

International Costumer

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Happy New Year!

President's Message

By Philip Gust

First, let me wish you a Happy New Year! I hope that 2015 will offer many rewarding opportunities in both your vocation and your avocations – especially costuming.

If you're like me, you're probably way over-committed, but I hope that you'll block out a little time this year to invest in yourself. Lifelong learning is important not only in your work, but also in the leisure activities where you invest your time. Costuming is such a large field and has so many aspects that there is always something new to learn, whether you're a hobbyist, a semi-professional, or a professional costumer. In 2015, let me suggest investing in learning a new skill that you've always admired but have never tried.

For example, who doesn't admire the beauty of quilts and the talented artists who produce them? Maybe 2015 would be a good time to try your hand at it, especially since the *Bobby Gear Memorial Quilt Contest* is being held at Costume-Con 33 in Charleston in mid-May. Quilting is a useful technique that can be applied to many aspects of costuming, from historical to sci-fi/fantasy and beyond.

Quilt Contest director Elaine Sims' article *Quilting as Embellishment in Modern Fashion* (*Virtual Costumer* vol 12 issue 3 http://www.siwcostumers.org/vc_contents.html#v12_i3) shows some amazing examples of how quilting techniques play an important role in decorative clothing, from outfits worn by Olympic teams to new designs seen on fashion show runways.

Silicon Web Costumers' Guild Chapter President Kevin Roche recently proved that it's possible to cross over between the quilting and costuming worlds. He included quilting-inspired features in his *Power Suit* entry at the Pacific International Quilt Festival (PIQF). The entry received an award for *Most Innovative Design* in the *Full Ensemble Division*.

This is just one example of a new skill that you might explore in 2015, but many others exist. The point is to pick something you've been intrigued about or always wanted to learn, and resolve to give it a try! The costumes I've been the proudest of building invariably required learning some new skill.

One of the great benefits of ICG membership is that we are such a diverse group. Whatever new skill you decide on, there are members who already have expertise and are happy to help fellow



A close-up of Kevin Roche's "Power Suit." Photo courtesy of Kevin Roche.

costumers get started. The ICG-D Yahoo group <http://groups.yahoo.com/groups/icg-d> is a great place to find them and to ask questions.

What new skill will you learn in 2015? Whatever it is, consider sharing your experience about getting started by writing a short article for the *International Costumer* newsletter. Articles by beginners are often just as interesting and valuable as ones by experts. Who knows, you might just inspire a fellow member to try it too!

From the Editor

By Vicky Assarattanakul

Happy New Year! I can't believe we are already looking at 2015, can you? The new year is a time that I like to think about new beginnings, but especially – new costumes!

We have many exciting events coming up this year, and Costume-Con 33 is quickly approaching. That also means the “panic before the con” is quickly approaching for many of us! I hope your preparations all go smoothly for costumes and events, alike.

What did your chapter do in 2014? Do you have any events planned for the beginning of 2015? Consider writing an article for *International Costumer* to let us know what you've been up to! There is an incredible variety of knowledge and skills within the ICG, and we'd love to hear from you.

About the cover:

The cover art comes from a Chinese New Year painting from the Yangliuqig region, that shows a regional costume as well as being a new year image. In recent years, China has seen a revival of

these paintings. Creating a New Year painting has become a favorite pastime of many people in China.

New Year paintings are a type of folk art in China. They may have originated in the Tang Dynasty, and the tradition of creating these paintings lasts to this day. The paintings are done using various techniques, including woodblock printing. Images may depict aspects of, folk stories, historic events, or religious symbols.

As with most regions of the world, a fantastic resource for historical costume reference lies in the folk art of the region. Chinese New Year paintings are no exception. The details of the garments worn by the people depicted is quite lovely.



New Year Painting from the Qing Dynasty, depicting a scene from a Chinese folk legend.

A Step Back in Time

CC33 Exhibit Room

By Jeanine Swick

A Step Back in Time is the theme for the Costume Con 33 exhibits, according to coordinator Jeanine Swick. She is looking for award winning costumes from the past that can include historic and alien costumes. Jeanine can be reached at exhibits@woollycat.net. CC33 hopes to have several items from our guest of honor, Janet Wilson Anderson, on display. Space is limited, so don't wait to get your item in.

The doll show will be run by Ann Catelli. Please watch <http://cc33charleston.org/wp> for more information.

The costume exhibit and doll show will be located in the former hotel gift shop. The quilt show will be sharing space with Miss Lizzy's in a separate room. The exhibit has windows on two sides, so you will still be able to view them when it is closed. Volunteers are needed to help staff both areas for the Quilt Show, Miss Lizzy's, and Exhibit rooms. We would prefer not to have to close them down during the day, but the coordinators need breaks and want to take in some panels. Please contact Jeanine at the exhibits e-mail address to help keep these rooms open.

Buccaneers Belles & Bootleggers

Welcome to the Jazz Age (Costume-Con 33 Friday Night Social)

By Sandy Swank and Dora Buck

Picture it, Charleston, SC, 1927. It was the age of prosperity. Even though it was illegal, the gin ran like water and all you had to do at the door of any local speakeasy was to ask to see the "Blind Tiger."

Welcome to the Jazz Age is the theme of Costume-Con 33's Friday Night Social. Our speakeasy, or Blind Tiger, is called *The Pirates Cove*, where we open the doors for a step back in time to the Roaring Twenties. In those days, Millie got Modern, the skirts were shorter, the music hotter, and to quote the Broadway show *Chicago*, "We were all going to hell in a fast car and making it Hot!"

Planned opening ceremonies will feature a series of short sketches introducing the Con-Chairs, Vice Chair, a few founding members of the newly forming Pirate of the Carolinas Costumers' Guild, as well as our

chosen Costumer Guest of Honor, Miss Janet Wilson Anderson. You won't want to miss the first of the competitions as we host the *Single Pattern Competition* directed by Elaine Mami.

Between introductions, enjoy a full dinner buffet and cash bar where alcoholic beverages are served in tea cups, and socialize with old and new friends. Be you a Pirate, Southern Belle or Flapper, be ready to come out and have a great time.

We've arranged convention rates with the hotel, so you can come a few days early and stay an extra day or two later to enjoy the sites of historic Charleston, voted #1 once again by Conde Nast Traveler as top vacation destination in the United States.

To read more about Costume-Con 33's Friday Night Social, visit <http://cc33charleston.org/wp/2013/10/01/friday-night-social-welcome-to-the-jazz-age/>.

Loncon3 Masquerade

By Carole Parker

I am normally in the masquerade green room, so it felt strange to be out in the audience at Loncon3's Masquerade. The room was large with the seating being wide and shallow rather than narrow and long. Several hundred seats on the far end of the room were empty. Every other seat had a listing of all the entrants and the title of their entry, but no indication of what level they were entering.

The following is a list of entries, by entry number, contestant name(s), and entry title:

- 1, Tali Semo, Alberta Gear
- 2, Nicole Keller, Elsa
- 3, Olivia and Eleah Flockhart, Lost and Found
- 4, Patti Keller, One Never Knows
- 5, Rose & Nove (no entry title or no names)
- 6, Don Clary, Immortal Air
- 7, Isobel Davidson, Chaos Costuming entry

8, Petra Kufner, Antje Brand; Puff & Perry on the other side of boring

9, Wicker Girl, Wicker Girl's Wicked Wicker!

10, Lyndsey Luther, Journey Before Destination

11, Louise Postlethwaite, A Steampunk Lady

12, Andrew Wishart, The Slender Man

13, Laura Hunt, We Dance

14, Kiersty Lemon, Mara Jade Skywalker

15, Jennifer Skwarski, A Glamorous Evening of Galactic Domination

16, Inigo Purcel, 40s Vamp Poison Ivy

17, Lars Adler, Drow of the Underdark

18, Emma Roberts, Fish Pond

19, Lorretta and Tim Morgan, Life is a Dream

20, Rebecca Davenport, Lady Loki

21, Michele (Miki) Dennis, The Odyssey

Dress

22, Emma Faragher, Frozen's Elsa Coronation Dress

23, Peter Westhead, Coliseum

24, Tang Fei, The Ood Girl

25, Rebecca Lale, Tribal

26, Philippa Chapman (Xenaclone), The Harpy of Astrapor

27, Christine Halse & Joseph Halse, 70s Dr. Who Monsters

28, Kathleen Davies, The Copper Countess

29, Sabine Furlong, A Message From the Ministry of Magic

30, William Spratt, Cousin Tony

31, Maggie & Mike Percival, Aratalindale

Note: Not all entries had all of the people listed. For example, the last entry with the Percivals had at least eight people on stage, but I have no idea of their names.

Masquerade Results:

Young Fan Division:

Best Time Traveler - Albert Gear (Tali Semo)

Most Beautiful and Coolest - Elsa (Nicole Keller)

Special Judge's Award - Elsa (Nicole Keller)

Most Original and Creative - Lost and Found (Olivia and Eleah Flockhart)

Novice Division:

Most Creepy - The Slender Man (Andrew Wishart)

Best Recreation - 70s Doctor Who Monsters (Christine Halse and Joseph Halse)

Honourable Mention for Fabric

Manipulation - Fish Pond (Emma Roberts)

Best Workmanship - Puff & Perry on the Other Side of Boring (Petra Kufner and Antje Brand)

Best Presentation - Tribal (Rebecca Lale)

Journeyman Division:

Judge's Favorite - Life is a Dream (Loretta and Time Morgan)

Best Workmanship - A Glamorous Evening of Galactic Domination (Jennifer Skwarski)

Best Presentation - A Message from the Ministry of Magic (Sabine Furlong)

Best in Class - Coliseum (Peter Westhead)

Master Division:

Most Beautiful - The Odyssey Dress (Miki Dennis)

Workmanship and Attention to Detail - We Dance (Laura Hunt)

Best Workmanship, Best Presentaion, and Best in Show - Aratalindale (Maggie and Mike Percival)

The group that did Aratalindale was fun to watch as well as being visually stunning. Except for a small glitch by the tech crew that made it so their lights were not well shown until they got their dark, it was a near perfect entry.

When someone who did not attend the masquerade heard who won, their comment was "the Percivals always win." Well, they deserved to win again.

Costume-Con 34 – Find Us Online!

Did you know that Costume-Con 34 has an Internet presence? Find us on Facebook, Twitter, and even YouTube! Our website has had several updates as well. Check it out at <http://www.costumecon34.com>. Questions? E-mail us at cc34madison@gmail.com.

Fabric Identification

By Leah O'Connor

Have you ever lost something on the internet? At a recent Costume-Con, I was talking to Carole Parker about an item I had seen on the Internet about chemical analysis of fabric to determine fiber content. She was editing the newsletter at the time, and asked me to send her a link to the web page. It included a chart which indicated which fibers dissolved in different solvents. For example, animal fibers like silk or wool would dissolve in a 5% soda lye solution in water.

Well, I have been looking for that web page ever since, without any luck. Maybe the page was removed because some of the chemicals used were toxic or dangerous. One page I did find:

<http://www.slideshare.net/tahmidurrahman52/identification-of-textile-fibers>

gave instructions for identifying vegetable fibers by placing a drop of 2% sulfuric acid solution on the textile and placing a hot iron on top. If the textile contained vegetable fibers, like cotton or rayon, the drop would char. But you cannot use just any acid. If I remember my high school chemistry, cotton plus nitric acid

equals gun cotton; get too much and it does not just char, it explodes. The above page mentions a few other chemical tests at the very end.

The burn test is probably the safest way of determining fiber content. You can find a lot by googling "fabric burn test." One of the best I found was:

http://www.fiber-images.com/Free_Things/Reference_Charts/free_reference_charts_fiber_content_guide.html

A few other good pages are:

Technical Tests for Fiber Identification: <http://www.teonline.com/knowledge-centre/technical-tests-fiber-identification.html>

A solubility of fibers chart:

<https://drive.google.com/viewerng/viewer?a=v&pid=forums&srcid=MDQ3NDM1NTEwMTQ4NTcyMzQ5NDEBMDU3ODI3OTkxMDU0OTk4MjQzMDQ3NDUyTHQxRnBlLkFKATAuMQEBdjI>

Standard Test Methods for Identification of Fibers in Textiles:

<http://www.astm.org/Standards/D276.htm>

If anyone in the guild knows where my lost page went, please let me know.

Other ICG Publications

In addition to the ICG newsletter, some ICG chapters and SIGs have their own publications. Some are only available to chapter or SIG members, while others are available to the entire costuming community.


Here is a sampling of ICG chapter and SIG publications.

Cactus Needles

Cactus Needles is the monthly newsletter of the Southwest Costumers' Guild. In addition to chapter news and event, it also runs short articles on costuming topics. Issues are freely available at <http://www.southwestcostumersguild.org/>.

The July 2014 issue includes:

- On the Web
- In the Mailbox
- SWCG November Meeting
- Steampunk moves to Sky Harbor
- Calendar



Cactus Needles
14.12 November, 2014
Southwest Costumers Guild, PO Box 39504, Phoenix AZ 85069
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On The Web
A New Community Issue of *Virtual Costumer* is online! Embellishment and Wearable Arts, incorporating unusual materials and construction techniques to provide costumers with new avenues for creativity. Go to <http://www.SiWC costumers.org> and select *Virtual Costumer*, then Current Issue. Choose Volume 12 issue 3. Enjoy! -- Phil Gust, Editor

Flemish Portraits of Heroes and Villains - Some of our favorite SF/Fantasy/Comics characters as though painted by the Old Masters. http://www.cnn.com/2014/11/21/showbiz/gallery/flemish-heroes-villains/index.html?hpt=hp_c3 (Found by Tasha.)

The Virtual Costumer

The Virtual Costumer (VC) is the quarterly costuming magazine of the Silicon Web Costumers' Guild (SiW). VC publishes feature articles on costume construction, reviews, interviews, how-tos, and event reports. The current issue is for SiW members; back issues are freely available at <http://www.siwc costumers.org/vc/>

Each issue of VC has a theme. The August 2014 Community Issue theme is Embellishment and Wearable Arts



Articles include:

- Belts and Beetle Wings
- Becoming the "Tooth Fairy"
- Raiment of Faith
- Embellishing *The Prince of Egypt*
- Quilting as Embellishment in Modern Fashion
- Ribbon Embroidery for Beginners
- Taking Your Design from Pencil to Stencil
- Virtual Postcards from Loncon 3

Guest Publication

Our guest publication is *Finery*, the bi-monthly newsletter of the Greater Bay Area Costumers' Guild (GBACG).



Finery has news, articles, book reviews, and updates on costume-related events around the San Francisco Bay Area. Issues are freely available at <http://www.gbacg.org/>.

The November/December 2014 issue is on creating a costume for a fictional character.

Recommend a Publication or Start Your Own!

Does your ICG chapter or SIG publish a newsletter? Is there a costuming e-zine, blog or website that would be of interest to ICG members? Send suggestion to the *International Costumer* editor. If your ICG chapter or SIG wants to start a newsletter, the ICG Publications Committee would be pleased to help you get started.

About the ICG

Membership Benefits

ICG membership benefits include participation in local chapters, Special Interest Groups (SIGs), voting rights, eligibility for grants, online forums, learning and volunteer opportunities, and the newsletter, *International Costumer*.

ICG Online

Visit the ICG website for current information and resources:

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

Join us on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/internationalcostumers>

Join the ICG-D Yahoo! group for lively discussions on costuming-related topics:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/icg-d>

Send comments and suggestions to the ICG board and standing committees:

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icg-board@costume.org

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The International Costumer

The *International Costumer* newsletter is published bi-monthly by the ICG. The current issue is for members only. Back issues are freely available to the costuming community on the ICG website.

Online Submissions

We welcome short costuming articles, book reviews, event reports, and news items. Submit your copy as rtf, doc, docx or txt files to the International Costumer editor: icg-newsletter@costume.org. All graphics formats are accepted.

Contacting the Editor

Please contact the editor to report problems, or to offer comments and suggestions: icg-newsletter@costume.org.

Newsletter Delivery

The *International Costumer* is available as both an online and print edition. Your preference is part of your ICG membership record. To change or verify your preference, contact your local chapter.

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 cannot be re-mailed.

Members who have an e-mail address on record are notified when a new issue is available. Access the online edition at <http://www.costume.org/currentnewsletter>. The user name is "costumer" and the password is "Happy2015".