

International Costumer

Volume XIII, Issue 3

International Costumers' Guild

May-June 2014



*High
Notes
Achieved*

President's Letter

by Phil Gust

What a Costume-Con! As Carole Parker points out in her column, the masquerades set new records for the number of entries in both the sci-fi/fantasy and historical masquerades. It was not just the number of entries. The quality of the costumes was amazing, too, and a some of them were absolutely jaw-dropping! The entries in both the *Single Pattern Competition* during the Friday evening reception and the *Future Fashion Show* were also amazingly creative and a joy to watch. Touring the doll show and the exhibit of costumes that have appeared at past Costume-Cons was also fun.

One of the most amazing things about this Costume-Con was the energetic and enthusiastic participation of the local cosplay and anime communities.

Everywhere I went, people were dressed in some of the most creative hall costuming that I've seen in years. The mix of characters and the quality of costumes rivaled what I've only seen at much larger conventions like San Diego Comic-Con. It was a real pleasure to stop and talk with many of them, learn about their characters, and hear the enthusiasm in their voices as they discussed the techniques they used to construct their costumes.

One thing that really struck me was how many were attending Costume-Con for the first time, and experiencing something very different from other cons. One first-timer, who is an anime costumer, summed it up by saying that while she attends other conventions with anime cosplayers, Costume-Con was the first time she has

experienced so many different kinds of costuming and mingled with costumers of such different interests.

She especially enjoyed all the classes and meet-ups on different aspects of costume construction techniques. She said that she hadn't realized that many of the elements of anime costumes actually come from historical costumes, and that she planned to use what she learned in future costumes. She also said that she wants to attend Costume-Con 33 next year in Charleston to



learn more.

Phil and Kathe Gust went as vampires to the Monster Club Social that kicked off Costume-Con 32.

One of the real benefits of conventions like Costume-Con and costuming

organizations like the International Costuming Guild (ICG) is that they provide a space for costumers from many different genres to get together, learn from each other, and have fun together. The many cons and organizations that focus on a single genre of costuming are also great because they enable participants to share detailed knowledge. However, the enthusiastic response from all the

Costume-Con attendees only strengthens my belief that it's also important to reach out across genres and celebrate the tremendous diversity of the costuming community.

If there's a single takeaway from this year, it's how important it is for both Costume-Con and the ICG to redouble their efforts to reach out across the entire costuming community to be that place where costumers of all genres, ages, and nationalities can learn from each other and help each other grow as costumers.

Congratulations to *Fiber and Fantasy Artists* President Dawn McKechnie, Vice President Maral Agnerian, and many others for putting on such a great CC 32. The conference ran so well, and brought in so many first-timers as well as veteran attendees, thanks to the hard work they put in to make it all come together. They totally ROCK!

Finally, I'd like to offer my thanks to Carole Parker, who has edited the ICG newsletter for the past two years and has transformed it into the *International Costumer* that you see today. It was my pleasure to recognize Carole's accomplishment with a President's Award at Costume-Con 32 this year.

Carole is stepping down as editor after this issue, but will continue to serve on the ICG Publication Committee and provide advice and guidance to her successor. *Thanks, Carole!*

In the next issue, I'll talk about some of the exciting new programs that the ICG is putting into place that benefit our chapters and members.

From the Editor

by Carole Parker

They say that it isn't over until the fat lady sings, but this lady is calling it over as far as being the *International Costumer Editor*. It has been a joy to create this publication, but now it's time to hand off the *International Costumer* to someone else.

In two years, the *International Costumer* got a name, a new layout, cover pages, and went totally electronic with only a few people getting a printed out version. I can only hope that people enjoyed this version of the *International Costumer*. I look forward to seeing what the next editor does with it.

I could not have done this without the support of the Editorial Board members: Betsy Delaney, Kathe Gust, Philip Gust, Bruce Mai, Patrick O'Connor, Jeanine Swick, and Randall Whitlock. Without their invaluable editorial and proofreading support, the *International Costumer* would not have been nearly as good. *Thank you, all.*

At Costume-Con 32, we had some really high notes of achievement for Costume-Con:

- The largest Costume-Con to date. More people attended this Costume-Con than any previous.
- The largest F&SF Masquerade with 87 participating entries and around 120 people in all those entries.
- The largest Historical Masquerade with 31 entries and around 100 people.

Congratulations to the Costume-Con 32 concom and masquerade crews. Well done. I look forward to Costume-Con 35.

The high note at the ICG meeting was that officers were elected:

President: Philip Gust

Vice President: Aurora Celeste

Treasurer: Jeanine Swick

Corresponding Secretary: Tonya Adolfson

Recording Secretary: Kathe Gust

At the F&SF Masquerade half time, we had the ICG awards creating another form of high notes.

President Phil Gust called up the previous *Lifetime Achievement Award (LAA)* winners. Then, he made them stand on stage while the *President's Awards* were given. We had three recipients recognized:

- Susan Toker, for furthering the ICG's outreach to the costuming community and beyond through the *Mega Convention List*.
- Yours truly, Carole Parker. I admit that I squealed like a teenaged school girl when my name was called. It was for transforming the ICG newsletter into the *International Costumer*.
- Jeanine Swick, for her many years of faithful service as the ICG Treasurer.

If anyone has a photo of Jeanine Swick and I holding our hands up high as we left the stage, please send me a copy.

After the suspense had built, the newest recipient of the LAA was announced: **Ann Catelli**.

For as long as I can remember, when I have been working in the masquerade green room, it seems like Ann was a stage ninja or lead stage ninja. That's a lot of years,

folks. She is also a past president of the ICG.

Please join me in congratulating Ann on receiving her LAA. To find out more about Ann and what she has done:

<http://costume.org/lifetime/catelli.html>

Ann Catelli, the newest Lifetime Achievement Award recipient.

On Sunday night, yet another high note was achieved during the Historical Masquerade half time.

Eric Cannon also received a President's Award for his great service to the costuming community by preserving our history in video.

More information about this effort follows this article.



High Note: Archival Bombshell

by Eric Cannon

Editor Note: This is the announcement that Eric did at the CC32 F&SF masquerade half time.

Two years ago, Rare Recorded Editions, Rare Recorded Videos, Warminster Productions, and Westminster Incorporated started a project which was decided to keep it secret until it was known that it was going to be possible.

February 1st of this year was a special day for the costuming community, yet no one knew it.

April 3rd of this year was another special day and another historical first for Costume-Con 1. Again, no one knew it.

I am pleased to announce that on February 1st, the (National) Library and (National) Archives of Canada, the National Archives of the United Kingdom, the National Archives of Australia, and the United States Library of Congress have agreed that costume masquerades are an art form that should be preserved in their respective archives.

Each archive will collect the masquerades for their own countries. Only Costume-Cons and Worldcons will be collected by all, as they are considered international events.

On April 3rd of this year, Costume-Con 1 events became the first masquerades to be archived.

All masquerades associated with Rare Recorded Editions, Rare Recorded

Videos, Warminster Productions, and Westminster Incorporated are currently being archived.

The next phase, which is still being ironed out, is to acquire masquerades from other sources and archive them.

Planned, but not finalized, is that one DVD copy will be returned with the source material, and one DVD copy will be sent to the International Costumers Guild's (ICG) Archives.

More details to follow.

*Editor Note: I spoke with Eric for a while on Monday, and he indicated that the costs of the archiving are covered by other sources. **NO ICG FUNDS** are being used for this massive project. He has hopes of getting other countries to participate in this project.*

He even found a film of a 1950s masquerade that is being carefully copied and color corrected frame-by-frame because it is so fragile. That is going to be a great archival video to view when it's done.

The *President's Award* presentation during the judging intermission of the Historical Masquerade at Costume-Con 32:

To videographer Eric Cannon, "*for his great service to the costuming community by preserving our history in video.*" ICG Vice President Aurora Celeste joined Phil Gust on stage to make the presentation.

Eric is well-known in the costuming community as the official masquerade videographer at Costume-Cons, as well as at many other conventions. He also generously donates copies of his masquerade videos to the ICG Kennedy Archives for long-term preservation.

Masquerade performances are an ephemeral art form, and we have a video record of so many of them, thanks to Eric. We were honored, on behalf of the ICG, to recognize his service to the costuming community with this award.

High Note: Masquerade DVD

You can order CC-32 masquerade videos from Eric through his company, *Rare Recorded Videos* at

<http://rarerecordedvideos.com>

High Note: Marty Gear Grants Fund

by Phil Gust

On March 22, 2014, the ICG Board of Directors approved the *Marty Gear Costuming Arts and Sciences Fund*. The *Marty Gear Costuming Arts and Sciences Fund* provides grants for innovative projects and activities that promote the art and science of costuming, either in a specific locale or the community as a whole.

The Fund was established in 2014, and is named in honor of Marty Gear, a founder of the ICG and a strong supporter of costumers branching out and trying new things. It is supported by a combination of ICG membership dues, and the generosity of individual and institutional donors. Please consider making a tax-deductible donation.

More information:

<http://costume.org/grants/grants.html>



High Note LAA Interview: Ann Catelli

by Carole Parker

When did you realize you were a costumer?

College, when I first started costuming myself, instead of only dolls as I'd previously done.

Where do you find your costuming inspiration?

Line and things mis-seen "that's not right; it should be"

What appeals to you about costuming?

The sky is the limit--all of history, all of literature, all of every medium, and all of your own imagination is available. An exact replica of a costume or clothes, a skilled interpretation of one view of a costume, a very little related piece, or one straight out of your mind may be made.

What was your reaction when you received your LAA?

I was very surprised. I still am.

To receive an LAA, service to the costuming community is one of the criteria. What would you suggest to others on how they could serve the costuming community?

Start small--teach something you know, however little or obvious it seems to you.

Be a den mom, an usher, a tech, an unskilled tech (gaffing wire runs or the stage), a ninja (always a favorite of mine ;)).

Run a Masquerade, a costume track, a Costume-Con.

Who were some of the costumers who encouraged you along the way?

Byron Connell was one of the first costumers to welcome me to the hobby.

Nora Mai gave me a compliment on a costume that had no awards. I never forgot that she took the time. (My costume on the LAA page, as it happens.)

Most of East Coast costuming fandom, though I can't specify everyone, for I'd forget some who were and are important.

What do you see as the future of costuming?

The vibrant cosplay world seems to be the future, with many very talented people dressing up and acting, and those cosplayers who stay interested in 'funny clothes' after they graduate high school or college may join our little costuming corner.

What do you think makes for a successful masquerade presentation?

Gripping the audience--whatever your costume might be, from pretty girl, scary demon, interesting interactions, to a new or well-done twist. Then get off the stage. Leave them wanting more.

Do you have any particular advice that you would like to give to costumers reading this article?

Show up--enter, help, welcome newcomers, admire costumes.

Many new costumers are afraid to approach "big-name" costumers for help or advice. What would you tell them if you could?

Timing is everything. In the Green Room is a bad time for nearly everyone.

Halftime of the show they entered or hanging out eating--much better.

Do you have photographs available of your first level winners to show the progression of your work if possible?

I have only ever won two stage awards, and both at the Master level in groups. I lost at Novice and Journeyman levels.

My first win was *Think Pink* at Costume-Con 22 in Decatur, GA. *Think Pink* (c)



Copyright © 2004 Ken Warren

Think Pink as a Historical Interpretation at the Master level.

The second was *Paint the Sky with Stars* at LACon IV

Paint the Sky with Stars - Libra and Aquarius.

Do you have a photograph of a favorite costume that may or may not be an award winner that you're especially proud of that you would like to share with our readers?



It's on the LAA page--1890s ballgown, or whatever I called it. A very nice corset and the gown fit over it like a glove.

Editor Note: Photo is on the From the Editor page.

Interview: A Gentleman's Gentleman

by Carole Parker

Voted the **Best Dressed Steampunk** in the **2014 Steampunk Chronicle** reader poll, Kory Doyle is known for being a sharply dressed gentleman while wearing historically correct bright colors. His journey into fandom began when he first saw *Space: 1999*. A lifetime of geekdom was established a year later when *Star Wars* came out. Over the years, Kory became an equal opportunity fan, loving the literary, graphic, and media sources. He became a costumer starting at sixteen. Kory has done historical costumes including Elizabethans, Victorians, Regency, Medieval, Celtic, and Saxon. His science fiction costumes include *Star Wars*, *Star Trek*, *Babylon 5*, and *Doctor Who*. Kory's current passion is Steampunk. He has created costumes from scratch design, to finishing, as well as repurposing and upcycling vintage and thrift store finds. Kory is one of the founders of the *Doctor Who* convention *Gallifrey One* and also the steampunk convention *Clockwork Alchemy*, which he served as co-chair in 2012 and 2013.



This smoking jacket is made from upcycled thrift store finds that Kory found.

How do you label yourself - costumer, wearable artist, tailor, upcycler, or something else?

It completely depends on the project, as I have answered to all the above. I try to treat everything as clothes, be it for a masquerade, cosplay, or historical recreation, so there needs to be a level of detail, fit, durability, and design no matter where and when I am going to wear it. This holds true on an original, where I draft the pattern, to thrift store finds I upcycle.

Where do you find your inspiration?

It comes from all sorts of sources. For example, I can see a collar from a 16th century woman's gown and try to figure out how to make it work on a 19th century inspired man's waistcoat, but use vintage French upholstery fabric I got from an estate sale. I have, at times, found something at a thrift store that I picked up for seven dollars and let it decide where it's going in an organic process of creativity. Other times, I do my own designs and go all the way from drafting the patterns to mockups, doing several fittings, to cutting and tailoring the final garment, as well as doing a lot of hand finishing. Each project is unique, and I let them dictate how we will work together.

What appeals to you about creating these garments?

Part of it is the fulfillment from the creative process, part of it is the pride of having made it myself, part of it is the accolades from my peers, and part of it is to have a wardrobe made up of clothes that no one else has.

How did you get started creating, tailoring, or upcycling men's garments/costumes?

I wanted to do *Ren Faire* as a participant, but couldn't pay the money to dress the level I wanted to, so I sat behind my sister's sewing machine and taught myself to sew. Learning to do Elizabethans taught me how to tailor garments. I took that into upcycling when I got into steampunk because, while I knew I didn't have to be 100% accurate when I upcycled a woman's jacket into a man's waistcoat, if it was fitted correctly it would look appropriate to the era.



An upcycled ladie's jacket that Kory took the sleeves off, flipped the fold over, and turned from single to double breasted. The pants were found at a vintage store and had to be taken in to fit. Photo Credit: John Bolman.

Did anyone encourage or mentor you in this hobby?

I've had many people give me pieces of advice and tips on techniques, but I've never had my own *Tim Gunn*, though I think my late friend *Frieda Soto-Jones* came the closest.

Where do you find your materials?

Thrift stores are a source. I love plaids and textured wools. I will look for a fabric that screams at me, and buy the garment, be it a skirt, blouse, coat, or jacket, just for the fabric.

I'll hit vintage shops, too. One time I happened into a local vintage consignment shop and found a faded tail coat. It was priced at \$120, and I was going to pass on it, but put it on anyway, and it fit like it was custom made for me. I started inspecting it closely, determined the entire interior was done by hand, and that its construction methods indicated it was an actual Victorian or Edwardian era piece. So, naturally, I bought it.

For fabrics, no place is better in San Jose than Fabrics "R" Us. It's two store fronts in a strip mall. Great prices for an amazing selection. You have to dig through stacks of bolts of fabrics, but it is worth the hunting.

For notions and trims, I make the drive and go to Britex in San Francisco. They are expensive, but I always find what I need there.

What level of sewing skill do you currently have?

Sunru Suzuki, founder of the San Francisco Zen Center once said, "In the beginner's mind there are many possibilities, but in the expert's there are few" thus, I think of myself as a beginner. I am pretty good at tailoring, though I am in no way at the level of a trained professional. My patterning skills are OK, but I don't think of myself as a pattern maker. I love doing hand work, but my skills in that regard are average at best.

I guess you could say I am a jack of all trades but a master of none.

Have you gone back and looked at some of your previous work? What did you think of it?

Funny you should mention that. I just hauled out a great coat I made thirteen years ago to repair. For the longest time, I thought of as the closet thing to a masterpiece I had. When I looked at the workmanship, I was a little embarrassed. The top stitching was wonky, pieces weren't the same size, and the hand work was sloppy by my current standards.

Do you have any advice for someone who wants to get started making or upcycling men's clothing for either themselves or their sweetheart?

DO NOT judge your work by other's work when you start out. We all started some where, and didn't get good over night. Find your own aesthetic, and don't worry about someone else's. My dear friend Kat Powell and I have totally different tastes. I like to do the refined elegant gentleman about town, and she does something akin to a steampunk *Tank Girl* look, and yet we both admire the other's work.

To the casual observer, it doesn't seem like as many men do Victorian or Steampunk upcycling or garment making as women do. Do you have any suggestions for guys that have no sewing skills but may want to learn?

I love upcycling and do it more than original work, currently. The trick is to know your body type and how to convert women's sizes to mens and vice versa. 75%

of my Victorian/Steampunk started out as women's garments. If you love a coat, and it fits in the shoulder and waist, all you really need to do is to flip the way it folds over the body, and it goes from women's to men's. If a man is a bit more on the burly side, he can take a double breasted coat and wear it as single breasted. If you have limited sewing ability, there is fusible hem tape that you can use instead, or use Wonder Tape for temporary fixes. If you don't want to do button holes because the thought is intimidating, then use rivets to attach belts as a closure instead.

Anything else you'd like our readers to know?

It is work, but it is worth it.

An original Kory Doyle design using the "eight yards of hideous patchwork plaid in vibrant clashing colors." Photo Credit: Anastasia Lang.



Chapter Newsletters

Does your chapter publish a newsletter? Is there a costuming e-zine that would be of interest to ICG members? Send your recommendations to:

icg-newsletter@costume.org

If your ICG chapter wants to start a newsletter, the Publications Committee can help you get started. To learn more:

icg-pubscommittee@costume.org

ICG By E-Mail or Internet

All members are welcome to join the ICG general discussion *Yahoo! Group* and participate in lively conversations on costuming. Please send comments and suggestions to the board and the standing committees using these e-mail addresses:

WebSite: <http://www.costume.org/>
Yahoo! Groups

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icg-d@yahogroups.com

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icg-board@costume.org

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icg-financecommittee@costume.org

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icg-pubscommittee@costume.org

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icg-techcommittee@costume.org

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Your ICG membership benefits include participation in a chapter(s) of your choice, voting rights, and a subscription to the *International Costumer*.

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Members who have an e-mail address on record are notified when a new edition is available. Those who receive the print edition are welcome to view the online edition by going to:

<http://www.costume.org/currentnewsletter>

When prompted, enter the user name "costumer" and the password "mardi2014gras."

Back issues of the ICG newsletter are available online for the entire costuming community to enjoy. Contact the newsletter editor e-mail address to report problems or comment on the newsletter. If your postal or e-mail address changes, notify your local chapter promptly, or send your updated information to icg-membership-corrections@costume.org. Returned copies of the print edition will not be re-mailed.

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