

Silicon Web Costumers' Guild

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President's Message **Kevin Roche***

Worldcon 76 is coming to San Jose! After 2 years of campaigning, the membership at MidAmeriCon II selected our bid for the 2018 World Science Fiction Convention. [Worldcon 76 in San Jose](#)¹ will be held August 16-20, 2018 at the McEnery Convention Center in San Jose, California. I have the privilege (and responsibility) of serving as its chair.

¹ That is the official name of the 76th Worldcon. I'm part of a group that feels giving the convention a different name every year makes it hard for new fans to find us, so we are sticking to a very simple name and web domain. The Helsinki convention in 2017 will be [Worldcon 75](#). Maybe we can start a new/old tradition!



Kevin Roche's first official act as chair of Worldcon 76 was to announce its name and guests.

Our worthy competition from New Orleans did a great job, and it was a fairly close vote, 675 to 596. I expect a number of their committee members will be volunteering in 2018, as we would have for them if their bid had been chosen.

We also got to unveil our Secret Project: a 1/10 scale replica of the San Jose Electric Light Tower, rendered in PVC pipe and addressable LEDs. At 32 feet tall, it was the tallest installation in the exhibits hall! The tower has a [page](#) on the bid website (which will be copied over to the worldcon76 site very soon). It went up in less than 4 hours, disassembled afterwards in less than an hour, and I expect you'll see it appear at a number of locations in the years to come.



1/10 scale replica of the San Jose Electric Light Tower, designed, by Kevin Roche, to promote the San Jose Worldcon bid. Watch the [video](#).

With a costumer as the chair, you can be sure we will build in many opportunities for wearing one's glad rags at the Worldcon (and remember the Museum of Quilts and Textiles is just a couple very walkable blocks away). Watch for Worldcon 76 reps at a convention near you!

At the Masquerade, while I was sequestered in the ballot room counting votes, SiWeb members did agree on and select a winner of the Dreamcatcher: Ashley Bilke, for her amazing Gryphon costume. Ashley will also receive a one year membership in SiWeb and the ICG.

Also on stage with Ashley was her friend and "handler" Chelsea Shelton. After some discussion, we've decided to present Chelsea with a membership as well. As someone who has had to navigate the halls in a muscle-powered Dalek, I appreciate the invaluable skill and patience a good handler adds to the experience. Welcome to both!

We're already receiving a flood of mail about Worldcon 76, and that won't stop any time soon. If you're interested in helping, drop a note to volunteers@worldcon76.org. If you have suggestions or questions, try info@worldcon76.org. I'm fully aware the next two years are going to fly by.

I'm off to the Rodeo by The River (the Bay Area Gay Rodeo) in a couple weeks to just have fun and enjoy some downtime with friends. (Though we are sponsoring a special cash prize for the best team costumes in the Wild Drag Race event.) Time to polish up my boots and brush off my good hat!



From the Editor *Philip Gust**

Hair, hairstyles, and hair accessories are an important part of costuming, whether historical, sci-fi/fantasy, or for any specific genre. For historical costuming, achieving an authentic appearance requires choosing a hairstyle that is not only right for the period, but also reflects the particular character being portrayed.

Costuming for sci-fi and fantasy also requires paying attention to hairstyles. If you recreate a character from a movie, video game, or even a comic book or graphic novel, getting the hair right can make all the difference between immediate recognition and a puzzled stare from those who see you. Choosing an appropriate hairstyle is also important if you are creating your own character. Hairstyle can reflect not only the culture, but also the position of your character in it.

Sometimes the right style can be achieved using one's own hair, but more often it requires selecting a wig, hairpieces, or extensions, so an understanding of wigs is an essential tool in the costumer's tool chest. Decorative hair accessories are also an important aspect that can add a touch of glamor or authenticity to an otherwise ordinary hairdo. What kinds of hair ornaments are appropriate for your character is also an important thing to know.

The authors in this issue of *VC* cover a wide range of topics to help you learn about hair, hairstyles, and accessories, and how to make choices to enhance your costume.

In my short review of the Creative Museum website, I'll introduce you to an important collection of hairdressing accessories that was begun by the wife of a French military officer in the early 20th century, and continued to grow throughout their lifetimes. The website is an online museum with a complete pictorial catalog of the collection and fascinating exhibits around various themes. This is an important resource that costumers should know about.

In her article, "Researching Historical Hair Styles," world-famous hair archeologist Janet Stephens tells us how she single-handedly founded the field, and continues to discover how archaic hairstyles were created. Her tools are a detailed study of statues and artwork throughout history that show the hairstyles of people of the times, and a detailed understanding of hairdressing that she has gained in her "day job" as a hairdresser and hair salon owner. Janet also shows how she goes about recreating a historical style based on a statue.

Lisa Ashton is in love with everything Victorian. In fact, she founded "Miss Lizzy's Traveling Historical Fashion Show," a collection and traveling exhibit of vintage Victorian costumes, hats, accessories, jewelry, and thousands of photos representing the Victorian period. In her article, "Hair Jewelry and Hair Art in the

Victorian Era,” Lisa fills us in about a kind of jewelry art that is almost lost today. The Victorians were fond of jewelry and other artwork made of human hair. It either memorialized a friend or family member who passed away, or served as a token of affection of a loved one. In addition to describing the various types of hair jewelry and hair art, Lisa also discusses resources for collecting these unique artworks and incorporating them into costumes.

For costumers who need a custom wig or hairpiece to complete their costume, commissioning a hand-made wig is a good way to way to achieve the perfect look. In her article, “Working with a Professional Wig Maker,” professional wigmaker Heather K. Fleming talks about the wig making process, commissioning a hand-made wig or hairpiece, and working with a professional wig maker. She also offers tips for wearing and maintaining your wig.

Kathe Gust’s collection of hair combs ranges from a metal hair comb from ancient Rome, to combs from the Regency, Victorian, Edwardian, and contemporary periods. Her article, “Collecting and Wearing Vintage Hair Combs,” provides an illustrated overview of hair combs from several historical periods, often with examples from her own extensive collection. She also provides information about collecting historical hair combs including sources, and offers advice about potential pitfalls when purchasing vintage hair combs.

Costumer Kendra Van Cleave is a expert on the clothing, hairstyles, and accessories of the 18th century. In “Accessorizing 18th C. Wigs,” Kendra expands on the information in her book, *18th Century Hair and Wig Styling*, by providing information about hair accessories that were worn with these styles. She starts with a decade-by-decade overview of men’s and women’s hair accessories, illustrated with paintings and sculptures of the time. Then she offers step-by-step instructions on how to reproduce several men’s and women’s accessories from the first part of her article.

If you thought that creating a period accurate wig for just one costume was challenging, you’ll be impressed by what Jeanna Parham does. Jeanna is the head of the wig and makeup shop for the San Francisco Opera. Each season, she and her small staff produce dozens of custom-made wigs for almost a dozen shows. In “Wig Making for the San Francisco Opera,” Jeanna talks about how she got started, and about the wig and makeup shop and how it operates. Then she describes the techniques they use and the steps for making a wig. She also shows us the several unusual wigs used for productions over the years.

Here is a preview of what is upcoming in *VC*. The theme for the November 2016 issue is “Labors of Love,” featuring costumers who invest extreme amounts of time and effort into some truly amazing costuming projects, and why they do it.

For the February 2017 issue, the theme will be is “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.

I am pleased to announce that the theme for the May 2017 issue will be “Summer Magic.” As spring ends and summer approaches, this issue focuses on exploring new and interesting materials and techniques that will be useful when planning and creating costumes for the fall and winter seasons ahead.

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.



Philip and Kathe Gust marched for "Women's Suffrage" in the July 4th parade in San Jose, California in 2016.

Sarabi Creator Receives Dreamcatcher Award

Gryphon costume uses traditional puppetry techniques.



The Silicon Web Costumers' Guild presented a Dreamcatcher award to Ashley Bilke (left) at the MidAmeriCon II masquerade in Kansas City, Missouri on August

19, 2016. The Dreamcatcher recognizes the innovative use of technology and/or creative problem solving in costume construction. All entries with a creative use of technical or special effects are eligible to win regardless of division. Ashley received the award for her novel solution to technical problems in quadrupedal locomotion. Ashley had this to say about her Gryphon named Sarabi:

“Sarabi (it means “mirage”) is a traditionally crafted one man operated puppet made for my senior year thesis project at the Kansas City Art Institute for my Bachelor degree of Fine Arts in Illustration. I chose to create a Gryphon to address the unique problem of puppeteering a quadrupedal animal as well as create in one large and challenging project in a portfolio of multiple styles of puppeteering and costuming.

“Sarabi, my second large puppet, features moving eyes, ears, mouth, hind legs, and tail – all controlled

from the inside and managed in a system of levers, rods, pulleys, and swivel joints. The mouth and eyelids are on separate levers that are operated by in the right hand while the ears are attached to a pulley which rests between them. Operated by the left hand, this pulley when pulled down causes the ears to rotate backward, and then forward when pushed up. The hind legs attach to the opposite foreleg by a length of strong braided fishing line which runs through the belly and to the knee and ankle joint, lifting both at the same time for realistic motion.



Ashley Bilke wearing Sarabi the Gryphon, with handler Chelsea Shelton (right), meet Larry Dixon and Mercedes Lackey (left) who wrote *The Black Gryphon* and several other books that inspired her.

“Sarabi took me a total of 250 hours to create and is primarily constructed of PVC pipe, molded chicken wire, upholstery foam, and ample blood sweat and tears. I ran a kickstarter campaign in order to afford realistic looking faux fur which was hand sewn onto the gryphon using a pattern that I created myself. The feathers are constructed of galvanized steel wire with fabric glue-soaked and laid on either side of the faux ‘vein’ created by the wire. The feathers were then spray painted.

“I’m is a firm believer in the art of storytelling and believe the art of illustrating stories is just as well done in the physical world as it is between the pages of a book.

The intent of my work, and Sarabi in particular, is to make magic, wonder, storytelling, and enchantment more easily

accessible to an audience by bringing the story to physical form and getting it out into the world. In book pages one must seek magic but in the form of Sarabi the Gryphon, magic comes to you.“

Both Ashley and her handler and partner on stage, Chelsea Shelton, also receive one year memberships in the Silicon Web Costumers' Guild and the ICG. Welcome, Ashley and Chelsea!