

Silicon Web Costumers' Guild

Silicon Web Staff

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Vice-President:	Elaine Sims
Treasurer:	Bruce MacDermott
Secretary:	Deb Salisbury
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President's Message **Kevin Roche***

It's spring! (Actually it's almost summer. How did that happen?)

I've been doing my lame imitation of an international jet-setter. Andy and I flew to Manchester, England for Easter weekend (and Eastercon, which was there this year) to promote the San Jose in 2018 Worldcon bid, and had a fabulous time. We took our "chairman" costumes -aka sports jackets, slacks and slick name tags -- and hosted a party in the fan bar on Saturday night.

We also did the RoboGames (ThinBot took gold again -- that's 4 times straight!), FogCon, Costume-Con 34, and I'm writing this from the Golden Nugget in Las Vegas, where we are off on our annual pilgrimage to the Punk Rock Bowling and Music

Festival, one of our rare non-SF outings. It has plenty to see in the way of sartorial eye candy of course.

After having to cancel on attending Costume-Con 33 because of financial and familial obligations, it was great fun to get to Madison, Wisconsin for CC34. We set up the San Jose table, I was a judge for the Single Pattern Contest this year on Friday, we sponsored the hospitality suite for lunch one day, and my only other commitment was to take my masculine Barbarella homage down the runway in the Future Fashion Show. That meant I had the privilege of wrangling the Silicon Web group discussions on what might deserve kudos from SiWeb in the form of our Dreamcatcher Award for the Science Fiction / Fantasy, and the Historical Masquerades.

SiWeb's [Dreamcatcher](#) is awarded for creative use of technology in a costume made by someone who is *not* a member of our chapter (which meant Andy was frantically reviewing our roster for me each time something interesting came across the stage). This year, we had some serious discussions about what that meant, and made a point of looking at technologies that were more than simply the best blinky lights, including some bits of stagecraft.

Our winner in the Sci-Fi/Fantasy Masquerade ("La Muerte" from *The Book of*

Life animated feature) was, in fact, an illuminated costume, but it was Rachel Kojetin's solution to the structural issues of keeping candlesticks vertical on her train and enormous sombrero that impressed us. In the Historical Masquerade, the use of new printable fabrics to ornament her dress with turn of the 20th century photographic portraits netted Nora Mai's "La Photographie" a Dreamcatcher. In addition to the spider-bestrewn Dreamcatcher trophy, Rachel and Nora received one-year memberships in SiWeb Costumers' Guild. Congratulations and Welcome to them both!

As I mentioned in February, we are now in our annual officers election process. While the existing officers are all willing to serve another term, we welcome more involvement, in particular exploring the possibility of splitting the Secretary's role to have someone take on our social media presence as a formal role. Towards that end, I'm thrilled to announce that we (finally!) have an official [SiWeb FaceBook](#) page! Be sure to visit and "Like" the page so you can see our posts.

If you'd be interested in helping out, there is a lively and friendly discussion going on in our email group right now, or drop a line to president@siwcostumers.org to let me know. I'm going to hold off on the actual election for a little longer to encourage folk to step forward.

As we move into summer, Westercon and Worldcon, of course, loom. This weekend (Memorial Day) I know we have members at Baycon, Balticon, FanimeCon, and Clockwork Alchemy, and I'm sure more I haven't mentioned. Where are you going, and what did you wear? Post pictures!

P.S. Here in Las Vegas, we just did a vodka tasting at the Vodka Vault, an ice bar tucked into the Red Square restaurant on the strip. They even loan you Russian coats and hats to keep you warm while you are on ice!

P.P.S. Site Selection for the 2018 Worldcon has just opened. Besides the San Jose bid that I am on, there is a bid from New Orleans. If you care where Worldcon

(and its Masquerade) is held, take the time to vote. You need at least a supporting membership in this year's Worldcon (MidAmericon 2, in Kansas City) to be eligible, and you'll have to pay an advanced supporting membership fee when you vote (converts to a supporting membership in the 2018 Worldcon regardless of who wins). Visit the [Worldcon site selection page](#) for more information. Also visit the [San Jose site](#) and the [New Orleans site](#). Both bids also have FaceBook pages.

Obviously I'm biased in favor of San Jose, since I'll be its chair if we win, but the important thing is that you vote if you care where the convention takes place!



From the Editor *Philip Gust**

For many, a visit to a Polynesian island brings to mind a tropical paradise where people go to splash in the waves, drink beverages with little umbrellas, and take pictures of lush scenery and people in exotic clothing, all while wearing shirts or skirts of bright and colorful materials. However, for the people of the Islands of Polynesia, it is a place with a rich history, ancient customs, sacred places, and traditional attire that unites them while also making each of them unique.

This issue of *VC* explores the rich history and the cultures of Polynesia by learning about both traditional and modern attire of the people who call some of these island nations home.



Kevin Roche (2nd from right) with Mette Hedin, Andy Trembley, and Bryan Little (far right), vodka tasting in Vegas.



The islands of Polynesia. Image: [Hobe / Holger Behr](#).

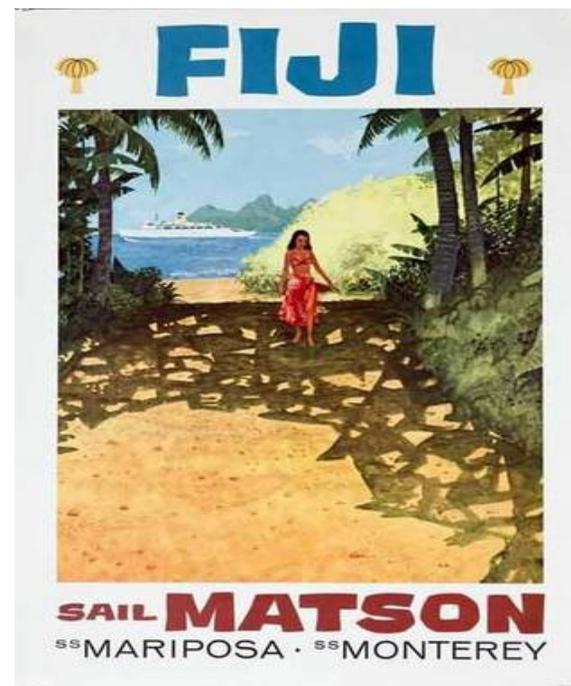
We begin with a “Virtual Author Talk” by Don McCunn about his book, *How to Make Sewing Patterns*. A new edition provides expanded content and instructions for creating patterns of every kind for both men's and women's clothing. In his article, Don tells us that he came to patternmaking through his interest in the theater, and the influence of a professor in college who had been a student of Lucy Barton, author of the classic *Historic Costume for the Stage*. The rest, as they say, is history.

Although she has never visited Hawai'i, Terry Walker became interested in Hawaiian attire when she took a dance class on a whim, and became hooked by the second class. In her article, she describes her recreation of attire for the ancient form of Hawaiian hula, *hula kahiko*, which she entered in the novice division of the Costume-Con 33 Historical Masquerade in 2015. Her greatest enjoyment is showing people what Hawaiian dance really is.

Patrick Makuakāne is also passionate about Hawaiian dance, culture, and attire. He is the *Kumu Hula* (hula master) of *Nā Lei Hulu I Ka Wēkiu*, one of the largest *hālau* (hula schools) in the United States. His school puts on several shows a year for an appreciative San Francisco audience, with costumes that span the spectrum from traditional to urban contemporary, all made by the school and its students. In his article, Patrick shares with us some of his favorite costumes that have been featured in shows throughout the years.

Dale Hope grew up in the Aloha shirt business. His father was a textile salesman for a supplier of Hawaiian-printed fabrics, and Dale remembers ordering his first Aloha shirt from him in the third grade. He went on to become an executive in the industry, and a leading collector and authority on the Aloha shirt. Using stories and pictures from the newly published second edition of his book, *The Aloha Shirt* from Patagonia press, Don takes us on a fascinating tour through the history of this iconic garment.

Designing a costume for a feared pirate and chief of the “First Born” from Edgar Rice Burroughs' “John Carter of Mars” series of fantasy books was much harder



Vintage travel poster promoting Fiji tourism. Matson Cruise Lines, c. 1960. Source: [Pinterest](#).

than first expected. In my article, I describe how I looked to the traditional attire of a Tongan warrior chief for inspiration, as part of a project with four teams of costumers that we called, “Costuming by the Book.”

Hair and makeup artist Ashley Phaneuf Wakai received a phone call in late 2015 from the newly crowned Miss Fiji, Zaira Begg, asking for help with her hair and makeup for the upcoming Miss Pacific Islands pageant. Little did he dream that he'd also be called on to design and create her Traditional Attire Costume, or that his creation would win the prestigious “Best Traditional Attire” award at the pageant. In his article, Ashley describes the unique design, materials, and techniques that he used for the costume.

Kevin Roche's inspiration for one of the wackiest Polynesian costumes ever came from a beaded tasseled trim he found in a Texas fabric store that reminded him of robot hula dancers. An avid *Doctor Who* fan, his mind immediately made a connection and led to the creation of the Tiki Dalek, based on an evil race of creatures from the series. The result was “*Gilligan's Island* meets *Doctor Who*.” In his article, Kevin describes the project and the reaction of attendees and fellow Dalek-makers at one of the largest *Doctor Who* conventions.

When the Hawaiian Legacy Reforestation Initiative contacted Hawaiian-born featherworker Rick San Nicolas, they proposed an audacious project: recreate seventeen royal feathered cloaks and

helmets of King Kamehameha I and his court depicted in a painting by artist Brook Kapukuniahia Parker to help promote their reforestation project. In his article, Rick explains how he undertook this decade-long project, how he learned the ancient techniques by studying historical cloaks, and how he hand-ties to a mesh over 200,000 feathers that look just like ones from highly endangered or extinct native Hawaiian birds.

Here is a quick preview of what is upcoming in *VC*. In the August 2016 issue, we'll explore "Hair, Hairstyles, and Accessories," and the many ways that historical costumers as well as those in sci-fi, fantasy, anime, and other genres, use hair, hairstyles, and hair accessories to accentuate their costumes.

The theme for the November 2016 issue is "Labors of Love," exploring why costumers are driven to invest outrageous amounts of time and effort into their creations, completely out of proportion to any reasonable expectation of any return for their efforts.

I am pleased to announce that the theme for the February 2017 issue will be Props and Costume Special Effects, focusing on the art and practice of making props and creating special effects to add an extra spark or a look of authenticity to costumes and their presentation.

See the Upcoming Issues page of the SiW website for details. Now is a great time to start writing for *VC*, and share what you know and love with your fellow costumers.

SiW Members Receive ICG President's Awards

Two SiW members received ICG President's Awards at Costume-Con 34. The award recognizes extraordinary service to the ICG. It includes a certificate and a listing on the [ICG President's Award web page](#).

SiW members who were recognized are Kathe Gust and Bruce MacDermott.



Kathe was recognized for collecting, scanning and indexing all issues of the ICG's *Costumer's Quarterly* magazine; indexing back issues of the ICG's *International Costumer* newsletter; and developing public relations material for the ICG Resource Center for Chapters and SIGs. Kathe is the ICG Recording Secretary and a member of the Communications and Public Relations Committee.



Bruce was recognized for establishing and administering the ICG Group Exemption Letter (GEL) program, which enables participating U.S. chapters and SIGs to become 501(c)(3) non-profits easily and at no cost. Bruce is chair of the ICG Finance Committee.

Kathe and Bruce join SiW members Betsy Delaney, Denisen Hartlove, Jay Hartlove, John O'Halloran, Carole Parker, Kevin Roche, Elaine Sims, and Jeanine Swick, as past ICG President's Award

recipients. Bruce MacDermott and Jeanine Swick have both received the award twice.

Congratulations, Kathe and Bruce!

The other President's Award recipients at Costume-Con 34 were Patrick O'Connor, past editor of the ICG newsletter and a member of the ICG Publications Committee, and Vicky Asaratanakul, editor of the ICG's International Costumer newsletter and chair of the ICG Publications Committee. See the [President's Award page](#) of the ICG website for details of these and all past awards.

La Photographie Receives Dreamcatcher at CC34

Historical masquerade entry cited for Creative use of vintage photos printed on fabric.

During the Historical Masquerade at Costume-Con 34, SiW President Kevin Roche presented a Dreamcatcher award to Nora Mai for her entry, "La Photographie".

Nora's costume was cited for creative use of vintage photos that she collected and printed on the fabric of her costume. She received a Dreamcatcher, a one year membership in SiW, and a place of honor on the SiW [Dreamcatcher Award page](#).

We asked Nora to tell us a little about her costume and its inspiration:

For much of the nineteenth century fancy dress balls were popular in England, the U.S. and Canada. A lot of time and money was spent planning and designing

costumes for individuals and groups (for tableaux). Popular costumes were based on historical and literary figures as well as allegorical or emblematic costumes representing broad concepts or ideas. My dress was inspired by a Miss Stevenson; one of three women who attended the Garrison Ball in Montreal in 1865 as “Photography”.

The origins of modern photography can be traced to France and the work of Joseph Nicéphore Niépce and Louis Daguerre. By the beginning of the Belle Epoque, Cabinet Cards and Carte de Visite had become widely available, and were a popular way of capturing a portrait both in Europe and the United States.

Carte de Visite (CDVs) were developed first, generally as an albumen print mounted on cardstock roughly the same size as a visiting or calling card. They were immensely popular and commonly collected and traded, even those of prominent people and “celebrities”. Many cards were embossed or printed on the back with the photographer’s name, studio address and sometimes specialties.

Cabinet cards gradually replaced CDVs. Essentially the same process but a larger image roughly 5 by 7 inches which could be viewed across the room when displayed upon a cabinet in the parlor.

I collect old photos purely for the beauty and clarity of the images. Some are actually from my family but others I acquired at estate sales or online. I like to think about these people and their stories.



Photo: Scott Johnson, [Realtime Portrait Studio](#).

On the bodice of my costume, there are 13 portraits centered on a picture of my maternal great-grandmother Myra Lockwood. On the skirt there are 37 pictures centered on a picture of my paternal grandmother Ellen Nelson Schneeberger. Photos were printed from my computer after being scanned and edited, but the colors and the images are mostly unchanged.

It was based on the shapes and the construction techniques from around 1870 with a fitted bodice and pleated skirt but the dress is more about displaying the beautiful photos rather than historical accuracy.

Many of my modifications were for ease of wear and surface maximization. I modified the basic bodice and added a curved collar to better display the photos. I arranged the selection of portraits to carefully fit them around the collar. Each photo was stitched in place then framed with gold grosgrain before the collar was assembled.

The band of photos around the skirt was pre-assembled on a strip of cotton for stability. The photos were separated with grosgrain during assembly, and then the entire strip was attached to the skirt. A band of grosgrain was then stitched above and below the photos.

Nora entered in the Master division, and also received a Judges' Choice Award in the Master division for Creative Use of Technology. Congratulations Nora, and welcome to SiW!

La Muerta Receives Dreamcatcher at CC34

Sci-fi/fantasy masquerade entry cited for giant sombrero and dress train with candle lighting effects.

During the Sci-Fi/Fantasy Masquerade at Costume-Con 34, SiW President Kevin Roche presented a Dreamcatcher award to Rachael Cuddle for her entry, "La Muerte." Her character is the Ruler and Queen of the Land of the Remembered, from the animated movie, "[Book of Life](#)."

Rachael's costume was cited for its giant sombrero and train with illuminated candlesticks. She received a Dreamcatcher, a one year membership in SiW, and a place of honor on the SiW [Dreamcatcher Award page](#).

We asked Rachael to tell us a little about her costume and its inspiration:

I was born and raised in Mexico to missionary parents, and retain a deep love for its people and culture. When the "Book of Life" movie came out, I instantly fell in love with their depiction of 'La Muerte' and knew I needed to recreate it in a costume. I kept an eye out for the perfect fabric and carefully studied pictures to make sure I could do the character justice. I learned to sew when I was 9 and have sewn both with and without patterns throughout the years. This is my first year really pouring myself into intricate costumes so I could try entering contests and I picked a fairly difficult one to start.



Photo: Scott Johnson, [Realtime Portrait Studio](#).

For La Muerte's dress I wanted to get the perfect round train and the unique silhouette. I draped muslin to create the dress pattern and used that when cutting the dress fabric out; no store-bought patterns were used for any of the costume pieces.

For the large round hat and the train to keep their shape I used PVC pipe. The top piece of the hat that is covered in marigolds was shaped out of Dollar Tree cutting boards and then covered with the fabric and embellishments. The gloves were also made without the use of an existing pattern and they had fold details painted onto them.

Between the dress and hat there are approximately 200 hand stitched marigolds made from felt. There are also around 50 little hand cut and painted craft foam skulls on the hat and dress. I was lucky enough to find the perfect candles for this costume at the Dollar Tree. The base that came with them was perfect for keeping them attached in place. There were approximately 27 candles on my costume.

All in all, this costume was a huge undertaking but it was a wonderful journey in improving my sewing skills and crafting, and I was so proud that it was my first Masquerade piece. I am sure it will improve as I find ways to make it better but this is a costume that I love and hope to get to show off for a while."

Rachael entered in the Novice division, and also received a special award for movement onstage. Congratulations Rachael, and welcome to SiW!