

# Silicon Web Costumers' Guild

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## President's Message Kevin Roche\*

Editor's Note: Kevin has been under the weather this month. His column will return in the next issue.

Kevin and his husband Andrew Trembly made their annual journey to "Gallifrey One," the *Doctor Who* convention near Los Angeles this month. While there, they also promoted [Worldcon 76 in San Jose in 2018](#), which Kevin will Chair.

Here are a few of Kevin's posts about the event from Facebook.

Feb 12 - A new costume for Gallifrey. It's the Ghost from the *Doctor Who Xmas Special*. I'll have both the Ghost (new costume) and Tiki Dalek at Gallifrey.

Feb 16 - Party refreshments shopping done. Grabbing a bite because dinner will be after 7:30 tonight.

Feb 20 - Tiki Dalek managed a lovely peregrination one afternoon to the usual joyful response. Cough and a bit of fever hit after I took the Dalek for a spin.

Feb 21 - We got home about 8:15, and got back from dropping off the van at 9. We had to divert through Morgan Hill to avoid where 101 was closed from flooding, but we stopped for dinner at Casa de Fruta so most of the jam was gone by the time we got there. Gallifrey One was great as usual.

Feb 25 - I'm definitely on the improving side of things.



Kevin Roche as the Ghost from *Doctor Who Christmas Special*, at the Gallifrey One Convention in Los Angeles.



## From the Editor Philip Gust\*

Everyone is familiar with the wonderful props from block-buster movies, like the wands and mysterious suitcase from *Magical Beasts and Where to Find Them*. We also know about costume special effects (costume FX), like the lights in the Fairy Godmother's dress in *Cinderella*. Many, other props and costume FX go completely unnoticed, although they add depth and authenticity to costumes in almost every movie we see on screen.

Yet many who design and build costumes, as a hobby or for a living, do not usually consider designing and incorporating props and costume FX into their creations, or they treat it as an after-thought and do not give it the same care they lavish on their choice of fabrics or the perfection of their sewing techniques.

I think that is a missed opportunity.

The same things that add magic in Hollywood can also make a world of difference in how costumes look and how people react to them, whether in the hall at a convention or on stage in a costume competition. Props and costume FX deserve the same level of planning and attention as other aspects of the costume.

This issue of 2017 includes articles on the art and practice of creating props and costume FX to add a spark and a look of authenticity to costumes and presentations.

Kate Hartman is the author of the book *Make: Wearable Electronics*. Kate is Associate Professor of Wearable & Mobile Technology at OCAD University in Toronto, Canada. In her Virtual Author Talk, Kate reveals how she became interested in the field, and tells costumers how they can master the skills to make their own creations using information in her book.

Rachael Kuddle took the inspiration for her latest cosplay recreation from the 2014 animated feature, *The Book of Life*. In her article, Rachael tells us how she decided to recreate the character La Muerte from the movie, solved some difficult mechanical problems, and used dozens of battery-powered candles for a hauntingly beautiful costume special effect.

In William Kennedy's entertaining article on costume distressing techniques, he introduces us to his friend Zombie Bob, and shows how to use very powerful but often overlooked costume FX techniques to make a costume look terrible – on purpose!

An interest in puppetry led Ashley Bilke to attend the Kansas City Art Institute, and to undertake her most difficult project yet: a full size and fully-articulated wearable Gryphon puppet. In her article, Ashley describes the materials and the construction techniques she used to bring Sarabi the Gryphon to life.

Following a stint in the U.S. Army, Joshua Cole put skills he learned to use creating props and special effects. He soon opened his own studio in Atlanta Georgia, and gained clientele from the television and movie industries. Joshua takes on a tour of Hex Mortis, and talks about his approach to “practical special effects” that don't require expensive CGI techniques.

Finding gauges that look right for steampunk, yet are light enough to use with props, costumes, and accessories is both difficult and expensive. In my article, I show how to produce realistic lightweight gauges, of almost any kind at little or no cost.

Linden Wolbert is a professional mermaid who is a kind of “mermaid to the stars” in Los Angeles, where she lives, and has gained a worldwide following. Linden talks about how she got started in her unique profession, and worked with top Hollywood special effects artists to learn their techniques and create a mermaid tail that she wears swimming in pools with children and in the oceans with other marine life.

Here is a preview of what is upcoming in VC. In May 2017 we'll experience some “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.

For the August 2017 issue we'll be “Stepping Out,” with articles about shoes and anything else that costumers wear on their legs and feet.

I am pleased to announce that the theme for the November 2017 issue will be “Barely There,” about creating costumes that are daring while remaining PG, and some of the materials and techniques that costume designers and creators use to achieve the look.

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.



Kathe and Philip Gust at the opening of the 25th FIDM Museum exhibit of Oscar-nominated costumes in Los Angeles.