

The Costume Fanzine of Record

Yipee!

Volume 2

Issue 8

Loose Threads



YIPE!

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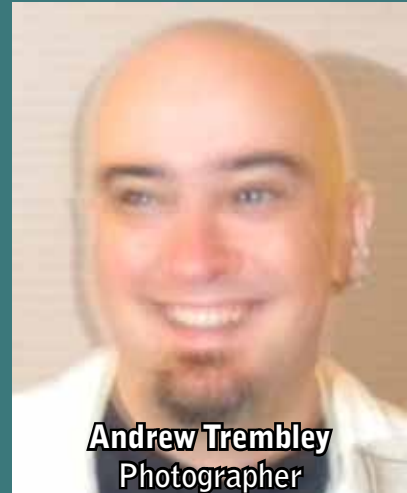
The Costume Fanzine of Record



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Are Infinitely Thankful For
And At This Time Would Like
To Thank For The Buckets
Full Of Free Pictures And
Backgrounds We Use On A
Regular Basis To Flesh Out
The Pages You Are About To
Read RIGHT NOW.



Letter from the Editor

Send all complaints to:
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I'm just going to come right out and say it: this isn't the best issue we've ever done.

It's not the worst. No, I think we've yet to truly plumb the depths of how awful we can be when we drag our hungover carcasses out of bed only to have some jerk stick a keyboard in our faces and tell us to be "creative".

But what we're dealing with here is a lack of... what's the word... cohesiveness? I like that one... High syllable count.

Yes, anyway: cohesiveness. You see, fanzines are like magazines which are like costumes in that everything comes together in the end and is expected to sorta... cohere. You get all your trimmings and details and hair and makeup and, unless you're a terrible excuse for a human being, it adds up to something.

And that's what we try to do with this fanzine. Take a bunch of writing from hands



which should never be allowed to touch, and edit them together into one... cohesive, right? Yes, a cohesive group of stories, pictures, rants, histories, drawings, and things I have no words to describe-- all adding up to one glorious whole.

Well, this ain't that fanzine.

No, something went awry when we all got together in the secret lair and tossed around possible themes for August. I was hoping we could try for an issue dedicated to cosplay after the glory that was Anime Expo and the only slightly different glory that was Comi-Con. Sadly, schedules were not permitting and the cosplay issue was pushed to a later date.

So Kevin peered out from under his dracula cape and proposed we focus the issue around the great costuming myths of fandom. Now, this was something we could really sink our teeth into. An untapped well of pure fanzine gold.

Only problem: no one had any costuming myths to share. Which itself sounds like a costuming myth, but there you are.

All eyes were on España as she finished slaughtering a busload of orphans in front of their crying mothers. Surely someone as evil as her would have the answer for us. She's SPANISH, dammit. All they ever do is commit fashion nightmares, write sex farces, and start civil wars, right? And their trains always run on time, I hear.

I really don't remember what happened next. They tell me it took a few weeks to reattach my head after I conveyed the preceding sentiments. Everything seems to work, for the most part, but my thought process is a bit... not... cohesive?

But, in the meantime, articles were written, photos were taken, alcohol was consumed, and what we had left was... well... a bunch of Loose Threads.

After considering it for a number of months, we finally got in touch with six time Hugo loser (a number soon to be increased) Christopher J. Garcia to put together the article we've been intent on blackmailing him for-- a story of costuming taken past roleplaying and into the world of professional wrestling. Yes,



we speak of the artform known as Kaiju Big Battel, where adults dress up as giant monsters a la Godzilla films and beat the tar out of each other in a ring filled with a miniature city.

Then it's Ms. Sheriff's turn to share the evil with her tale of the disastrous experience that is making a deadline with a faulty Macintosh.

Finally, for the first time in... cohesively... a year? Robert Hole does his research and tells us all what's wrong with research and how it

affects our notions of historic costuming.

Are these stories relatedly to each other thematically? Does the slightest detail connect each one to every other? Can I think of anything to link them in any way whatsoever?

Yes, actually. They belong in *Yipe!*

Jason Schachat

Confusing honesty in advertising, even if it has nothing to do with costuming.





by christopher j. garcia

Do you ever get the feeling that the Universe is mocking you? I truly believe that it is because of a series of events that played out in my senior year at Emerson, a lovely college then situated in the Bay Back section of Boston. It was November 1st, 1996 and there was a gathering of good people in the common room of the dorm. We were gathering to watch some terrible television, as I recall, and one of my floormates had brought over a few friends from MassArt, another college along Beacon Street, who had been at a Halloween event at the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, across the Fens. They told a tale that was difficult to believe: that there had been an event at the Revolving Museum where

guys had dressed up as Toho-esque monsters and wrestled. I disbelieved. No one would do that except for me and my group of friends. There was no truth to it, I decided, and went about my regular viewing of ECW and WWF pay-per-views and irregular viewings of Godzilla movies.

The same folks visited again, the Wednesday before Spring Break, and specifically invited me to the second Big Battle, a full-scale version of the event they'd had back at Halloween. I, sadly, was flying home with a couple of friends. I had missed the first event by a day, and I was flying out two days before the next event.

Universe 2, Garcia 0



Boston in the late middle 90s was an exciting place for a geek. Boston is the ultimate college town, and there was so much going on in Pop Culture that was emerging from the city. Boston, Cambridge, Belmont and Watertown all featured tons of places where a body could find themselves a mess of videos from all over the world. The best of them, a small mall at the far end of the Red Line of the MTA, had

three video stores that specialized in Japanese video tapes, one of which got all the recent movies and television shows from Japan and you could have them set a particular set aside for them like having a box at a comic shop. One of the other got all the latest All Japan and New Japan wrestling tapes. Wrestling was on its biggest jag of all-time at that point. WCW's nWo had set the world on fire and Stone Cold Steve

**Toho Studios movie monsters:
the inspiration for the glory that is Kaiju Big Battel.**



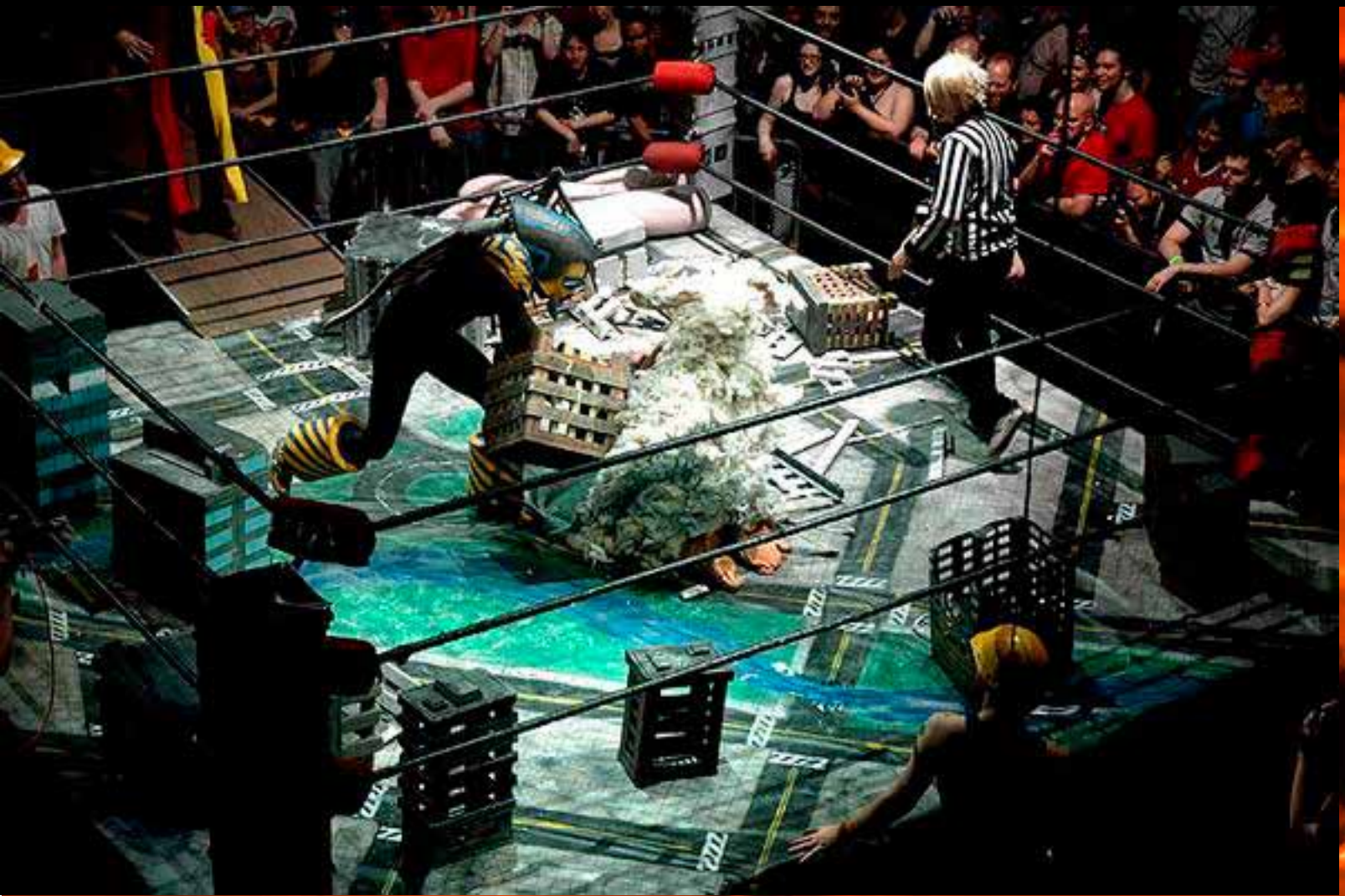


Austin was quickly becoming the biggest star in the world. ECW, a hard core version of wrestling centered in Philadelphia, had introduced the US to Lucha Libre in the form of masked wrestlers Juventud Guerrera, Psicosis, La Parka and Rey Misterio, Jr.. They were snapped up by the much larger WCW and that turned much of the US wrestling world on to Lucha. In addition, at the same time, there were groups like Incredibly Strange Wrestling that were producing wrestling shows that were over-the-

top and crazy, completely abandoning the idea of realistic competitiveness in favor of wild storytelling.

In addition to all that, Boston was the home of more magazine and bookstores than you can imagine. I hung out at all of them and there were two huge sellers at the time: Giant Robot, a zine dedicated to Asian pop culture, and From Parts Unknown, a masked wrestler zine. You couldn't go to a dorm where there weren't at least five or six copies of each floating around dog-





eared and well read. You could always tell when the new issues came out because there'd be three or four people reading them at the dining hall. All of this put together formed the perfect Petri Dish for a strange new form of wrestling.

Kaiju Big Battel is the name of the promotion that was founded at that Halloween party and then exploded onto the world with all the force of King Kong ravaging Edo. It was the natural outcome of the confluence of Lucha Libre, daikaiju and Art Students.

Rand and David Borden were the inventors of Studio Kaiju, the producers/promoters of the group. They had built a giant monster suit for an independent video project. Like all non-assignment related video projects started by college students, the video never happened, but another student, one who happened to be a giant wrestling fan, said that they should build more and then do a video of them wrestling. That

evolved into the show at the Revolving Museum after they built three more suits. The first four suits, Midori No Kaiju, Atomic Cannon, Powa Ranjuru and Force Trooper Robo, battled in the first shows, with a story behind the entire promotion. The forces of evil show up on Earth every once in a while and the forces of good have to battle them. of course, this is destructive to the world, so the forces of good and evil came





up with Kaiju Regulatory Commission that set up Big Battels (named, much like the Drink Tank, after an accidental misspelling) to allow the forces of good and evil to fight it out without the massive destruction that usually follows when giant monsters attack. They installed the Kaiju Commissioner to keep rule over all of it.

A successful wrestling storyline rests upon a three-legged stool: characters, presentation and storyline. The over-arching storyline is easy, but you can't live on





a single storyline, you have to give miniature storylines that feed off of or into the main. Kaiju's main storyline is always present, but there've been additions to it, like Dr. Cube, a former Nazi-bred monster turned plastic surgeon, who has assembled a crew of bad monsters. There's also the Los Platanos, a pair of brothers who are, in fact, giant plantains. They were in conflict with another pair, CIA Plantains, who looked exactly like Los Platanos, only with mustaches. The storylines are over-the-top, even for giant monsters, and that allows them to play with huge toys in their rings. Characters? Yeah,



they've got characters, and while in regular wrestling, with rare exceptions, the most successful characters are the ones who are at least somewhat realistic, in Kaiju Big Battel, your biggest stars are the characters who are most out there. This is true of all the weird wrestling groups (see the success of The Abortionist in Incredibly Strange Wrestling and/or Rock 'n Roll Jesse Helms in Capitol Hill Fights) and characters like French Toast, a Hero who is universally hated who happens to be a giant mass of custard-dipped baguette, Hell Monkey, who is on the trail of Los Platanos because he thinks they're bananas, or SDS-1, the Super-Dimensional Slug.

Presentation is the one where Kaiju Big Battel excels. Their shows aren't traditional wrestling shows; they're part wrestling show and part performance art. They're insane events presenting guys in giant monster suits! The suits are amazing, some of them absolutely incredible, and that's a big part of the play. In the regular wrestling world, suspension of disbelief is probably the most important thing, without it, it's just Ice Capades and there's no interest in seeing what happens from show-to-show. Kaiju Big Battel has none of that, nor does it need it, the presentation takes you completely out of the need for interest in continuing storylines, though they keep





pumping them out, because what's important is the monster fighting, the weird announcing the scene. One of the big things is that they tour, doing shows around the Northeast to start with, and adding shows all over the US and even in Europe, where French Toast is a big star. By not concentrating on the tradition forms and techniques of wrestling, and having awesome suits, they've made it possible for the show to go on and on and on.





One thing that is amazing is that the suits hold-up. Even regular wrestling masks tend to get seriously beat-up after just a couple of shows, so the full-body suits and the head gear and such that survives match after match after match is a remarkable thing. The suits are the biggest marker of the promotion.

Kaiju Big Battle even had two shows scheduled for San Francisco, which I purchased tickets to the moment they were announced as being on sale. Turned out that both got cancelled by their venues.

Universe 4, Garcia 0.





Sheriff Don't Like It

by España Sheriff

All right, so the space occupied this week by this frankly substandard and entirely off topic rant should in fact be occupied by a solid seven hundred (well okay, 612) words of fresh vitriol hot off the flimsy chiclet keyboard of the supposedly technologically superior Macintosh computer that I have been forced to struggle against with for the past two weeks while the genuises at Dell attempt and repeatedly fail to make a simple

delivery of a replacement PC with such a mind-blowing level of incompetence that the aether spontaneously generates the faint strains of 'Yakety Sax' each time I'm lucky enough to explain the whole debacle yet again from the beginning to the latest newly assigned but not briefed customer service rep.

But, as you may have cleverly discerned from these even fresher 505

tardily delivered words of technophobic mouth-frothing, something-as they say-went awry. In point of fact Google Docs and this aesthetically pleasing but less than entirely intuitively designed POS I am even now still forced to type on, conspired to "cut" but then not so much "paste" as "consign to oblivion" all my pretty, pretty prose.

Now, Google Docs, like most of Google's products seems to

inhabit a curious space smack in the middle between “awesome tool I never knew I needed but is now indispensable” and “app that Satan shat out to screw me over by failing right at the critical moment” so you know, I get it. No one trusts Google anymore, ‘Don’t Be Evil’ has become a punchline, so yeah-it’s perfectly reasonable to expect it to make my life—and by extension that of your long-suffering editor-miserable.

But, Mac... for all that I, in my primitive ape-like end user intellect shall never be entirely comfortable navigating your too-polished intricacies... I had at least thought we had an mutual understanding; you don’t fuck me over too blatantly and I don’t accidentally drop you and all your futuristic shiny surfaces and pleasingly inoffensive round corners onto the concrete floor when I move you off the desk to

make room for the much-delayed replacement PC.

That is, if I get a replacement PC at all, because it is slowly becoming clear this may never happen. It seems you have brainwashed everyone in the office into looooooving you so much that they keep casually stopping by my desk to ask, with brightly glittering cultist eyes “so, how do you like the Mac?” and day-dreamily commenting



PICTURE UNRELATED

But it's a gigantic panda blasting a hole through a knight with a rainbow spewed from its mouth... what's not to like?

**This cat is pushing a
watermelon out of a lake.**



Your argument is invalid.

how awesome it would be to replace all the machines in the office with more of your pod-children. At which point I am liable to grab the nearest femur and go totally 2001 on their asses while screaming 'Listen! They're here

already! You're next!"

Right, breathing... I'm fine...

I'm sorry, what was that? Wait, did I hear you say something about Linux? Really now? Well that sounds just fascinating. I

am intrigued and quite suddenly made aroused and kittenish by your smug technological superiority... please, ignore the claw hammer in my trembling fist and step just. a. few. inches. closer.



Fashionable History



I'm sitting here at my local public library, trying to think of something appropriate to write. On the table next to me are copies of the first (1989) and third (1998) editions of "Survey of Historic Costume". There is also a copy of "The History of Underclothes" (Dover reprint, 1992) and a five-volume history of California published around 1914.

The history is modestly illustrated with images including engravings, photographs and reproductions of paintings. The sorts of things you would expect to see in an illustrated history.

Why have I chosen these particular books to have around me to write this?

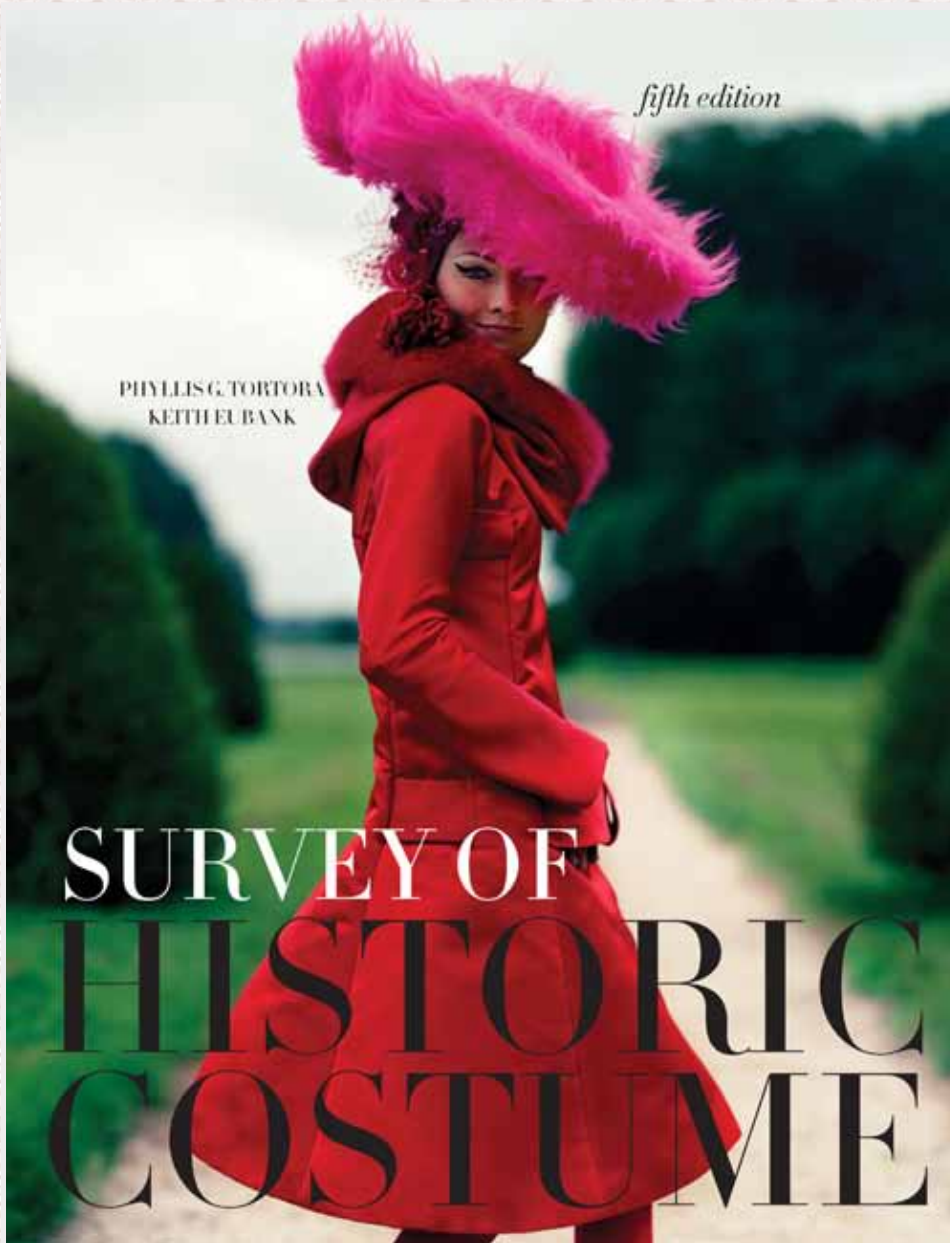
Looking through the general history book alongside the costume history books, I note the illustrations in the costume history books are mostly from volumes similar to the California history books. They are engravings, photographs and reproductions of artwork. Rarely do they have "new" photographs of the clothing they are writing about.

Because woven garments were, until the 20th Century, made entirely of

natural materials, they can degrade quickly unless very special care is taken with them- or unless someone accidentally puts them away in careful storage conditions.

Woven materials have also, until recently, been rather expensive. Unless you were very well-off (and often even then), you and your family would out of necessity practice "reduce, reuse, and recycle" habits with any clothing in the household.

If a youngster grew out of a piece of clothing, it would get passed to the next youngest. It would be



patched, mended, and re-patched and re-mended until it became patches or mending material.

The only items kept for any length of time were the kinds of garments we might keep today - special event clothing like wedding dresses, uniforms, and the like. And you'd keep these only if you could afford to (or afford them in the first place).

So we have, in most cases, very few well preserved (or even poorly preserved) actual garments that were not the special event clothing of the well-to-do.

So we have to rely on paintings, sculptures, and, recently, photographs for much of our knowledge of historic patterns of dress. There might be some supplementary written material; Herodotus' travel

writings are among the earlier sources, though he mostly relied on traveler's tales. He never actually left Greece.

Fortunately, for the last few thousand years, many human populations have been highly illustrative. We have depictions of people from many professions and classes from many cultures and locations around the world. Of course, for most of history and prehistory even, these illustrations are going to be "cleaned up". They don't depict everyday clothing even on the laborers pictured in the background.

In addition to those limitations, reliance on illustrative sources gives us problems in constructing (reconstructing) the garments pictured. We have many fine Egyptian tomb paintings, but how exactly were those skirts wrapped, and how were they held up? What were they made of? Were they bleached or dyed colors other than the few pictured?

For the specific example of the ancient Egyptians, we are lucky they were literate and record keepers and interacted with other literate, record keeping

peoples (for instance, Herodotus wrote about their clothing). We also have various samples of the actual garments in this specific case. Okay, maybe ancient Egypt wasn't the best example of the lack of evidence, but hopefully you get the idea.

A better example might be underclothing as a type of garment. "The History of Underclothes" for instance starts with the sweeping generalization that, until the Renaissance, underclothes were "...purely utilitarian", and then goes on to four whole paragraphs covering the world's use of undergarments before the 15th Century.

The authors of that book point out that prior to then, there is a lack of evidence beyond glimpses "...as it were by accident..." in illuminated manuscripts (the book focuses on European/Western culture). How they can state that underclothes even existed before the 15th Century if there's so little evidence-- I'm not sure.

Regardless, most illustrators of the past were focused, understandably, on painting the people who could pay them - the upper classes. Further, those posing for portraits (for which they

Plate 24, Vol. 4.



EVENING PROMENADE, OR
SEA BEACH COSTUMES.

were paying) would, also understandably, put on their best clothes or some other costume for their portrait. So here too, like surviving actual garments, our sources are biased toward upper classes and special occasion clothing.

This is something like basing our knowledge of current fashion on Paris Fashion Week runway designs. It's a rather limited sampling. Personally, I don't think I've ever worn any design that's ever shown up on a Paris fashion runway.

Of course, with the invention of photography and changes in artistic fashion, this bias in source material will be much less pronounced for historians studying the 20th and 21st Century. They actually might have the opposite problem: a severe information overload.

To finish, I'm going to give you a challenge. I want you to take a turn as that future historian of fashion. Pick a time in the last fifty years (1960 seems like a good starting point), and pick a type of event. A prom, a music festival, a science fiction convention, "Ru Paul's Drag Race", something. Assume that's

all the information you have on the fashion of that time period.

Use that as a basis to make some statement about the overall "fashion" of that time. Not just the event, but the whole culture. Make up a few drawings of designs for "every day wear" based on the time

and event you have picked. It should be a good exercise in getting a feel on how much we don't know - and a good exercise to produce an article for Yipe!





Letter from the Other Editor

Send all complaints to:
Kevin@yipezine.com



Yee Haw!

I'm writing this as Andy and I prepare to pack up and head off to camp (in a friend's RV) at this year's Bay Area Gay Rodeo. Andy and I have been sponsoring some of the award buckles for [The Best Buck in the Bay](#) for over half a dozen years, and if you enjoy good amateur rodeo, I recommend it quite highly.

You might wonder what rodeo has to do with costume. To begin with, the event for which we sponsor the buckles is called Goat Dressing. It is one of three "camp" events featured at Gay Rodeo in addition to the traditional events. A team of two tries to be the fastest to catch a billy goat and get a pair of briefs onto its hindquarters, then get back across the starting line before the

goat kicks them off. Goat Dressing is nothing, however, compared to the Wild Drag Race, in which a team of three (a Cowgirl, a Cowboy and a Drag) must wrangle a steer across the arena, put the drag queen on top of it and wrangle it back. I hope Andy and I will have a photo spread featuring the Wild Drag teams for you in a future issue of *Yipe!*.

Next month, we're off to FenCon in Texas of which we have heard good things. Andy and I are Fan GOHs, so I'm sure we'll come back with a whole new set of tales to share with y'all.

As I mention in my reply to Lloyd Penney's LOC, we've now set up an email subscrip-

tion feed on yipezine.com, so you can get immediate notification when we post a new issue. Spread the word!

thing you'd like to share (short articles, poetry, photos, artwork), drop us a line at editors@yipezine.com

And as always, we're always looking for new content. (I'm not allowed to say "desperately seeking content" :-)) Jason and I would like to assemble a couple of strongly themed issues: an anime issue, and another all about costume myths and legends. If you've some-

Until next month!

Kevin

(it's still all my fault)





Dear Jason and Kevin:

Way behind again am I. Do you guys announce when an issue is about to come out? Could you add me to your list? Much appreciated. And now, here's comments on Yipe!, Volume 2, issues 5 and 6.

You can now subscribe to our posts on yipezine.com via feedburner.com, which means you'll get direct notice every time we post a new issue! Generally speaking, we aim to publish right around the middle of the month. (Technically, submissions are due by the first Saturday, Jason aims to finish layout by the second

[Saturday of the month and then we get to copyedit.](#))

5...I saw all the hyperlinks embedded in the .pdf of this issue, and saw how much you'd put into it...and I shot it all to hell by simply printing out the .pdf at work. I still have the .pdf, though, and can easily strain out all the vital information no one wants me to have. Isn't modern tech great? (By the way, is fluorescent plaid the new fashion statement in California? I can imagine what the statement is...)

Masquerades are fun, but I have seen people drop out of masquerades and costuming

entirely when the costumes got so complex and heavy, and difficult to carry to conventions. That kinda happened to us in the 80s. Today, the costumes aren't complex, they are fairly comfortable, and we carry them around in a steamer trunk. Maybe we're a little more tolerant?

We've run masquerade green rooms, and the worst thing to do there is provide foods that are greasy, crumbly, squishy or wet. We're bound to get foods like that all over our costumes. We usually provide flavoured waters (not too much, don't want a bursting bladder as you're going on stage) and good foods like cut veggies some fruits. Anything you can pick up and pop in your



mouth, and that will sustain you as you wait unendingly for your cue.

I haven't seen many Alice in Wonderland costumes yet (day after tomorrow is *Polaris 24* in Toronto, so I may see a whole lot!), but already I've seen a ton of Mad Hatter hats. Yvonne's got one of them, and made sure it had a real peacock feather and the proper number of hat pins in it. (Five.) A local music store chain was selling Alice stuff, and while the t-shirts and other things were lame, the hats were flying off the shelf.

The rockabilly mode of dress somehow reminds me of the steampunk style...there's no real set way to do it, but you have some leeway to do it the way you'd like. And, there are

more extreme versions not everyone agrees with. You're right, a lot more like fandom than we might be comfortable with. These folks have definitely heard of Bettie Page...

I should get you in touch with people like Barb Schofield, master costumer from the 80s and beyond. She never really left costuming, even though she left competition, and formed guilds and small costuming mini-cons.

Barb's a good friend of mine!

I've seen some of the DVDs of past CostumeCons, and I am pleasantly surprised by the quality of the work. There's no crap, unless it's been prejudged. Hall costumes are a little difficult, especially if it's a uniform. To me, the cos-

tume is best based on clothing instead of something you might sew together. Yes, I'm grumpy that way. I want to be comfortable, and not all scratch-built costumes are comfortable for everyday wear. Another plus for steampunk costumes.

Nope, everything entered goes on stage at Costume-Con (unless they scratch themselves at the last minute due to nerves or wardrobe malfunction). I agree mostly about hall costumes, but I've also been building comfy ones for a long time. That's how my 1912 Able Seaman started! And most of my beefcake hall costumes are very comfortable, as long as the environment is appropriate (in terms of both climate and culture).

The letter column...I will be hugging the stuffings out of Dawn McKechnie when I see her in a day or so. She's a nice girl, really. Ah, there's my letter...look away, look away, we're not the droids you're looking for, keep going, keep going, this way to the egress... Yes, I am a bad, bad man. But then, that's my convention persona, so I'm used to it.

6...you guys aren't burning out over this, are you? Now, I heard a few things from that Garcia guy about Baycon, and that most of the concom left lemming-like from the committee pit, but the event still happened.

After a 20-year hiatus from costuming, our every day conwear for many years was homemade Hawaiian from Yvonne's sewing machine. She literally made hundred of them for committees, and for us. I have purchased similar shirts and ditched them when they shrunk around my stomach (yeah, right), but I have all the shirts she's ever made for me, and I have one for every day of the month.

Why was the Six-Time Hugo loser shirt on the table? Was Chris promoting himself again? Wonder what he was

selling?

Hey, Lance Moore, I used to know the Puget Sound Star Trekkers! I think that was their name way back in the late 70s when I lived just north of there on Vancouver Island. The seemed able to travel on a whim, and we had an open invitation to come and visit...which we never did, because we never had the money to go to Seattle. Hey, I couldn't even get to Vancouver at that time.

Zombies...sorry, don't do a thing for me. I learned that Toronto is famous for having the very first Zombie Walk, and a bloody young lady names Thea Munster is the one responsible for that. I get notifications of when the zombie walks are, too, but nope, not for me.

My letter about steampunk costumes...Yvonne is creating a steampunk accountant costume. She will make it happen, trust me.

Found out last night, the big pro gateshow in Toronto, FanExpo in mid-August, will be staging a steampunk

fashion show, and we will be part of the walk-on costumers. Should be fun, and I usually don't go to FanExpo, I'm grumpy that way, but I will go to be on stage and show off the conductor one more time.

All done for the moment... when are you guys creating Volume 2, issue 7, or whatever? When you do, let me know about it, and I will get one of these letters off to you, promise. See you then.

Yours, Lloyd Penney.





YIPE! AUGUST 2010

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