the day’s end.

Following the second take, we had a longer break of about 25 minutes, during which we adjourned to another holding area. As we went back into the auditorium, I wondered, where was Jennifer Connelly, the leading lady who portrays Mrs. Nash? I voiced my question to a Union actress, who replied, “There she is, right over there,” gesturing toward a small cluster of people nearby. I looked in amazement; she had been sitting only ten rows in front of me all the time! Here was another remarkable job of makeup; the results of hours of work earlier in the day.

Again, we got ready, looked at the assistant director for our cue. Again, the familiar voices, “Speak”, “A Beautiful Mind – 235M – Take 3.” At the final words, “F Mark”, we did another shot of the scene.

Another brief break; we were told not to leave our seats. When Russell left the stage after a take, to have his makeup touched up, a stand-in immediately replaced him at the lectern. This was a man of about the same size as Russell, who simply stands there while the cameramen go to work with tape measures, getting the right distance from the cameras to the man’s face. They also worked with instruments which I believe measured light intensity. I was later told that Union actors are usually the stand-ins.

This time, Russell returned to the set after only a few minutes, and something wasn’t quite ready. So Mr. Crowe entertained us with the first of several raunchy Australian jokes, of which he knows quite a few.

Another take; again we heard the familiar words; and once again Russell Crowe walked up to the podium and made his speech. And again, we applauded, rising to our feet as we did. Then we broke for lunch, back in the original holding area at the hotel adjoining the NJPAC.

When we returned to the set, most or all of the four cameras had been re-positioned. I got a close look at one which had been moved from the stage into the audience area. Although I couldn't be sure, I believe they have small camcorders mounted on top of the cameras. Whether both run simultaneously, I don't know. There wasn't time to ask questions of the cameramen.

The director's assistants now gave us new instructions. During the final applause, when we give "Dr. Nash" a standing ovation, the way we rose to our feet didn't look right; didn't look natural. We all rose together, as though acting on cue, (which is exactly what we were doing). We were now told to come to our feet slowly, first, all Capricorns, then all Libras, then everyone else, with the applause increasing. We were to glance at the person next to us, but again, not all at once. We practiced it, and practiced it, and then we were ready for another take. And once again, the familiar word, "Speak!" "A Beautiful Mind – 235M....." I was beginning to see another parallel to costuming...the advice of the late William Rotsler, in his list of rules....."Rehearse, Rehearse, Rehearse!"

During the breaks, the makeup people would suddenly appear, checking up on us. They moved from one person to another, doing quick touch-ups with just a fraction of the equipment they had had at the makeup tables. I believe Jennifer Connelly had her own makeup specialists; they sometimes worked on her right in the "audience" area where we were milling around. I could see the wisdom in the rule about not asking for autographs; it just wouldn't be feasible in this environment.

I did, however, have a chance to meet and briefly talk with Ron Howard. He was the only big-name Hollywood star I actually met that day. He is a very impressive man, and moreover, a fine leader and supervisor. Throughout the entire day, he was almost always in sight, checking on everything. I recall seeing him at one point speaking to a cluster of people and I think he was enquiring if they had gotten enough to eat.

Back to the set. Again, we were re-positioned in different seats. It was nearly 3:00 P.M., and it was clear that these folks were real perfectionists; they were going to keep doing it until they were satisfied they had the footage they needed. A few people could be seen nodding off during the waiting periods; after all, we had all been up since very early in the morning. The assistant directors had to remind us to sit up straight and maintain good posture.

More takes, more re-positioning and re-seating, more off-color jokes from Russell Crowe. I noticed that when he went up to the podium just to tell us a joke, he walked with the same halting, "old-man" gait as during actual filming. He was staying in character, the same as we costumers do.

The afternoon wore on, with still more takes, one after another. During breaks, I asked some of the SAG people about their acting careers. Most of them lived in New York City. They were willing to talk about their profession to answer my questions. I had to admire them, struggling along with odd jobs, while pursuing their dream of someday getting their big break in show business. It's hard to grasp this when you've had a steady job and paycheck every week of your life since age 23. One woman worked as a Real Estate Agent; others as waiter and waitresses, computer operators, or whatever. I learned that acting in TV commercials, while not particularly glamorous, was a good paying acting job. Several of them mentioned that working on Soap Operas, even in bit parts, was good experience and often a launching pad to bigger things. They mentioned that the highest paid salaried workers on the set today, were most likely the cameramen, (though their work is seasonal, with many slack periods.)

Dinner time came, buffet-style back in the holding area. Then back to the set, where the cameras had been re-arranged again, with one of them at the back of the auditorium. Now we were going to get the backs of our heads filmed.

It was getting past 9:00 P.M., and we began wondering, just how much longer will it be? After all, we had our regular jobs to go to tomorrow. Finally, the word from one of Ron Howard's assistants; there would be one more take, and we would be finished.

Russell Crowe walked up to the podium, from which he had made his acceptance speech so many times today. He thanked us for our hard work, and for putting up with the long hours and repetition. He said he had one more story for us. He walked over to a carryall bag and pulled out something wrapped in what looked like newspaper. I was reminded of the scene in The Godfather, when the Corleone family receives a dead fish wrapped in newspaper, symbolizing that one of their men "now sleeps with the fishes." Was Russell going to pull out a dead kangaroo? Very unlikely.

"Here's what all our hard work is for," he said, unwrapping the package so we couldn't see its contents. We were still expecting a joke of some sort. He held aloft his Oscar statuette, from last year's Academy Awards, for best actor in Gladiator.

"This is what we're going for, folks; best picture!" We burst into applause, cheers, and a standing ovation; more vigorous than any during the filming. It was a perfect ending to a long, hard day. We settled in for the final take, then returned to the staging area, where we changed back into our street clothes, and made out our final pay paperwork. Then to our cars, and, for myself, another hour's ride back home. I got to bed about midnight, and went to sleep with the words still in my ears, "Speak!...A Beautiful Mind"...etc, etc, ending with the familiar "F Mark."

About two weeks later, I received my paycheck in the mail; I earned \$138.00 for my efforts. Not as much as the Union actors, and certainly not as much as Russell Crowe

or Jennifer Connelly, but still a pretty good day's pay for a wonderful experience, so I'm not complaining.

Looking back on this experience, I could not help but notice several similarities to costuming. There are, of course, the obvious ones such as being outfitted in unusual attire, which we may not be used to. This was the case with my wearing a tuxedo, even though many would not consider it a "costume" in the usual sense of the word. Having makeup applied is certainly familiar to many costumers. But I also noticed a similarity to filming the scene, and presenting a costume at a masquerade; you do your performance in a short space of time. Many scenes in movies are less than one minute and within the "time limit" we have at masquerades. And if you are a non-union background actor, you probably won't speak any lines. You'll be acting but not talking, as on the stage at a masquerade.

What kind of advice can I share with costumers, who may some day have an opportunity to try for an extra/background part in a movie? Mainly, never turn down a chance to go to a casting call because you think, "They'll never pick me." There are hundreds of other people thinking the same thing, and staying home. Extras casting agents are looking for ordinary, every-day people of all ages, sizes, etc. Although I learned of this casting call from the local newspapers, there is a lot of information about casting calls and agencies on the internet.

You may be called on short notice, which can be a problem if you can't get time off from your regular job. But make no mistake about one fact; costuming experience is definitely a plus. I'm certain I was more relaxed and prepared for this, than many of the others.

As for myself, I wrote to Bill Dance afterwards, asking him to call me anytime they're casting in this area. I'm ready to do it again.

.....

Assistant Editor's Comment: The movie was nominated and won 4 different areas.
Supporting Actress - Jennifer Connelly
Directing - Ron Howard
Best Picture - Brian Grazer and Ron Howard
Writing (Adapted) - Written by Akiva Goldsman

Note: Michelle Jaye Solomon provided this on the D-List for all to use. Thank you Michelle.

Fabricholic's Will

Being of sound mind and body, I _____, do hereby record my last will and testament, knowing that _____, my _____, (husband, sister, daughter, etc.) has no appreciation of, or in some instances knowledge of, my extensive fabric collection deposited throughout the house.

Knowing also that _____ has notified the local thrift store should I precede him or her to the great fabric shop in the sky, to pick up and dispose of the aforementioned collection.

Therefore, I do will this collection, and all collections related to it, to my dear fabric preservationist _____. It is my wish that she, upon hearing of my death and the inability to take it with me, come to my home and stack my entire collection in my studio. She should then purchase refreshments for all my friends, and they shall gather in that room and remember me, then peacefully divide the collection amongst themselves.

Be forewarned, I will be hovering over this process! The rest of my worldly possessions (car, stocks, house, etc.) can go to those who do not understand this event.

Signed _____

Date _____



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If you've never met a sequin you didn't love, if you spend the entire movie either critiquing the costumes or trying to figure out how to make them, if the clerks at the fabric store know you by name -this con's for you!

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WHERE I SHOP, AND WHY (Part II)

By Karen Dick

Over the last 29 years of making costumes, and the last 20 years of editing THE WHOLE COSTUMER'S CATALOGUE, I've discovered all sorts of places to shop for the raw materials for costumes. All of the ones listed in this column are places I have made purchases from personally and consider some of the best.

Some of these will probably not be a revelation for you if you live in the same geographic area they're located in, or if you've been costuming forever like I have. But I hope some are new gems that you haven't encountered yet.

BAER FABRICS

515 East Market Street

Louisville, KY 40202

Phone: (502) 569-7010, -7011, -7017

FAX: (502) 582-2331

Direct line to Costume Dept.:

(502) 569-7011 Local

(800) 769-7776, -7778 Toll-free out-of-town

Store Hours: Mon 9:00-9:00; Tue-Sat 9:00-5:30

Mail-Order Dept. Hours: 9:00-5:00 Mon-Fri

Contact Person: Kevin

Large warehouse (four stories; 85,000 square feet) filled with costume materials, costume shop supplies, feather and poly boning, 15 types of shoulder pads, trims, eyelet and lace, jacquard braids, jewelry findings, buckles, alteration and tailoring supplies, dancewear and shoes, general fabrics, synthetic fur, rhinestones, feathers, beads (including chain strung rochaille beads (as easy to put on as trim!), pearls, military braid, hats and hat frames, HUGE selection of interfacings, appliques (beaded and sequined), closed-cell foam (very dense, very thin foam useful for making lightweight 3-D costumes or headpieces), and Brooklyn petticoat (the plastic mesh used in the backs of baseball hats). Also home decorating supplies, including heavy duty trim, gimp, fringe, cords, tassels, Fresh Again uniform and costume spray, and tagging guns. Check their Back Room for bargains such as bolts of trim from the 60's for cheap. "Over one million yards of fabric and trim in stock." Also industrial sewing machines; Mediaeval Miscellanea, Past Patterns, and Folkwear patterns, etc. They also carry costume books—over 50 titles in stock! Will swatch, but please be specific as to color, fiber content, and texture that you want. Good prices. Friendliest sales help we have encountered anywhere! Accepts mail and phone orders. Will ship to Canada. Write for free catalog, which contains many

fabric swatches. Accepts personal checks, Visa, MC, AmEx, and Discover. No minimum purchase amount. Retail and wholesale.

Baer is another of what I call "national-level full-service fabric stores." When we were on the clown convention circuit, we stopped there at least once per year, and we still do mail-order with them. If you go there in person, be advised that their parking lot is the size of a postage stamp and difficult to navigate in a large vehicle, but it is free.

BLANKS, INC.
6709-A White Stone Road
Meadows Business Park
(Exit 17 off the Baltimore Beltway)
Baltimore, MD 21207
Phone: (410) 944-0040; FAX: (410) 298-2834
URL: www.blanksfab.com
Email: info@blanksfab.com

Since 1904. "Maryland's Largest Fabric Center." Large warehouse filled with all types of fabrics. Large sections of the store are dedicated to drapery and upholstery fabric, fancy bridal and metallic fabrics, and quilting fabrics (lots of Jinny Beyer prints!). Good selection of "standard" fabrics (cotton/poly blends, poplins, woolens, etc.). Excellent prices on flat-fold tables, sometimes as low as \$1.00/yard. Also carries fancy beaded and sequinned appliques, trim, lace, buttons, etc. A full-service fabric store. Accepts MC and Visa.

When we lived in the Baltimore area, Blanks was one of the places we shopped regularly. We have not been to their store since they changed locations a few years ago, but assume they still carry all the same stuff.

BON-MAR TEXTILES INC.
8448 St. Laurent
Montreal, Quebec, Canada H2P 2M3
(514) 382-2275; FAX: (514) 382-4661
Toll-free (Canada only): (800) 363-2993
Hours: Mon-Fri 8:30-4:30; Sat 8:00-12:00 noon
Contact Person: M. Brook

Billed as "Canada's Greatest 'Show' Fabric Wholesaler," they supply many of the ice spectaculars in Canada and the U.S. If it's in stretch, they have it. All kinds of lycra: plain and prints (some great snakeskin), Glitterskin, wet-look cire, laces, nude-look, sequinned, etc. Large selection of colors. Also carries metallic fabrics and mesh, chiffons, satin, supplex and other activewear fabrics, feathers, metallic and chainette fringes, metallic braid, hat forms, jewels, and rhinestones, including an impressive collection of rhinestone transfers. Largest sequin product supplier in Canada. Located

just south of the Metropolitan (TransCanada Route 40). Accepts mail and phone orders, or visit their store. Will ship to U.S. Send \$5.00 in Canadian funds for their 18-page catalog (includes many swatches and sequin samples). Accepts MC and Visa, no personal checks. \$100 minimum order (Canadian funds). Minimum cut on fabrics is 5 meters. Primarily a wholesaler, but will sell retail.

A friend turned me on to them in '85 when I was hunting a particular kind of spandex—black and white stripe, with the stripes at about ½” intervals. They not only had the fabric, but they had it in two different variations: with the stretch running with the stripes, and the stretch running across the stripes!

GLITZ!, INC.

*801 Bayou Pines Drive
Lake Charles, LA 70601-7076
(318) 439-8166 or (800) 344-5480
FAX: (318) 494-0862*

Beaded and sequinned appliques, beaded fringe, beaded trim. (Many of their designs are “families” of appliques in the same style/color combination that can be mixed and matched together for some truly stunning effects.) Lace appliques and trim. Gold bouillon embroidery from India. Quilted and airbrushed appliques, iron-on embroidery appliques. Loose rhinestones, strip rhinestones, drops, acrylic stones, glass beads (by the gross), glass and bugle beads (by the pound). Loose sequins, strip sequins (by the 72-yard roll). Write for 34 page color catalog and wholesale price list. Opening order \$150.00 minimum; subsequent orders \$50.00. Accepts Visa and MC, business checks. Wholesale only. Custom applique orders available: 24 piece minimum on sequinned and beaded items, \$25.00 setup charge; 100 piece minimum on embroideries, \$30.00 setup charge.

We found this company through the Halloween trade show. Yes, the opening order is a lot if you're not a business, but get together with your friends to make a purchase—it will be worth it. We used to go to Kahaner every time we went to NYC, and GLITZ! Is our new favorite.

LEATHER IMPACT, INC.

*256 West 38th Street
New York, NY 10018
(212) 302-2332; FAX: (212) 730-2486
Email: leatherfacts@email.msn.com
Hours: Mon-Fri 9:30-5:30
Contact Person: Francois George, Ana Sanchez*

They have moved into a larger space with more room for all their wonderful leathers. This store has the most incredible selection of garment leather we have ever seen. It's like a fabric store—solids, prints, lames, etc.—but all the “fabric” is leather hides. They

have a wide color selection in solid-color cowhide, lamb, suede, etc. They also have real snakeskins (natural, colored, metallic, and iridescent). Must be seen to be believed. They will slice \$5 cuts off certain hides (by the cutting table) if you want small pieces for art-to-wear color blending, etc. They also carry furs, tails, lacing, belting, and trim (we saw some that was fur pom-poms!). Cash only—no credit cards, no checks. Businesses may use a business credit card when accompanied by a valid resale number (no personal credit cards). Mail-order is possible if shipped COD.

Hands down, my favorite place for garment leather on either coast. I've made several trips to NYC just to go there.

M & J BUTTONS

1000 6th Avenue (between 37th & 38th Street)

New York, NY 10018

(212) 391-6200; FAX: (212) 391-0023

URL: www.mjtrim.com

Email: info@mjtrim.com

Hours: 9:00-6:00 Mon-Fri; 10:00-5:00 Sat

M&J has the two most organized stores in the New York Garment District. Everything is on display and color-coded, making it very easy for you to find just what you need. Prices are retail, not wholesale, but the lack of frustration is well worth it. Individual button prices range from 30 cents to 30 dollars. Besides buttons, they carry beads (larger types for necklaces vs. bugles and rochaille beads), fancy frogs, glue, rhinestones, tassels, handbag handles/frames, and belt buckles. Featured in an April 29, 2001 "Best of New York" article in the DAILY NEWS, and we heartily agree. Accepts mail and phone orders, \$50 minimum.

M & J TRIMMING CO.

1008 6th Avenue (between 37th & 38th Street)

New York, NY 10018

(212) 391-9072; FAX: (212) 764-5854

URL: www.mjtrim.com

Email: info@mjtrim.com

When the original M & J TRIMMINGS suffered a disastrous fire in 1997, the buttons portion of the store moved to the address in the previous listing, and the trimmings moved here. We visited in April 2002, and it has the same high level of organization as its original store. The old M & J was always one of the first places we stopped when searching for that "special" trim for a costume. They also carry a whole wall of bugle/seed/rochaille beads in a wide variety of colors.

M&J is not the place to go if you are hunting for bargains; however, I am willing to pay a little more because their selection is so spectacular in both stores. I always make a point of stopping into M&J every time I am in NYC.

THAI SILKS!

252 State St.

Los Altos, CA 94022

(650) 948-8611; FAX: (650) 948-3426

Phone: (800) 722-SILK outside CA

(800) 221-SILK in CA

Hours: 9:00-5:30 Mon-Sat

Contact Person: Queti Valqui

URL: www.thaisilks.com

Imported silk fabrics at LOW prices! (\$4 to \$20 per yard.) Also silk garments and accessories. Write or call for free brochure. \$30 buys you a complete sample set (over 400 swatches). If you order within 30 days, you will receive a refund of \$10. They also have a silk fabric club (annual fee: \$20). Discounts for stores, artists, dressmakers. Accepts mail and phone orders, or visit their store. Will ship outside the U.S. Accepts personal checks, AmEx, MC, and Visa. Will ship COD. Minimum order is 1/2 yard. Both retail and wholesale.

I loved visiting their store in person when I lived in the Bay Area in the 80's, and I still do frequent mail-order with them for my corset business. Their swatches are well-worth getting—I recently did a costume that was all different types of silk, but all in black, and the swatches helped me determine the “hand” of the different types I needed. They have one of the most extensive collections of jacquard brocades I've seen, with prices well below “street” prices in NYC. You now can buy swatch sets of particular fabric types—see “Fabric Samples” on their website for details.

UNIVERSAL SYNERGETICS, INC.

P.O. Box 2840, Dept. C

Wilsonville, OR 97070-2840

(503) 625-2323 (retail orders)

(503) 625-7168 (wholesale orders)

FAX: (503) 625-4329

Email: carol@beadcats.com or virginia@beadcats.com

URL: <http://www.beadcats.com>

Hours: Mon-Fri 10:00-4:00 (PST)

Contact Person: Carol or Virginia

Thousands of beads and colors, beading supplies, beading books and videos. Beadwork and articles by the owners, Carol Perrenoud and Virginia Blakelock, have been featured in *Bead and Button*, *Shuttle Spindle* and *Dyepot*, and *Threads* magazines. (Virginia's

book, *THOSE BAD, BAD BEADS*, is available here and is highly recommended. It covers loomwork, fringes, flat peyote, tubular peyote, netting, quadruple helix, Ndebele herringbone, and right angle weave. 100 pages, spiral bound for worktable convenience, \$15.00.) They carry modern beads as well as antiques found in their European searches. Seed beads from size 110-240, straight and twisted bugles from 2mm to 60mm long, 2-cuts, 3-cuts, and Charlottes. Their own family factories in the Czech Republic produce unique shapes and colors of hand-made lamp-worked and pressed glass beads (leaves, hearts, tear-drops, etc.). Needles include glovers', milliners', sharps, betweens, beading and stringing in sizes 10-16. Threads include Nymo, Nylux, monocord, Kevlar, Silamide, Gudebrod, silk, and linen in sizes 000 to FF in dozens of colors. Plus innovative supplies like bead trays and cases (for portable beading), personal magnifying lights, and bead sample cards to make ordering by mail easy! Accepts mail, phone, fax, and email orders. Will ship anywhere in the world. Catalog available for \$2.50. Accepts personal checks, MC, and Visa. Retail and wholesale.

You've probably admired Virginia's work in *THREADS* magazine—now here's the place to get some of the same beads she uses!

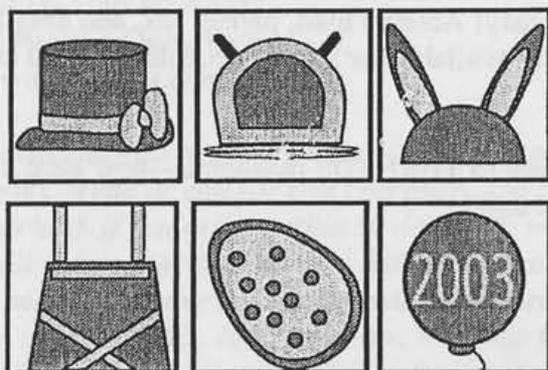
UnNATURAL RESOURCES
A Division of Douglas & Sturgess, Inc.
730 Bryant Street
San Francisco, CA 94107
Order Line: (800) 992-5540
FAX: (415) 896-6379

This company specializes in "thermoplastics" (plastics that can be formed with heat). Their products are excellent for armor, props, etc. This includes "VARA-FORM", light and heavy weight mesh by the yard; "PROTOPLAST", thermoplastic sheets; "SKIN-LIKE", super thin plastic, great for masks and special effects; "ADAPT-IT", thermoplastic pellets for modeling and bonding; and "FABRIC-FORM", thermoplastic covered fabric. Their latest offering is "META-LITES", a metallic beaded mesh that comes in 9-1.2"x34" or 19"x34" sheets. Spectacular! In addition, they now offer a complete line of molding, casting, and sculpting tools and supplies. Send for free information and price list. Swatches are \$5. Complete 82-page catalog is \$5. Minimum order is \$50. Accepts mail and phone orders. Accepts COD's, prepayments, Visa, and MC.

Here's the place to get some interesting alternatives to Whiting and Davis metal mesh. Some Klingon costumes from the *STAR TREK* TV and movie series use the square "chain mail" version of Meta-Lites at the throat. This is where to get it!

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Costume-Con 21
P.O. Box 633
Skokie, IL 60077

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