

Status Report to the ICG on Transformations:Cosplay Project

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In April 2015, I was fortunate enough to have received a grant for my project "Transformations:Cosplay", and this is my 12 month follow-up report.

The aim of **Transformations:Cosplay** is to take portrait photos of costumers in both their costumes and in "civilian" attire, on large format 4x5" film. As the cost of this project is relatively high: in particular, each *sheet* of 4x5" film cost \$4 and costs ~\$1 worth of chemical to process (I do my own processing and scanning to reduce the cost as much as possible), I am constantly on the lookout for funding assistance, including applying for the ICG Grant.

The 2015 ICG Grant award was very timely, as it enabled me to attend Costume Con 33 in South Carolina. The convention chairs Sandy Swank and Rob Himmelsbach and their staff, and the official photographer Ken Warren, worked with me to be able to use the official photography space for my project (when the space was not otherwise in use), and I was able to take photographs of 20+ costumers at the convention. As these are some of the top costumers in our field, I feel the project is enriched greatly by this.

A large portfolio of over 40 24"x30" prints from the project was available in the Exhibit room for CC33 attendees to view. Even though these are nominally "proof" prints, since they are printed from 4x5" negatives, the quality is already much higher than what most people are used to seeing, and they are helpful to demonstrate my vision for the project. I also gave a one-hour presentation about the project.

I shot over 70 sheets of film, at a cost of approximately \$350. As I was able to travel to CC33 using airline miles, the ICG Grant money was used to pay for the film and processing, plus the cost of the hotel.

The project has continued since CC33. In August, I attended Sasquan, the 73rd Worldcon. The Worldcon concomm provided me with a studio and exhibit space in the Exhibit Hall to continue the project (I was also working on a portrait project of SF&F authors and artists at the same time). I printed two images from the project at the size of 4 by 5 feet with one displayed in the exhibit space near the large viewing portfolio, and the other in the Art Show. The displays received many positive comments. At Worldcon, I was able to photograph half a dozen costumers for the project.

As a result of the presentation at CC33, the St. Louis Costumer's Guild generously granted me a \$300 donation, and in October I was able to send those two prints to Archon for Art Show exhibition.

In January 2016, I attended the Anime Los Angeles convention, where I added photographs of 4 sets of cosplayers to the project, and also re-shot a couple sets of cosplayers' "out of costume" photos, as I was not satisfied with their "out-of-costume" photos taken in previous years. (Unfortunately with film photography, unlike digital, there is no "instant feedback", and re-shoots are sometimes necessary.) My biggest "record" of retakes for a cosplayer involved shooting her out-of-costume image 4 times, including driving 3 hours round-trip for the last photo, before I was able to get the look I wanted!

In 2016, I hope to be able to attend at least one major anime convention, as well as some of the larger Science Fiction conventions, including Mid-Americon II, the 74th Worldcon. As my schedule has it, I will only be able to attend one day of Costume Con 34, if any - to be able to fill out the portfolio some more. I hope to start working on a book by the last few months of 2016. The project is by no mean finished, as I expect to continue to work on it at least until end of 2018 for a second book.

In closing, the 2015 ICG Grant has been used to continue the Transformations:Cosplay project, and I am very grateful to the ICG and the grant committee for helping make this project possible.