

Silicon Web Costumers' Guild

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President's Message **Kevin Roche***

Greetings and Salutations!
Yours Truly has just returned from Worldcon 75 in Helsinki, Finland, as part of a 2 ½ week trip via Stockholm (Andy and I were determined to make an actual European vacation of this Worldcon trip), so this is going to include a bit of a travelogue.

It was really lovely to play tourist in two cities that are both pedestrian-friendly and have working mass transit. In Stockholm, we got to have history-inspired "Viking" meals at two fabulous restaurants in Gamla Stan (Old Town): Aifur, which goes all out as a Viking banquet hall, including a herald who sounds a horn and announces your party (most of our group was heralded as from "Vinland -- and someplace with very strange hairstyles!"),

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and Sjätte Tunnan ("Sixth Barrel"), which specializes in local and imported meads. We sampled the bar and the menu in both (drinking in one and eating in the other) on two occasions, and I recommend them highly. The staff dress in theme, and the first time we drank in Sjätte Tunnan the waiter turned out to also be a fire eater. A word of warning about Aifur -- be prepared to climb over the trestle table to get to your seat!

We also got to visit the ABBA museum (including a large collection of stage costumes from the band and a special collection from the Eurovision Song Contest), and Skansen, the "world's largest open-air museum." Skansen includes relocated households from assorted times and places in Sweden's history, with costumed docents happy to tell you about



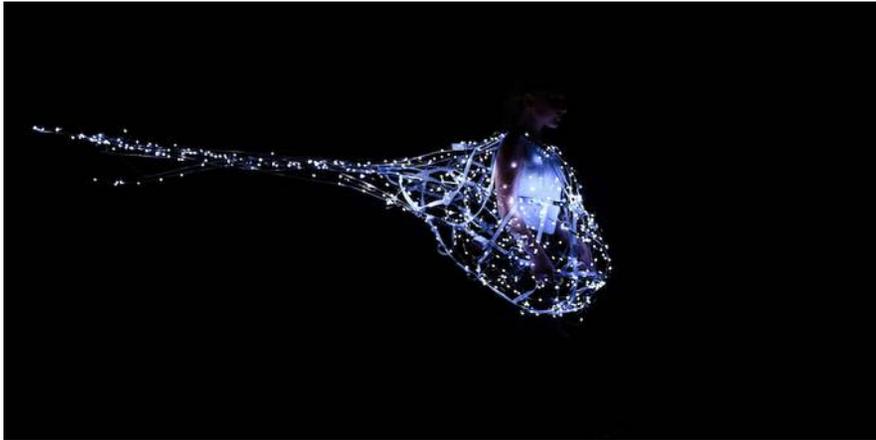
ABBA Museum exhibit, Stockholm. Photo: [Wikimedia Commons](#).

their eras, including a pair of Sammi camps, one historic, and one contemporary. It also includes several animal exhibits, most notably the reindeer. It was raining the day we visited, and I didn't care one whit about getting wet.

We were also lucky to be in Stockholm to see their Gay Pride parade (from our hotel, the Scandic Haymarket), then on Monday afternoon boarded an overnight ferry cruise to Helsinki. We stayed at the "Original Sokos Hotel Vaakuna" which had originally been built as housing for the 1952 Olympics, and is truly a wonder of late-40s/early 50s functionalist architecture. It's worth visiting just for the ring of "Evil Genius" chairs in the lobby. They've been there, reupholstered many times, of course, since it opened (with my sister Kelly below).



"Evil Genius" chairs in lobby of Original Sokos Hotel Vaakuna from 1952. Photo: Andy Trembley



"When Halley Came to Jackson, 1910." Photo: Henry Soderlund.



Group inspired by *Scandinavia and the World* webcomic.



Best in Show Presentation winner Olivia Flockhart with father Ian. Photo: Lincoln Peters.

Wednesday we set up the Worldcon 76 table and exhibit at Messukeskus Convention Center and the whirlwind began. I had the pleasure of announcing two more Guests of Honor for Worldcon 76 (Artist John Picacio and Musician Frank Hayes) and was on a number of costume and science panels during the convention.

I had the honor of being a presentation judge for the Masquerade, where Best in Show Presentation was won by 12-year old Olivia Flockhart who decided she didn't want to be the only Young Fan entry in the show and entered as a novice instead. Her "When Halley Came to Jackson in 1910" was both innovative and truly beautiful, as she drifted across the stage as Halley's Comet while her father Ian watched with a bundled babe-in-arms. The rest of the masquerade was full of wonderful things (we judges did not have an easy time of it) and I recommend you check out the [photos online](#) by Lincoln Peters.

Worldcon 76 teamed up with George RR Martin to host the Hugo Losers Party, which was held at Steam Hellsinki (that is not a typo), an amazing steampunk bar just a couple blocks from our hotel. We got to visit again after the convention, so we could actually see the space less crowded; I was particularly bemused by the winged kayak with a gilded typewriter mounted (backwards) in front of the cockpit.

I did get in a bit of costuming myself, including being part of a very fun group inspired by the Scandinavia and the World webcomic, where Mette Hedin made almost all the shirts and each of us supplied our accessories. We had a great time and were really pleased at how many people recognized our costumes immediately. (I was cast as Iceland, which meant tracking down a can of glitter spray, since Iceland "sparkles" in the comic).

Messukeskus was one train stop away from downtown (where our hotel was) so I

found I was packing each day's costumes into my spinner carry-on and trundling them over to the convention center most days. I did pack an assortment of my crazy business suits for all my official appearances as Chair, including the closing ceremonies where Jukka Halme struck the gavel closing Worldcon 75 and passing it on to me. By the end of the weekend, Worldcon 75 ended up as the second largest Worldcon in history, with nearly 7200 warm bodies on site!



Worldcon chairs Hukka Halme (75) and Chair Kevin Roche (76) strike closing gavel. Photo: Andy Trembley.

After Worldcon closed, Andy and I had a few days to tour Helsinki itself. We got out to WEEGEE House in Espoo (a print factory converted to a 4-museum complex), where I got to visit their fully restored Futuro House, and found yet another Evil Genius chair to pose in. The Modern Art Museum on the 2nd floor is a beautifully designed space displaying some really amazing art.

We then hopped back to Stockholm, and the next day took a non-stop Dreamliner back to Oakland and home. We flew home Friday to give us two days to recalibrate to Pacific time before going back to work, which proved to be wise.



Futuro House. Photo :Kevin Roche

It was a wonderful trip, and now I'm in the hot seat (with my very talented Worldcon 76 crew, I'm glad to say -- which includes plenty of SiWeb members). I'm looking forward to the Bay Area Gay Rodeo in a couple weeks (cowboys for my birthday), Convolution in October, and Andy and I are Fan Guests of Honor at Loscon 44 in November. Watch for us there, and for the Worldcon 76 ambassadors at an event near you!



Eero Aarnio chair. Photo:Andy Trembley



From the Editor *Philip Gust**

Shoes play an important role in civilization, serving both a utilitarian and a decorative role. They protect the feet from rough terrain, help keep them warm in harsh climates, and enable their wearers to travel much greater distances and live in more varied climates. Shoes are also decorative, making a statement about the wealth and status of the wearer, and serving a social purpose by constraining what shoes can be worn by whom, and when.

Shoes play an important role in costuming as well. Historical costumes must be accurate from head-to-toe, including the footwear. For sci-fi, fantasy, anime, and other genre, shoes must also be believable for the character and the society being portrayed, even if the design happens to be fantastic or impractical.

The theme of this issue is “Stepping Out,” with articles about creating and wearing shoes and legwear of all kinds: historical, modern, or purely fanciful. I hope these articles will inspire costumers to explore the possibilities for what is on their feet and legs when designing and creating costumes.

Margot Silk Forrest is an expert in painting and embellishing shoes. In her virtual author talk, she discusses what is in the second edition of her book *Sassy Feet!* which she wrote with co-author Destiny

Carter. The book covers tested techniques for painting shoes, as well as finding the right embellishments to make those shoes uniquely your own.

In a companion article, Margot gives us a primer on techniques she has developed for painting shoes, including preparation, choice of paints, and techniques for creating unique effects that turn an ordinary pair of shoes into something special. Her article includes many examples from her own collection to help stimulate your creativity.

An idea for a fantasy faun costume was behind Olivia Stanton's project to design a set of digitigrade legs that move naturally, and offer both comfort and flexibility. In her article, she shows the progression of ideas behind the design and construction of her faun legs, and the techniques that she used to create the rest of the costume. The results are amazing!

The earliest known shoes are a pair of sandals dating from 7000-8000 BCE, and the oldest leather shoes are those of Ötzi the Iceman, dating to 3300 BC. Both shoes were the object of shoe authority Petr Hlaváček's professional interest. For fans of extreme historical costume recreation, I tell the near-epic story of Hlaváček's near decade-long quest to study, and eventually to accurately recreate and test, Ötzi's shoes. (Stone knives and bearskins both come into play.)

Chopine were platform shoes that became a popular extreme fashion in parts of Europe during the 15th-17th centuries. They have also held a fascination for author



"Commodore Philip Ashe" and his animatronic macaw at an event with "Tales of the Seven Seas," a pirate re-enactor group in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Marianne Pease, who fills us in on the history and construction techniques of this style of shoe in her article. Her eventual goal is to recreate a favorite pair from 16th-century Italy held in the Bata Shoe Museum in Toronto – what a great reason to make a new costume!

Nicole Mullen is a curator with an unusual address: the International Terminal of the San Francisco International Airport. That is the location of the SFO Museum and a unique exhibit space where she works her magic. In a wide-ranging interview, Nicole

talks about planning and curating her latest exhibition, "Stepping Out: Shoes in World Cultures," featuring 19th- and 20th-century shoes from a variety of countries and cultures. This is a must-see for anyone passing through SFO, or who lives in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Here is a preview of what is upcoming in VC. The theme of the November 2017 issue will be "Barely There," about creating costumes that are minimal, or daring while remaining PG, and some of the materials and techniques that costume designers and creators use to achieve the look.

For the February 2018 issue, the theme will be "Transformations" about costumes that use various techniques to change the garment or wearer, or to completely transform themselves into something completely different from what was originally presented.

I am pleased to announce that the theme for the May 2018 issue will be "To Boldly Go..." about costumes that push the limits of current design, materials, and construction techniques, or introduce novel approaches to presentation, workmanship, or documentation.

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.