

# *International Costumer*

*Volume XIX Issue 4*

*Jul – Aug 2020*



**From The President's Desk**  
**June 2020**  
**Greetings from Phloston Paradise!**



Happy Summer, everyone! I hope you and yours are still safe and well.

It has taken longer than we expected to get our new Board of Directors Google group up and running, but it appears we now have all the officers and delegates properly connected (short gory nerdy details: some of the legacy free email systems like hotmail, yahoo and aol can be fussy to configure so they cooperate with Google authentication and don't classify things as spam). That means we can start getting to work! (It also means we will be shutting down that yahoogroup permanently. It was archived just before the never-happened March meeting, so we have a full copy.)

The other critical business process under way right now is chapters submitting their necessary details to qualify for 501(c)3 tax-exempt status under our Group Exemption Letter. This is one of the most valuable benefits the ICG can offer our chapters, so please make *sure* to respond to the request for documentation. Any questions should be directed to [icg-gel@costume.org](mailto:icg-gel@costume.org)

On the non-business front, my household is still under the Santa Clara County shelter-in-place guidelines. Andy's job has translated completely to work-from-home, while I do a mix of masked work at my laboratory and remote work. This includes way too many calls with teams on the East Coast or in Europe, so I have developed quite the little amateur video studio at home.

My costuming impulses have been channeled into outfits for hosting online trivia matches for work, and coordinating my morning run\* ensembles and masks.



Oh -- I also built a trebuchet because when I referred to using one metaphorically my friends were astonished to discover I did not own a real one.

Our next big project is decluttering our studio so I can start sewing projects larger than masks again, and then extending our home automation into that room so we can tune the spectrum of the lights in there. How are you engaging your costuming urges?

Stay safe, be well and keep costuming!

Kevin Roche

\*I started a virtual running team at moonjoggers.com, *Space Rangers -- Nuts In Space!* If you are doing regular walks or runs and want to journal it, you're welcome to create a free account and join the team. **Do** be sure to edit your profile and add a first and last name so it will show in the team listing (cosplay/fan names are perfectly fine).



## Editor's Message

By Melina Chestley



Early Rus historical costume; photo by me.

The summer approaches and there are no cons to be seen on the horizon. Well, at least not physical cons anyway. The facebook group Concellation2020 is going strong and has been so much fun to be a part of.

While I have been perculating ideas in my head about some leveling up to a couple of my recent costumes and have a new one cut out, ready to sew, I must admit that it is my more mundane UFO pile that is seeing any sewing action. Though I did finally get around to building the bigger sewing tables that I've complained about not having for a number of years now. I'm also learning more about the art of being on video as there have been a few costuming related video projects that I've had the pleasure of participating in.

It's been amazing what the various costuming/historical communities have been doing to keep their communities together at this time. The 'pass the brush' and/or 'glow-up' videos circulating the internet have been so much fun to watch and be inspired by.

I hope that everyone else is finding some way to continue to be creative even without the obvious deadlines that cons provide.

I would like to thank the following for contributing articles for this issue: Anne Davenport, Leah OConnor and Blythe Craft

#### About the Cover Photo:

*The only thing left; entrance to the hospitality suite. Provided by Anne Davenport from the Not-Costume-Con38 in Montreal.*

### The Costume-Con® That Wasn't

*By Anne Davenport; photos by Anne Davenport*

COSTUME-CON 38 – Montreal, Quebec, Canada – March 13-16, 2020  
My trip up to Montreal was uneventful. There were no weather or airline delays. I had managed to get everything I needed into one checked bag, minimizing my luggage fees and I got from the airport to the convention hotel, arriving in its lovely lobby, with

no problems. I was ready for Costume-Con.



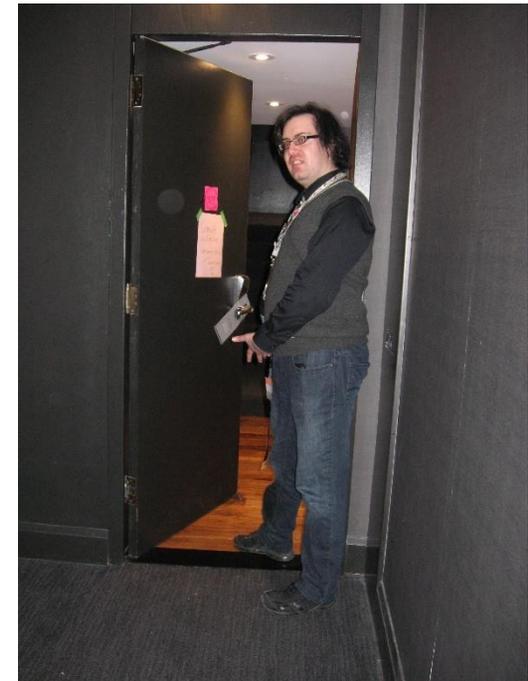
**The lobby of the Hotel Bonaventure.**

I checked in and saw someone I knew from the con and found out that the con schedule had drastically changed.

Force Majeure.

The Premier of Quebec (Premier Ministre du Québec), François Legault, had banned all gatherings of over 250 persons due to the spreading coronavirus pandemic. Covid-19 had just eaten Costume-Con 38.

The only thing left was the hospitality suite.



**Hospitality Suite and Costume-Con 38 Chair, Emmanuel "Manu" Hénault**  
*-- "This was a very special experience. It was very stressing to organize, but as far as the cancellation, it is still Costume-Con because the people made it Costume-Con. It is not only the costumes. The few people who came, they made it happen, a big party where every costume lover is welcome."*

Since the announcement had gone out around noon local time on March 12, 2020, the day before the start of the con, most of the attendees in transit turned around before ever getting to the con hotel, or even into Quebec. The few who arrived early stayed a night or two and went home. I, having come all the way to Montreal booked a new flight back home on Saturday, leaving Friday for some con-related shopping and so I could attend one of the remaining Costume-Con-related activities, the Friday Social, which was limited to the hospitality suite. The food and the suite were already paid for and the now-canceled CC38 was well below the 250-person allowed maximum gathering size, so why not? On Friday, March 13, I spent the day on an impromptu shopping expedition through the winding underground shopping mall to and then onto the Montreal subway and buses to do a little fabric foraging (much thanks to Liz, our local guide); we managed to score some pretty good deals. Upon returning to the hotel, it was time to get dressed for the Covid-ravaged Costume-Con Friday Night Social. Since Costume-Con 38 had been

officially canceled, we were just having a party, safely well below the 250 person limit. We worked hard on these costumes, so we were going to dress up. Here are some of them:



**Memory Jacket:** *"I worked really freakin' hard on this. Someone is going to take my picture" -- Sharon Bass (the "other, other" Sharon). The fabric came from costumers, then was crazy quilted. The embroidery was inspired by friends and co-workers. The trim was all made from donated fabric.*



*"I worked hard to get this done on time. So, I'm going to wear it." -- Gann Monroe.*



**Friday night social attendees showing off their costumes at Not-Costume-Con38**



**Ghidorah (Maral Agnerian) and Mothrah (Krystal Messier) at Friday night social.**

The Friday social wrapped before midnight. The food went away a few hours before that. The next morning, the Saturday when I left, there was an impromptu schedule for the day, to be held at a local maker-space.



**The "Not" Costume-Con 38 Schedule Posted in the Hospitality Suite.**



**The "Not" Costume-Con 38 Schedule Posted in the Hospitality Suite read by a not-attendee.**



**Maral Agnerian preparing a Saturday tambour embroidery workshop for the remaining Costume-Con refugees.**

CostumeCon 38 was just one of the first casualties. March, April, May, June conventions have been canceled. For the first time in it's 50 year history, the July San Diego ComiCon has been canceled. The Pennsic War (the Society for Creative Anachronism's largest annual event) has been canceled for August in Pennsylvania. Burning Man has been canceled. Worldcon in

August is taking online-only memberships. The only reason why many other conventions and events have not canceled is that they need to wait for the force majeure in their areas to allow them to legally break their contracts. Until a vaccine or at least a treatment for Covid 19 emerges, we can all expect many more events to be canceled beyond those.

And finally, this is the list of dealers who were scheduled to be at CostumeCon 38 and were left hanging when everything was shut down the day before the con. Please consider them with your online purchases.

- Aiika Creation
- Arda Wigs Canada
- Bullits.ca
- Centre Taiyo
- Farthingales
- Green Cottage Gallery
- La Rose et le Dragon
- Le Bazar de Kali
- Le Dragon Argenté
- Mrs Milligan's Milinery & Haberdashery
- Ponto

- Sutoru
- Thésaurus Tea
- TrimCité
- Unusual Frequency

*Editor's note: Costume-Con ® is a registered service mark of Karen Schnaubelt.*

## A Note from the Gulf Coast Chapter

*By Blythe Craft*

The 2020 Carnival season in New Orleans ended on an overcast day on the 25<sup>th</sup> of February. It's a time in which you see the same strangers each year, and pomp and circumstance await at almost every corner. For many of us here in New Orleans, we mask. Whether it is handmade, locally bought or from Amazon it is likely that you have some plans to mask through the season, which changes in duration each year (Mardi Gras Day is 47 days prior to Easter Sunday, which occurs on the first full moon after the Vernal Equinox on March 21<sup>st</sup> in case you were wondering). Yet the start of the season is fixed on January 6<sup>th</sup>, also known as the feast of the Epiphany-

which is always in the middle of flu season. It was a strange time this year, one that will likely cause changes in our beloved season for years to come- as an unknown virus was spreading quietly which made a thundering appearance in early March.

We were hit particularly hard here, and I spent many weeks in the thick of it. Businesses shuttered, people fell ill, hospitals overflowed. Yet the making never stopped. From the group of 9 costumers that I interviewed, an estimated 1500 masks were made over the course of just a few weeks, with the bulk of these being given away at no cost to those in need. This does not include the masks made from fabric donated by a local non-profit RACK's stash, as well as a large donation from six Wal-Mart stores in the Greater New Orleans area that contributed about 3,000 yards to the cause.

Mothers sent fabric to their children, shops that specialized in high end fabrics became a hub for elastic and thread, notions and fabric were traded (at a distance) from porches to the

cutting table and back. People who have sewn for pleasure were now sewing for the utility of saving lives—some of us hadn't even had time to clean our sewing tables.

As a costumer, I am thrilled by seeing what people make, what fabrics and textures speak to them. As a nurse, I am humbled by the makers. I am reminded that despite the technology that exists, we still can make a difference with a machine that hasn't changed that much since Thomas Saint's sketches in 1790. The makers have quite literally sewn the curve flat which is no small feat. As a city we transformed from masking for pleasure to masking for safety, and it is likely that we will be doing so for some time. With each mask that I see, I think of the maker, and appreciate every stitch.

## Clear Face Mask Tutorial

By Leah OConnor

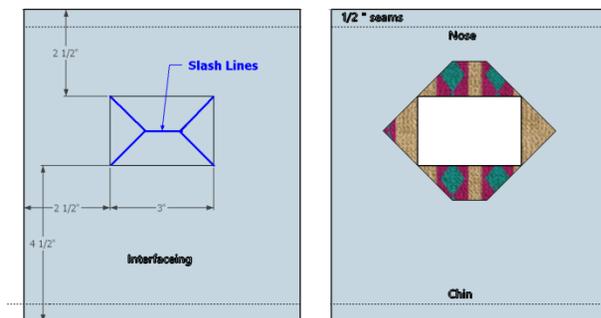
Now that everyone is expected to wear facemasks in public, many people, including myself, have been making masks. Have you noticed how much

harder it is to understand people who are wearing a mask? If so, you may be a lip reader, without even knowing. It is amazing just how much context we can get from seeing lip motions and facial expressions.

Masks pose an even bigger problem for deaf and hard of hearing people. We depend on lip reading. I cannot tell you how often I have to remind my husband not to try to talk to me when he is standing behind me. When we are out in public it is very hard to understand people who are wearing masks.

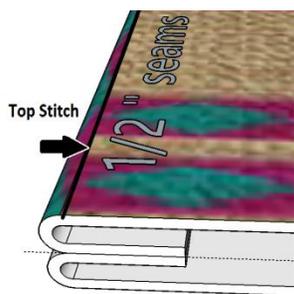
One solution is a mask with a clear vinyl window over the lips. I made one for my husband and few more for a local chapter of the Hearing Loss Association of America. The mask is fairly simple to make. You will need;

- Two 8" x 9" rectangles of cotton
- One 8" x 9" rectangle of interfacing.
- One 4" x 5" piece of clear vinyl and either of
- a) Two 2" x 4" rectangles of cotton and 1 yard of ¼ elastic OR
- b) Two 2" x 24" strips for ties.



Place the cotton fabric with right sides together. Put the interfacing on top. Pin the 3 layer sandwich together. Draw a 2 x 3 inch rectangle as shown. You can draw with a sharpie on the interfacing. It will not show. Draw in the slash lines. Cut along the slash lines going through all 3 layers making sure the diagonal slashes go to the corners of the rectangle. Separate your fabric sandwich, so you have a single piece of fabric (A) with the wrong side up and one piece of fabric and interfacing (B) with the interfacing side up. Fold the tabs, formed by the slash lines to make a window on each piece. Iron the tab folds. Place the vinyl over the interfacing and pin in place. Sew vinyl to the fabric 1/8 inch from edge of window. (On my sewing machine it works best if the vinyl is on the bottom

and the fabric is touching the presser foot.) With right sides out center piece of fabric (A) over the vinyl window. Pin and sew together ¼ inch from the edge of the window. At this point you can clip any extra vinyl so there is no more than ¼ inch from the last line of stitching.



Fold in ½ inch along top (nose) and bottom edge (chin) and top stitch the

edges together. The sides are still raw edges. The face mask can now be pleated with a box pleat. If you want a nose wire, insert it inside the two layers of fabric and stitch around it to hold it in place.



The face mask can now be pleated with a box pleat. The vinyl

window will form one side of the box

pleat. Pin the box pleat in place and stitch along the right and left edge to hold the pleat in place. The final size should now be about 3 by 8 inches. The final step is to use the 2 x 4 inch rectangle to cover the raw edges and form a tube to hold the ¼" elastic. Or use the two 2 x 24 inch strips to cover the raw edges and form the ties.

The problem with these homemade masks is that they may protect other people from your sneezing; but they don't do as much to protect you from other people. When my daughter, who is a doctor in Northern IL, asked me to make some see through face masks to use with hard of hearing patients, I decided to search online to see if anyone is making real N95 medical grade face masks with a see through window. Turns out that one company <http://www.faceviewmask.com/> is working on obtaining FCC approval of a see through N95 face mask for talking with lip readers. Unfortunately they don't have the approval yet, but their prototype looks much better than mine.



Face View Mask



My Mask

## About the ICG

### Membership Benefits

ICG membership benefits include participation in local Chapters and in Special Interest Groups, voting rights, eligibility for grants, online forums, learning and volunteer opportunities, and the 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>

**Amazon Smile link:**

<https://smile.amazon.com/ch/52-1656188>

Send comments and suggestions to:

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### The Marty Gear Costuming Arts and Sciences Fund

The Marty Gear Costuming Arts and Sciences Fund provides grants for projects and activities that promote the art and science of costuming. For information on how to apply for a grant, please visit

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

### 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](mailto:icg-newsletter@costume.org). All graphics formats are accepted.

### Contacting the Editor

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