

The Costume Fanzine of Record

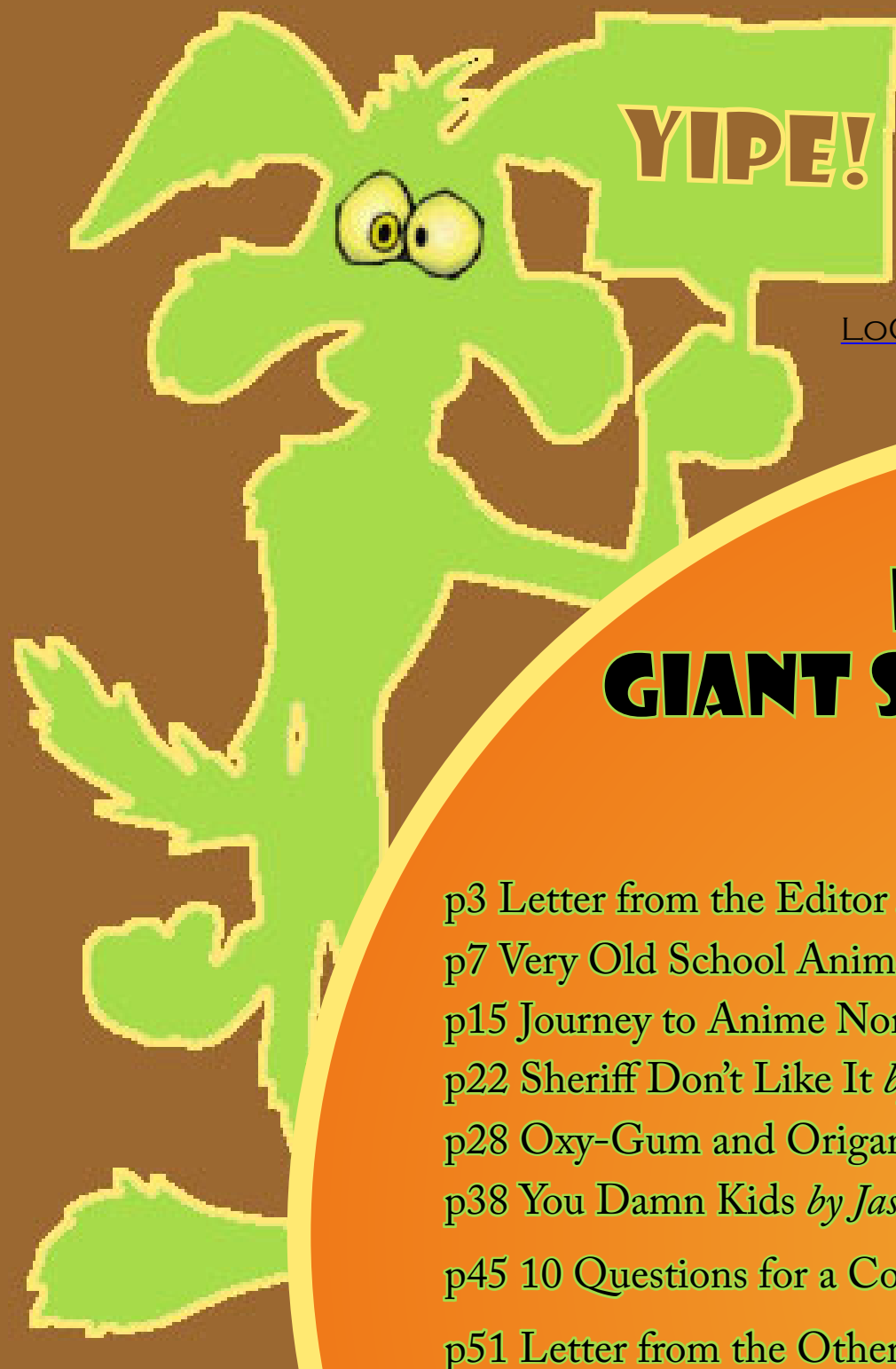
Volume 2

Issue 9

Giant Size Otaku

Yipe!

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The Costume Fanzine of Record

Letter from the Editor

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Readers will know I'm not one for incendiary statements. Except when I'm talking about things that suck or rule, of course.

But I don't think I'm far wrong when I say anime fandom is the foundation of the next generation of fandom and everything else is just clinging desperately to the edge of the cliff as the march of time unerringly pushes us all into obscurity.

The discord between general SF fandom and anime fandom is something we constantly bicker about. In this issue, you'll see phrases bandied about like "The Greying of Fandom," "You Kids Get Off My Lawn," and "Fannish Kids Are Few and Maladjusted'."

See, the big problem with anime vs. everything else in fandom is it's something more traditional fans need to put effort into researching. And why do something silly like that?

Conversely, the kids and teenagers raised on



anime and manga will think they know everything until life properly beats all the hope and joy out of them (which, appropriately, happens sometime between legal voting age and legal drinking age).

The solution? Hell, there's no magic potion. You either like anime or you don't.

I could point out all sorts of wrongness on both sides. That older fandom having such a vehement reaction to the first non-U.S. based science fiction movement to achieve worldwide success smacks of prejudice. That anime fandom's retention rate doesn't live up to the hype. That anime is a medium rather than a genre. That general SF fandom has a bad habit of picking and choosing what is and

isn't 'real' SF/Fantasy.

But, after decades of anime fandom growing larger and larger with every passing year, the term 'fad' seems rather petty. Face it folks, anime may be a medium not-entirely-catering-to Sci Fi, but it produces more Sci Fi and Fantasy than American television. Better quality, too.

Anime fandom also did one better by embracing video game fandom whole-heartedly. No judgments about legitimacy. They just accepted that people who play Pokémon can be equally fanatical to the people who watch Pokémon.

That said... Anime fandom, you need to grow up.

I and some members of the Yipe! staff were at an anime convention recently. Everything was going swimmingly when we got into the elevator with some other fans from the lobby. After a pregnant pause, a cosplayer stuck a finger in the face of a fan wearing a shirt proudly displaying Marvel's Avengers.

"How can you wear a Marvel shirt at an anime con?"

We were baffled. I mean, aside from the fact there's an Avengers movie in the works, comic conventions have embraced anime and cosplayers alike, and, Jesus people, MARVEL VS. CAPCOM 3?! Seriously!

What it comes down to is acceptance. Not



East Coast.



tolerance, but accepting that the new generation is getting their Sci Fi and Fantasy from mediums the older generations have never had the time or inclination to celebrate to the same degree.

The other side of the coin: anime fans need to chill out and broaden their horizons, or they're doomed to the same 'Greying of Fandom' their parents/grandparents are going through right now. Ironically, they'd realize this if they'd read "Rainbow's End" by Vernor Vinge.

So, like that Hugo Winner, Yipe! takes this opportunity to build one Giant Size Otaku, reflecting on the early days of anime fandom and the seemingly boundless growth of the cosplay community.

Karen Dick graces us our pages with her personal story of the seminal days of anime costuming, complete with pictures of her Starblazers and Captain Harlock creations from what might be considered the dawn of Cosplay.

Then Dawn McKechnie takes us on a tour of

Anime North, Toronto's sprawling home to cosplayers, masqueraders, ravers, lolitas, and maids alike.

España chimes in with her own take on the glory of Cosplay and anime fandom before bashing the hell out of them for being prettier and more talented than her, then Kevin sets the wayback machine to his own childhood and dredges up his formative years influenced by Kimba the White Lion, Astro Boy, and 8-Man.

I resume my unending thesis paper on anime

fandom vs. general fandom in our later pages, then Mette Hedin returns to form with 10 Questions for Bay Area Cosplayer Mea.

Incendiary? Perhaps. Definitely one big damn fanzine.

-Jason Schachat

West Coast.





VERY "OLD SCHOOL" ANIME COSTUMES (1979-1981)

by Karen Dick

Come with me to the prehistory of Cosplay in the late 1970's. A time when:

- We called anime "Japanimation" and were forced to watch it in afternoon TV time slots because program executives reasoned that "cartoons are for kids."
- DVRs did not exist, VCRs were available but expensive (\$400-\$1000), and individual blank videotapes were \$20. If you wanted to record your favorite anime, it was a significant investment.
- Personal computers and the internet did not exist, so there was no easy way to research your favorite anime, meet other fans, or purchase anime-related items.
- Specialized anime conventions did not exist, so anime fans wore their costumes to general science fiction, media, and comic conventions, often to the bewilderment of other attendees and masquerade judges.
- Anything manga or anime related (books, records, videotapes, etc.) was only available from specialty stores in the "Japantown" area of several major cities, and selection was poor. Special orders to get items from a particular movie or series were difficult.
- Specialty wigs, especially in colors not found in nature, were extremely hard to obtain.
- Often, to see a particular anime, a club or convention would have to rent a 35mm undubbed/uns subtitled print of the film and show it with a translator in the room to

do real-time interpretation of the dialog. (My favorite instance of this was when the 1983 World Science Fiction convention played one of the SPACE BATTLESHIP YAMATO movies. Toward the end of the movie, the captain of the Yamato gave a long and impassioned speech, which the translator abbreviated to "Don't screw up.")

I grew up in Southern California and was privileged to see all sorts of anime when it first hit U.S. airwaves in the 1960's: ASTRO BOY, SPEED RACER, MARINE BOY, PRINCE PLANET, GIGANTOR, 8th MAN,

AMAZING 3, etc. ASTRO BOY remains a favorite. The highlight of the 1978 World Science Fiction convention for me was to be able to see uncut episodes of ASTRO BOY in the film room after not having any access at all to them for 13 years. And my home office is still decorated with ASTRO BOY collectibles.

When the second wave of anime-based series hit the U.S. airwaves a decade later in the mid-1970's, they failed to capture my heart and attention in quite the same way as their 1960's counterparts, in part due to clumsy dubbing and rescoring, and in part to extensive story rewrites to remove violence for an American audience. GATCHAMAN was watered down into BATTLE OF THE PLANETS, and STARZINGER was turned into SPACEKETEERS (part of the FORCE FIVE lineup).

Then along came STAR BLAZERS (the American interpretation of SPACE BATTLESHIP YAMATO). I was introduced to the show in spring of 1979 by Terry Campbell. Terry worked varying shifts at a local convenience store, often had his afternoons free to watch



TV, and had discovered STAR BLAZERS while flipping channels one day. I was attending college in the mornings and evenings and working a part-time job for the local school district in the afternoons, so I usually could not watch the show in person. VCRs were still in their expensive infancy, as described above, so I did not own one, but my friend Dave Meyers did, so I persuaded him to record the episodes of STAR BLAZERS for me. Each week, I would shell out \$18 for a new VHS tape from the local Photomat store (which was the lowest price for a single tape at the time), and hand it to Dave, who would then set his VCR to





tape the episodes each day. Then, over the weekend, Terry and I would show up at Dave's apartment, and watch 5 days of episodes in one marathon session. Lather, rinse, repeat through 10+ weeks/52 episodes.

I was now a woman with a collection of anime VHS tapes and nothing to play them on, a situation that was not rectified for another 5 years. In retrospect, I find it interesting that I chose an anime as the first thing I made an effort to preserve on videotape, rather than episodes of classic STAR TREK, which I had been a rabid fan of since the late 1960's.

I had a private room/office for my job (used to give

competency tests in math and English to high school seniors), so, each afternoon, I would listen to the audio of that day's STAR BLAZERS episode on a TV band radio as if it were a radio play. It is a tribute to the quality of the voice acting and the retention of the original Japanese symphonic score that the episodes held up amazingly well under these conditions.

I belonged to my college's STAR TREK club (S.T.A.R. San Diego), and had been going to STAR TREK conventions and the San Diego Comic-Con since 1973. I actively competed in the masquerades at these conventions, and made costumes for S.T.A.R. meetings and S.T.A.R.'s annual Halloween

masquerade party. It didn't take long for me to look at STAR BLAZERS with my costumer's eye and see uniforms with clean design lines and bright colors that could be reproduced easily in inexpensive double knit fabric. I made the first two in fall of 1979 for Terry and myself. Other friends saw them and wanted them, so I made more. By spring of 1980, there were 10, and some of my friends were figuring out how to build the various weapons from the show out of sheet styrene.

Either in fall of 1979 or spring of 1980, I also connected with Mark Merlino, Fred Patten, and The Cartoon Fantasy



Organization (CFO), based out of Los Angeles. CFO members had an interest in all kinds of animation, but the club, founded in 1977, was becoming more and more heavily weighted toward anime. They always had flyers at conventions, and often had input to the film programs of Los-Angeles based science fiction conventions. My friends and I attended some of the monthly meetings, at least once in STAR BLAZERS uniforms. The CFO broadened our horizons and introduced us to anime series and movies we had not seen before: LUPIN III, CRUSHER JOE, RAIDEEN.



With the help of CFO members, I got directions to places in Los Angeles where anime-based materials could be bought, including the "Little Tokyo" area downtown, and the Gardena area further afield. Armed with this knowledge, my friends and I were able to purchase a wealth of manga, reference books,

LP soundtracks, and other collectibles related to STAR BLAZERS. (First Japanese phrase I learned was "Uchu Senkan Yamato," to query book store and record store owners about our favorite show.)

This was the era when anime

series based on the “Leijiverse” (of Leiji Matsumoto) were popular: big, sweeping space epics with romantic and chivalrous ideals, populated by women with ridiculously long hair and tall, thin men. At the time, my friends and I bore physical and personality resemblances to some of the characters, which helped in our costumed portrayals. Through our shopping expeditions to Los Angeles, we discovered other anime series set in the Leijiverse that we hadn’t seen yet: CAPTAIN HARLOCK, QUEEN EMERALDAS, GALAXY EXPRESS 999. We bought everything we could lay our hands on, and were never

disappointed by the music or the visual imagery. Terry felt an immediate affinity with the brooding Captain Harlock, and I with Emeraldas. By spring of 1980, those costumes were part of our repertoire, and so were all the accessories: guns, swords, and pirate flags, all scratch-built.

In spring of 1980, San Diego based CAPTAIN HARLOCK and STAR BLAZERS groups descended upon the masquerade of the S.F. Weekend convention in Los Angeles, and both won major awards. Both groups were aided enormously by the

sound technician, who was an anime fan and happened to have both theme songs on tape. These were still the days where sound was an optional luxury at most convention masquerades, and entries recording their own soundtracks was even rarer. The visuals and the music together were very powerful, and won over audiences and judges alike.

By Memorial Day of 1980, there was a full CAPTAIN HARLOCK crew put together for another masquerade competition, including the Mimay character, who has long blue hair, large pupilless golden eyes, and no mouth. We searched high and low through costume shops in Southern California and finally found a suitable blue wig. Nathalia Quirk, who portrayed the character, consented to have her mouth sealed shut with a latex prosthetic and her eyes covered with yellow sunglass lenses glued directly to her face. Even though the lenses had been pre-drilled with airholes, they steamed up immediately, and she spent several hours being both speechless and blind. Talk about suffering for your art! We brought color Xeroxes to the masquerade to show to the judges, as we knew they would



probably be unfamiliar with the anime. The masquerade director refused to pass the material along, so I tucked it into my belt, and as we were leaving the stage, I looked the end judge in the eye, handed him the folded up papers, and said, “Here. You need this.” The judge opened it up, saw what it was, and said, “Yes. Yes, we do. THANK YOU.” I think we got some kind of award for accuracy to source that evening.

At the same convention, we got in trouble with the hotel (the infamous Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles, where Robert F. Kennedy was assassinated by Sirhan Sirhan) for flying our Harlock and Emeraldas pirate flags out the window of our hotel room. They were afraid

passers-by on the street would think terrorists had taken over the hotel.

By summer of 1980, there were over a dozen STAR BLAZERS uniforms (and Captain Avatar, and Starsha), and we descended on the San Diego Comic-Con

masquerade en masse. We won a much-coveted Best in Show that year.

The next anime group we did was based on the GALAXY EXPRESS 999 movie. Captain Harlock and Emeraldas required minimal modifications, but costumes had to be made for 5 new characters. It was originally intended for Galacticon in fall of 1980, but the convention folded two weeks before it was supposed to be held. While we were sad not to have anything to do that weekend, we were happy to have additional time to work on the costumes. Kelly Turner, who was portraying Count Mecha, had to do a lifecast of his face, sculpt the Count Mecha robot face in clay on the lifecast, and then take a mold of the robot face and use it to produce a fiberglass resin





mask. A friend with access to a machine shop tooled up the resin “cogs” on Count Mecha’s coat. And again, we had wig problems. Count Mecha had short, blonde, page-boyish hair. The wig we got was the right length, but the ends were too curly and there was an unwanted “Prince Valiant” effect. We spent a lot of time and frustration trying to restyle and straighten the wig, which was synthetic fiber and heat-set. (I think we finally ended up ironing it, after trying to wet it, comb it, roll it on curlers in the opposite direction, and use a curling iron on it.)

The GALAXY EXPRESS group finally made its appearance at Equicon in spring of 1981. It was entry #13 in the masquerade, which lived up to its unlucky associations, as Kelly, in full costume, got stuck between floors in a hotel elevator just as the masquerade was starting. We realized he would not be freed before our number came up, so we asked the Masquerade Director to move our entry to the end of the masquerade. Fortunately, Kelly was able to escape from the elevator before the masquerade was over, and the group was well-received and won an award.

Later in 1981, we did a large ELFQUEST group and then started a push on large-scale original costumes for the next four World Science Fiction conventions. In 1984, Kelly and I, now husband and wife, moved to Northern California, which made it difficult to work on further anime-based groups with our usual costuming partners.

There were other anime costumes and characters we wanted to do (with the first thing on the horizon being uniforms from MACROSS), and San Francisco’s Japan Center became our new source of anime-based books and music, but we just never got around to it. The last anime-based costume I made was Hikaru Ichigo’s uniform from MACROSS, for Kelly, in 1989. The materials I had so painstakingly accumulated for a matching Misa Hayase eventually got used for a non-anime project.

In 1990, I moved to the East Coast and completely dropped out of anime fandom for a while, thus missing the emergence of the first anime conventions as entities separate from S/F, media, and comic conventions. My first introduction to a modern anime convention was AnimeUSA several years ago,

and it was a huge eye-opener. Now, as a middle-aged adult, I still have an avid interest in anime and costuming, but I struggle to find age-suitable anime characters to portray that appeal to me. I do keep looking at the State Alchemist uniforms from FULL METAL ALCHEMIST, and thinking “Hmmmm. I wonder

what these would be like, fully tailored out of wool?”

In all, my San Diego friends and I produced 3 highly visible anime-based costume groups (STAR BLAZERS, CAPTAIN HARLOCK, GALAXY EXPRESS 999)

over an 18-month period that made the rounds of the West Coast conventions and did very well in competition. I like to think that these early efforts were part of the groundwork that eventually led to cosplay and anime conventions as they exist today.



JOURNEY TO ANIME NORTH

BY DAWN MCKECHNIE



In May, Anime North, Canada's largest anime convention is held in Toronto, Canada.

With Anime North's youthful demographic and a subject matter as colourful

as anime to draw from it's not a surprise that a large percentage of Anime North's 16,000 attendees enjoy cosplaying! What is surprising is high percentage of attendee participation in wearing costumes in general, not just

Japanese media cosplay, but western media too, as well as Japanese fashion and street styles, and colourful fandom realated fashions of their own invention, a testament to HOW popular costuming and dressing up really is!

Anime and video game related cosplay of course reigns supreme during the weekend, but you're likely to meet a variety of other characters as well in the halls or during one of the many costume related events. Harry Potter, Spider Man, a Storm Trooper or an Elizabethan queen, may be spied, amidst the patrons dressed in anime standards such as Pokemon,, Naruto, or Sailor Moon.

You may see Lolitas crossing the road, or a couple sporting a popular J-Rock look dancing in an impromptu conga line, or perhaps some girls sporting a Decora fashion look stopping for ice cream at one of the many ice cream trucks parked along the popular grassy meeting grounds.. And of course, there are hundreds of the most casual of costumers, the funny t-shirt decked out in cat, (or bunny), ears and perhaps a tail and maybe a crazy hair colour.

Cosplayer dressed as Rachel Alucard from Blaz Blue strolls amongst the thousands of other fans at Anime North



These Armored Trooper Votoms cosplayers won Best Novice Workmanship in the Anime North Masquerade in 2008.



Cosplayers Gillikins, Jayuna, and Chibi Lenne in Magic Knight Rayearth cosplay





Cosplayer Featherweight as Squirtle



Girls dressed in the Decora Style



Cosplayers Kudrel and Magic Mirror perform in the Saturday night Masquerade as the Shiva Sisters



A Chocobo

From the hard core cosplayers to the casual alternative style enthusiasts, all participants in creative dress lend to the vibe and atmosphere that make Anime North such a deliciously fun spectacle to be immersed in.

Anime North is very fortunate to be in the heart of a strong, long established fandom costuming community, and thus offers many costume related events over its official three day run. Here are a few of the events where eye-popping costumes can be seen:

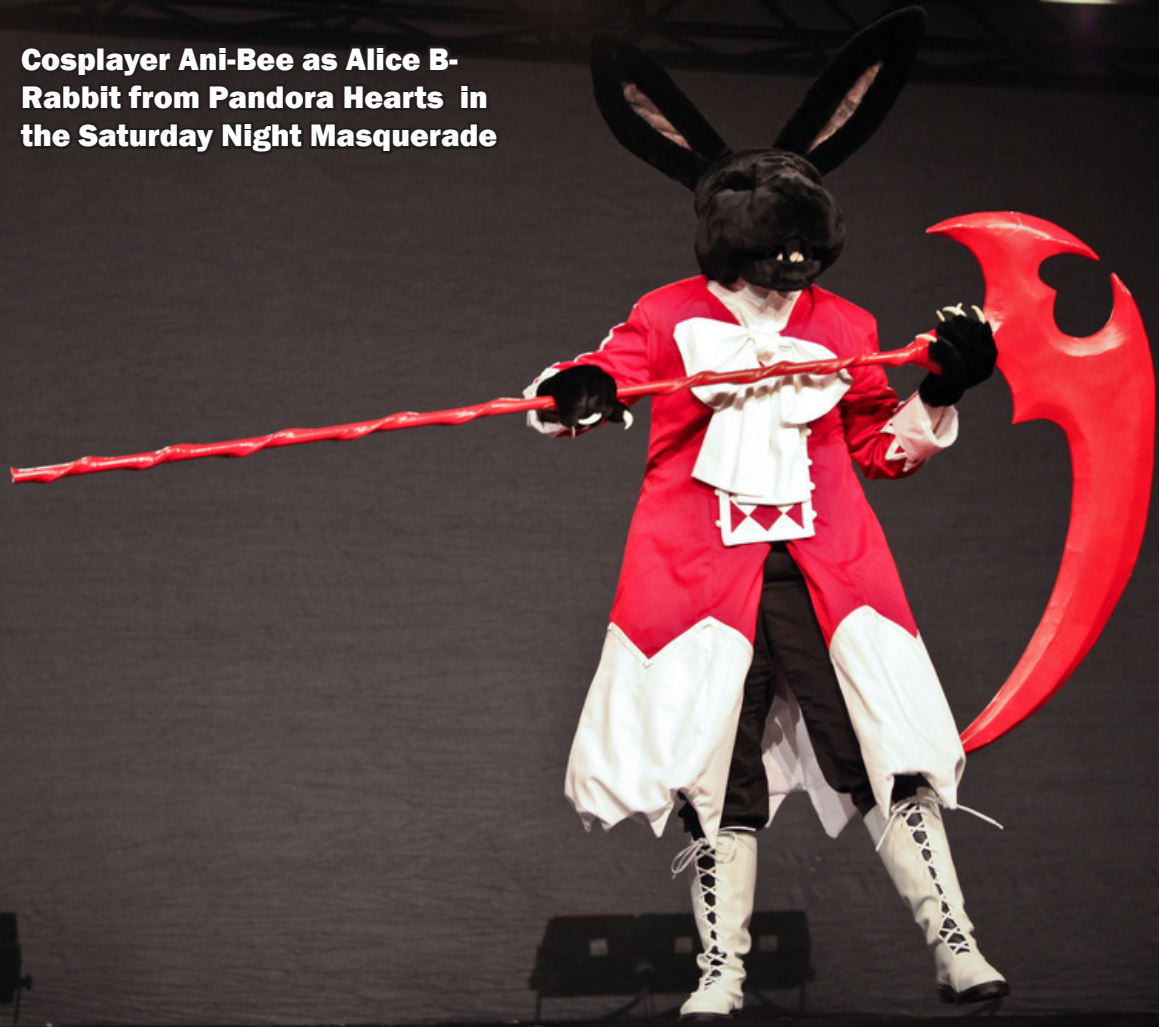
The Friday Night Skit Competition is an event for those who love to perform. It allows cosplayers a long time limit to sing, dance, or perform a long sketch of any type. Costumes can be either self made or purchased.

The Saturday Night Masquerade is the jewel in the crown of Anime North's costuming programming. It's a costume showcase where workmanship is extremely important. Unlike most Anime Conventions, Anime north welcomes more than just Anime or Manga costumes. Costumes based



Dynasty Warrior Cosplayers Sarah and Lindsay at the Saturday Night Masquerade

Cosplayer Ani-Bee as Alice B-Rabbit from Pandora Hearts in the Saturday Night Masquerade



Maid Café – Café Delish. For those who wish to experience the charming traditions of a Japanese style café such as those found in Akihabara, Café Delish fits the bill. The Maids at Café Delish, serve sweet cakes, and entertain the patrons with dancing and games, all while wearing their custom maid outfits designed and made by Café Director Jordan Smith. Patrons may get their photo with their favorite maid to take home. Many of Anime North's attendees attend the maid café dressed in costume themselves.



From Team Fortress 2, an Engineer sings an ode to his Sentry Gun.



on western media, Historical dress, J-Fashion, and original creations are all welcome as well. The masquerade follows ICG guidelines and uses the divisional system with great success. The participation rate is high, having upwards of 143 entries at one point. The competition is fierce. The masquerade is so popular with spectators you'll have to get a wristband in advance to guarantee getting a seat to watch the event live.

Café Delish Maids welcome you!



The Moonlight Masquerade Ball:

In addition to a traditional fandom dance, Anime North features a Masquerade Costume Ball known as The Moonlight Ball. Attendees create prom style costumes based on their favorite anime and manga characters, or dress to fit the theme of the year. (This years theme was Alice in Wonderland.) No costumer starves when feasting on the Ball's full buffet, and none go unfit after a night of court style dancing.

Kimono Fashion Show: For Kimono enthusiasts, Anime North hosts both a Kimono Fashion Show and a Large Kimono Display. A lover of traditional Japanese fashions may seek out one of

Anime North's well known kanzashi* artists such as Sarcasm-Hime. (*hand made,

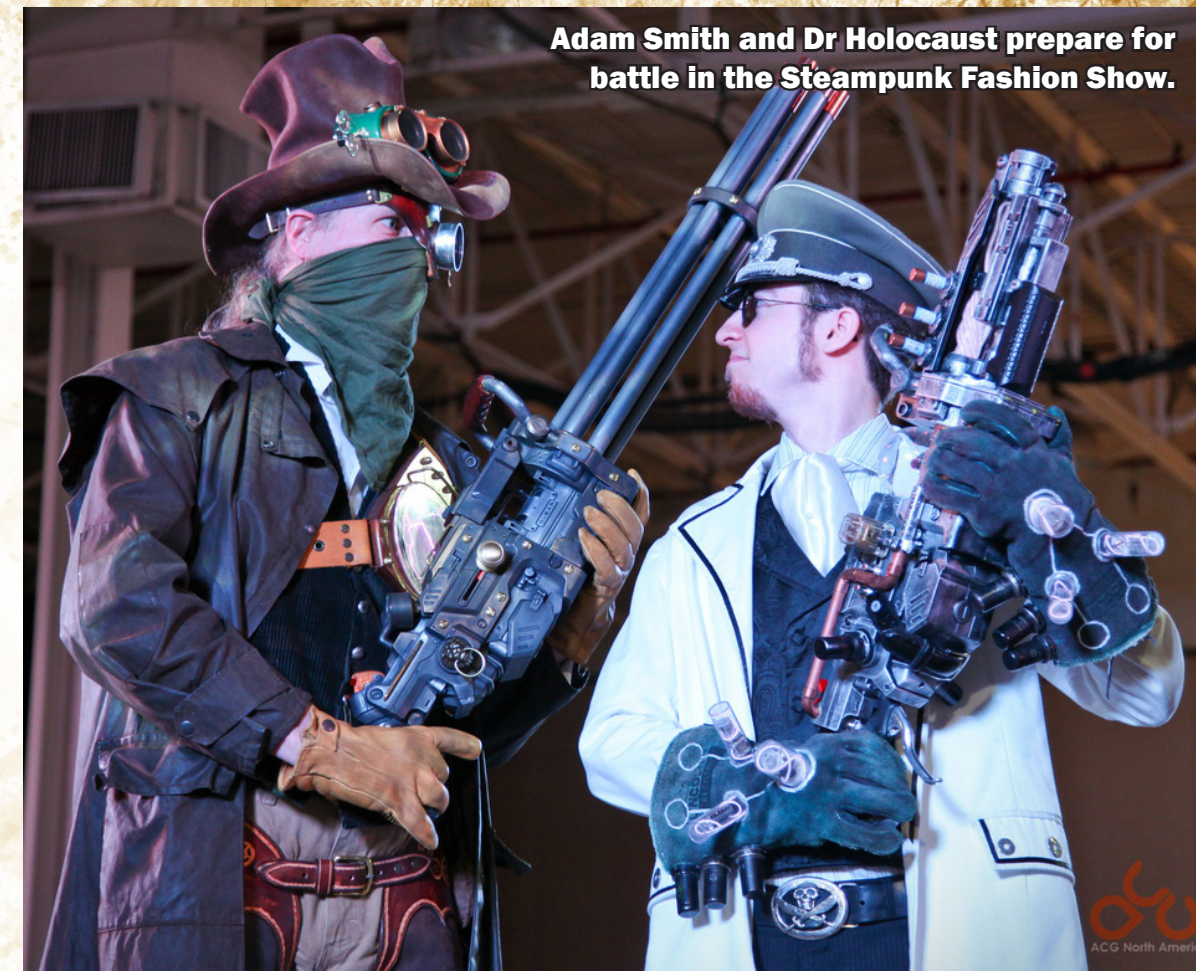


Steampunk Fashion Show

Recognizing the rising popularity of steampunk, and steampunk costuming, Anime North now hosts a steampunk fashion show.

Cosplay Chess.

The massive team effort it takes to coordinate a fully costumed thirty-five person human chess event is enormous. Fortunately the love the organizers and costumed participants have for the game and their subject matter, (the theme and costumes change from year to year), is immense.



Adam Smith and Dr Holocaust prepare for battle in the Steampunk Fashion Show.



A sampling of sweet lolitas gathered for the Lolita Tea Party.

folded, flower hair ornaments worn by Geisha and Maiko)

Lolita Teaparty: Girls and boys, (but mostly girls), in Lolita fashion of all types gather for the annual Lolita Tea Party. An abundant array of Lolita styles such as Sweet, Gothic, Aristocrat and Wa-loli to name a few, can be seen during anime north. For every girl dressed in Lolita, there is a photographer ready and willing to snap photos of the cute, doll-like ladies. During the weekend there is also a Lolita Fashion Show.



A sample of the costumed chess playing pieces in the human game of Cosplay Chess

Outdoor Rave

At the Otakubaloo outdoor rave, things are a swirl of light and colour and sound, as the attendees decked out in neon glow tubing, el wire, and dressed in a variety of colourful costumes, crazy clothes, and j-fashion dance the night away. And it doesn't stop there. Even DJ Selia the DJ from Japan is fully decked out in colourful costume while providing the tunage that makes Otakubaloo such a popular event.

It's impossible to convey the exciting, and fun atmosphere costumers experience at Anime North, or the astounding array of beautiful, comical and eye popping costumes that visit the convention over the weekend, but I hope this has given you a small sample of what one can experience in a visit to Canada's Largest Anime Convention.

Made in Japan – DJ Selia at Otakubaloo



Sheriff Don't Like It

by España Sheriff



You know what I hate? People who are younger, prettier and more talented than me. Which is pretty much Anime fandom in a nutshell; hordes of happy, adorably cute teenagers in brilliant costumes they made from scratch. Probably in between studying for their advance placement classes and volunteering at the local soup kitchen.

Or at least that's how it feels every year when I look around at the

Anime LA membership. The first time I attended, just a few short years ago, I had only a vague idea of what to expect. Of course, I knew the average attendee would be on the younger side, but mostly that translated in my brain as "No party floor, dammit!" I was familiar with certain aspects of the fandom from con reports, costuming and art websites or from things like Wondercon. But the sheer number of people in costume was

almost overwhelming and a real treat; from individuals cosplaying their favorite videogame character or just dressed in a specific fannish subculture fashion, to groups all doing one series, movie or manga, pretty much everyone seemed to be dressed up. I am a big believer in hall costuming as a vital form of fanac and there is no question cosplayers have that down cold.

One interesting result

of this is that one of the biggest activities at Anime cons seems to be taking and posing for pictures. Even compared to events with a similar ratio of costumed attendees like Steampunk cons, the anime crowd spends a lot of its time on photos. Any patch of grass is likely to be occupied from sunup to sundown with a stream of models. Which on the one hand I totally get wanting to have a good record of the hard work put into an outfit, and a lot of the photo galleries you can

find online are amazing; the costuming, modeling and photography-- all top notch. On the other hand, I sometimes wonder if it's a symptom of some degree of shallowness; are the kids who spend all day standing in front of cameras interested in the rest of their fandom at all? Are they the equivalent of the hipsters who go to clubs to be seen, have photos taken for their Facebook wall but don't really care about the band, dancing, or talking to their friends?

I suppose the answer is "Who cares?" There are plenty of Con-dom vs. Fan-dom discussions are general interest conventions as well, so, as long as everyone is having fun, the more the merrier I guess.

But back to the amazing costumes; A look at a website like cosplay.com will show you the incredible work that goes into some of these. A great deal of the source material for these costumes is extremely stylized, to the point where, if I had not seen



Pink dress and bunny ears, gloomy goth doll. This makes more sense when you read her blog.



It took three attempts to get a shot of these two eating their sandwiches out of character.

the costumes personally, I would have said it was unrealistic to do a recreation; long, flowing tresses that defy gravity and the structural limits of human hair, props and weapons that stand two or three times the height of the person wielding them, and clothing that was designed in a animated or drawn world of selective physics in which wardrobe malfunctions only exist for comedic effect.

But, somehow, these Cosplayers make it happen; wigs in highly unlikely colors are cut,

spiked, styled, and sprayed into drag queen-esque levels of artificiality. Styrofoam and paper mache are assembled into lightweight props that would otherwise be impossible to lift, much less carry, and the outer layers are worked on with such attention and care that even knowing the materials are faked up, it's hard to believe you're not looking at metal or stone.

The results are wonderful, and, although the Masquerade is a big part of the convention, the joy of running around in the

halls in full regalia seems to be half the point. Cosplay appears to me to be a social activity.

I remember walking the halls at the first ALA I attended and thinking how this fandom differs, at least from the outside, from the cliché of misunderstood outsiders that mainstream fans usually claim as their origin story. These kids all appeared to be healthy, highly social, and prettier than anyone in Nerdom has any right to be.

Am I exaggerating? Yeah, okay. Maybe a little

bit. There are certainly also a whole lot of slapped together Naruto costumes, and delicious moments of second-hand angst in the elevator when you are treated to snippets of drama, gossip, or the occasional full-on meltdown. And I'm sure some of the kids are no-goodniks who should be sent to military school, dammit.

And, to be fair, I am seeing them in their own environment, surrounded by their peers. But still, it was a great contrast to the combined 'Greying of Fandom' and 'Fannish Kids Are Few and Maladjusted' truisms that come up regularly in conversation most other cons I attend.



Sadly, this cosplayer's health insurance had no clause for spinal injury due to excessive hair mass.

España Sheriff spent three days running this fanzine lounge, and all she got was this stupid column.



Oxy-Gun & Origami

Being a mostly chronological non-mendacious personal reminiscence on the reccurent influence of J-pop in its various forms on your editor's life and artistic resume...

by Kevin J. Roche

Early Exposure

Bits and pieces of Japanese culture have been dropping into my life as long as I can remember. I think it all started with origami (the art of paper-folding). On several occasions after my parents had been away for a night in The City (San Francisco, for readers who are not Bay Area locals, is simply *The City* for the chunk of Northern California centered on San Francisco Bay), they returned with a gift of one of those books of simple origami designs complete with samples glued into the pages. My brother and I decoded the drawings (dashed lines for mountain folds, dotted for valley folds) and happily made origami flowers, fish and pigeons (which if you shifted the wing folds slightly could be

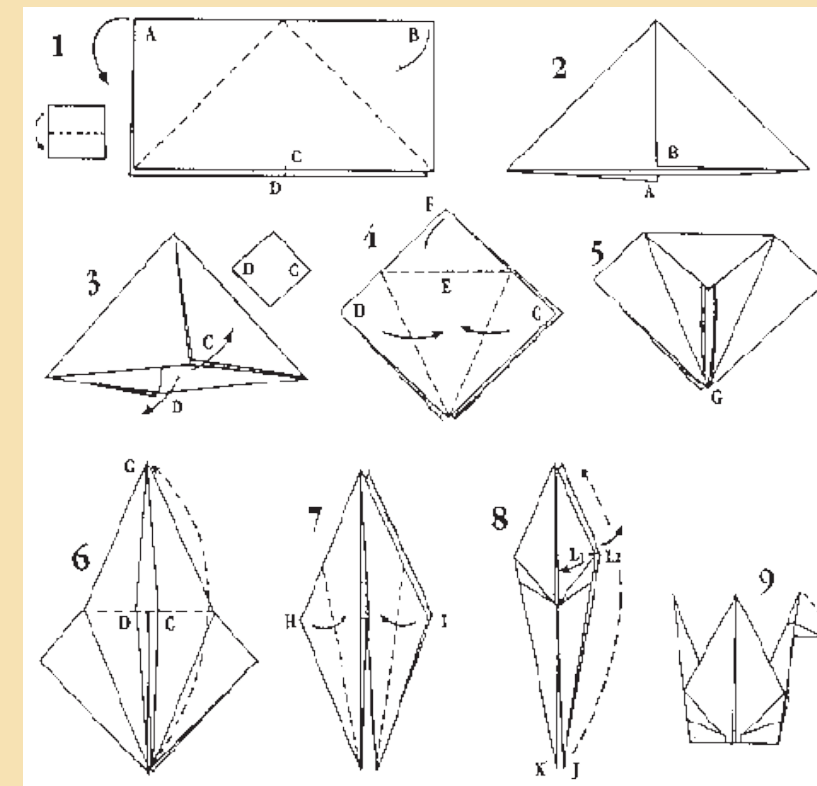


Figure 1 The Crane -- Note the all important G-spot to get from step 5 to step 6

occasionally be persuaded to fly), and puzzled over the more complicated designs crammed onto a single map-folded piece of paper in the back of the package of extra origami paper my parents were clever enough to buy.

Eventually, my civil engi-

neer father (I'm fairly sure it was he) figured out the cryptic drawings to get from step 5 to step 6 in the classical "crane base" for origami (see the figure.. the trick is realizing that you after doing the folds from step 4 to 5, you grab the top layer at point "G" and swing it up

and out; the creases you just made open and then refold to form the sides of that narrow diamond figure), and we were off again, creating fabulous birds and beasts galore. I still love origami, have successfully essayed some rather exotic designs including unicorns and octopi, and have even created a few designs of my own, notably a proper shamrock -- three broad flat leaves and a narrow stem, and paper models of the USS Enterprise and the Space Shuttle (which, rather like the poor origami pigeons, would *sort of* fly if properly weighted before launching them).

About the same time (1965, 1966) I acquired some new favorite afternoon shows. Today we would refer to them as anime, but back then they were just cartoons. Ah, but

what cartoons! *Astro Boy*, *Marine Boy*, and *8 Man* (or *Tobor, the Eighth Man*, depending which title you were reading) were my new heroes. A little later I found out about *Speed Racer* and *Kimba, the White Lion*. I watched them all, but while my friends loved the high-speed adventure of *Speed Racer*, I was hooked by those first three.

In hindsight, it's painfully

obvious why... I was a tiny boy, and smart, and everybody was bigger than me. *Astro Boy* and *Marine Boy* were heroes, but they were drawn as *boys*, smaller than everyone around them. *Marine Boy* also had his way-

cool-super-secret *Oxy-Gum* which let him stay underwater as long as he liked (well, as long as he always had another stick handy in his utility belt), which to a tiny boy who was much better at sinking than at even dog-paddling, seemed like the perfectly obvious solution to a problem. In hindsight, I'm not sure exactly how one could *actually* succeed at chewing one's gum while battling monsters, greedy marine exploitation-ists, riding one's best-friend dolphin and delivering cheesy dubbed action-adventure dialog all at the same time, but it made perfect sense at the time. (*Marine Boy* and *Astro Boy* also had the very definite advantage that they were not SCARY like that creepy fanged Angelique on

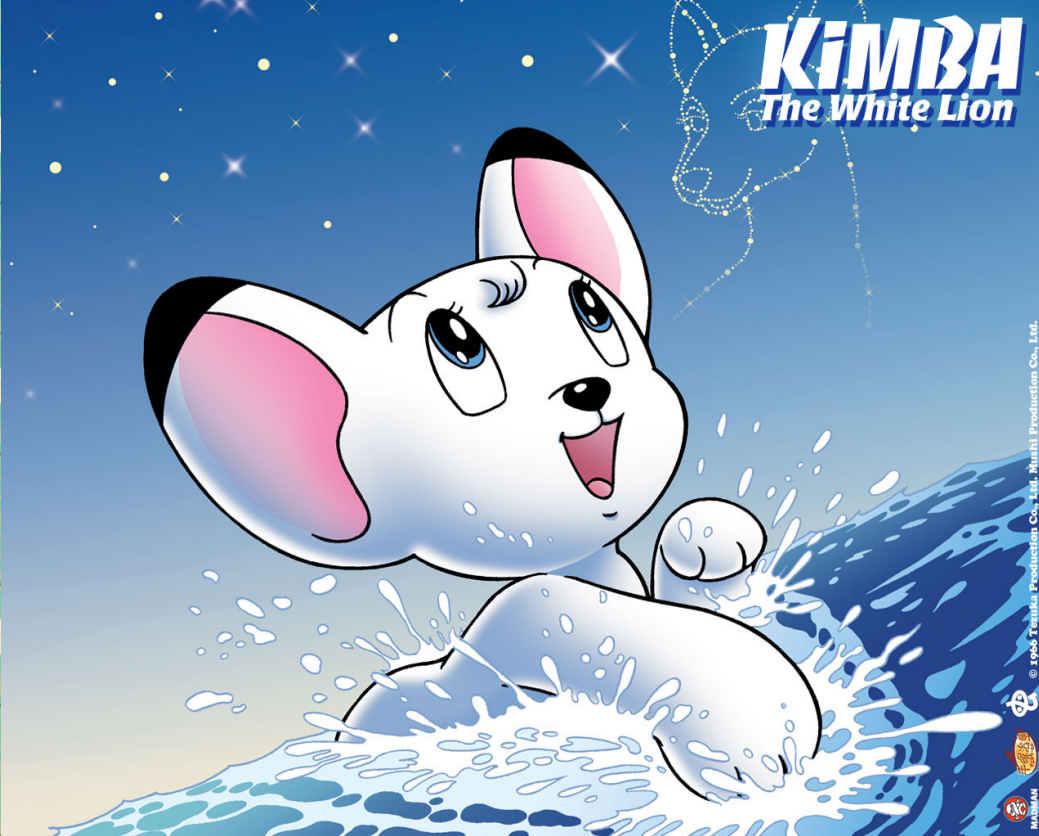
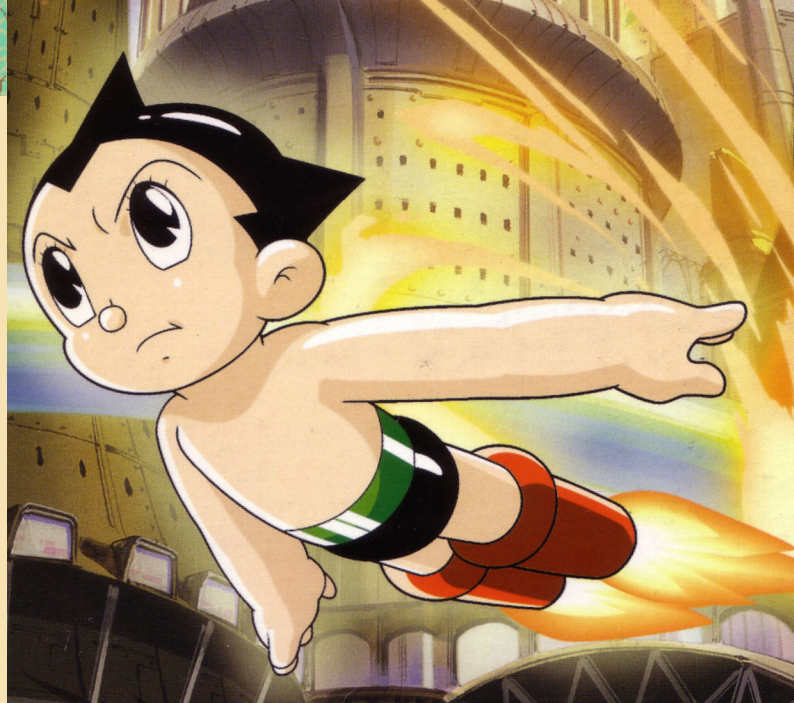
my babysitter's favorite afternoon drama, *Dark Shadows*. She gave me nightmares for years.)

How, you may ask, does any of this relate to costuming? At the time (in 1965, I was 5 years old), my idea of a costume was paper bag masks, or, more likely, wearing only the hood of my jacket tied on and running around with it as a cape to fly as Superman. In 1966 the stable expanded to include Batman (his costume was way more cool than Robin's).

Ah – but one of the keys to my early heroes was that they (or their costumes) could *transform*. *Astroboy's* feet turned into rocket boosters. *Marine Boy's*

wetsuit boots extruded swim fins when he clicked his heels together, and had “hyper-powered propeller packs” in the heels when he needed to go fast. And then there was Tobor, the Eighth Man. A murdered detective whose consciousness had been transferred to an ultra-secret android robot, *he could change his entire appearance by simply thinking about it*. If only costuming were that simple!

Flash forward a couple of years and we are now getting a show that begins with wonderful exotic creaking percussion effects as two whorls of paint slowly untwist to reveal... *Ultra Man*. The adventures of Hayata





sue). I was doing all sorts of fantasy and SF costumes, but there *were* a couple of Japanese-inspired pieces tucked in there: at Costume-Con 3 (1985) I entered a the historical masquerade with a kabuki costume: Princess Takeyashi (from *The Demon Princess*). In 1993 I entered the Confrancisco (51st World Science Fiction Convention) with a set of origami-folded **paper** costumes entitled *From the Folded Universe*, which effected kabuki-style transformations while on stage (a dragon with captive maiden became a helmed prince with princess in bridal kimono, all made from folded paper). We

and the Science Patrol were the beginning of my real love affair with kaiju and cheesy miniature effects. My husband Andy Trembley can lay the blame on *Ultraman* for my voracious consumption (and collection) of Gojira (Godzilla), Mosura (Mothra), Gamera, and other actors-in-rubber-suits-stomping-on-miniature-cities films. The Abominable Snow Monster from Rankin-Bass? Terrifying with all those fangs. Giant Lobster-Men from Space? Not a problem.

Eventually, I learned why Japanese actors voices never seemed to match what they appeared to be saying, but it didn't matter, this was still fun. (I will say that while still cheesy, those shows and

films are *way* more entertaining these days with English subtitles and the original language soundtrack)

Spreading the Infection

In high school and college, while I was aware of other animated series from Japan, none of them made a tremendous impression on me... this was the time of Star Wars. Just after college, however, a new wave of Japanimation arrived. I vaguely registered its existence (my friend Karen, on the other hand was doing amazing StarBlazers and Space Battleship Yamato costume, as she talked about earlier in the is-

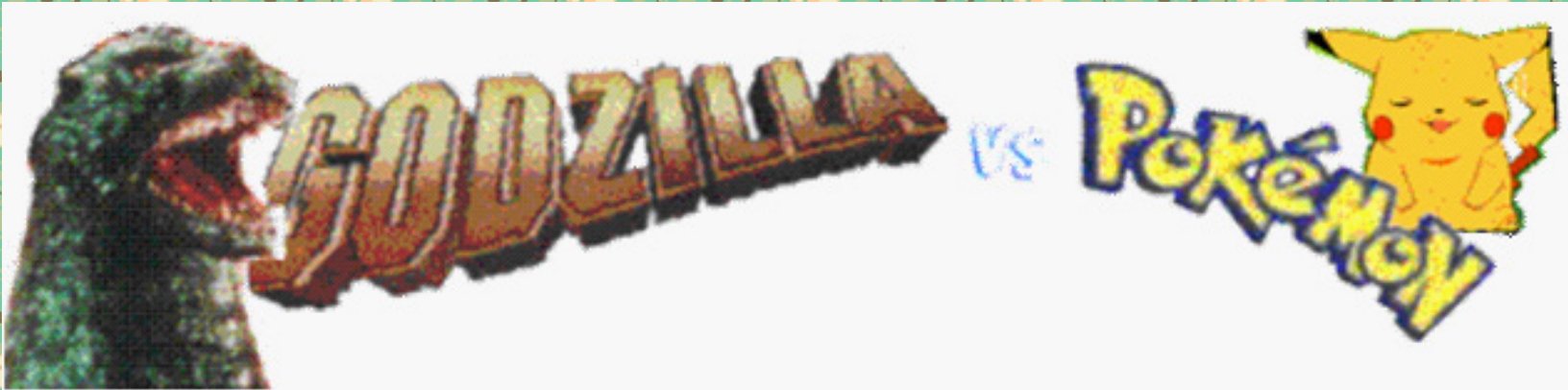


Figure 2: *Lost in Space -- The Regeneration*
It doesn't get any prettier at higher resolution



won that year's CostumeApa award for our efforts.

And then came Robotech, which all my friends went mad for, but I found just plain confusing. Fortunately, more and more films and series were becoming available for view (and folks also began referring to it as *anime* rather than *Japanimation*). I wandered into a convention video room one day and watched, jaw agape, the opening episode of *Ranma ½*. After exhausting Robotech, KTEH, our local PBS station, started broadcasting other anime, including several OAV (Original Animated Video) productions and one of the *Tenchi Muyo!* serials. Some time in there Jennifer Tifft and I did an entry at the Baycon masquerade with designs informed by (yes, really) Anime, *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, *Dr. Who* and *Lost In Space*. As I recall, the design brief for *Lost in Space: The Regeneration* entailed "color combinations not found in nature, spandex, asymmetric construction, and horrific puns." In addition, my uniform was designed to be hot-tub compatible as soon as I shed my boots. Fortunately for the reader, I have only one grainy snapshot of the result.



And then, in 1998, I met (my future husband) Andy. *He* was definitely an anime fan. While trapped by a New Year's blizzard at his house in Milwaukee, we watched a marathon of *Ranma ½*. And *Here is Greenwood*. Then he introduced me to the whacki-



ness that is the multiple retellings of *Tenchi Muyo!* and I learned what OAV means.

In 1999, Andy moved here to the SF Bay Area and our anime insanity truly began. That year Karen Tully, Andy and I actually organized a Japanese pop-culture Halloween party: *Godilla vs Pokemon* (with the gracious co-conspiracy of friends who owned an atrium Eichler home with a pool). It featured Speed Racer and the Mach 5 in the carport, one giant Gojira looming over the entrance atrium (arriving guests being ably defended by Pikachu; the fog colume was a good 40 feet tall), a second Gojira surfacing in the pool behind a miniature tug towing a glowing Mosura egg, and a third relentlessly encroaching on the miniature downtown (through which guests were invited to rampage and be caught on film), while Gamera and Mosura flew overhead and miniature (plastic) jetfight-



ers pursued them futilely. A few snapshots from said party are included here, the rest are still available for view at <http://www.twistedimage.com/productions/halloween>.

Andy came as a faceless alien ambassador. Karen and I came as the Cosmos Twins (from the *Mosura* remake), with costumes that, regrettably, define the color "screaming pink," and matching page-boy wigs that, if we had any sense, we would have burned as soon as we looked in a mirror. Team Rocket from Poke-

mon arrived, as did a pair of Agents from the Matrix. Darth Maul and Boba Fett destroyed downtown with relish, as did a truly frightening Killer Clown. In the end, when the votes were tallied, Pikachu won the day, which is only fitting, as the young lady in the Pikachu costume, the 3 year old daughter of our hosts, was the *only* creature who remembered to move the civilians out of harms way before stomping on downtown.

Andy had brought his anime collection and we added to it, including numerous aspects of the *Tenchi Muyo!* universe (I still want to make some of the Jurai court costumes with the levitating arm-bands), an unexpurgated set of *Sailor Moon!*, and a complete box set of *Super Dimension Fortress Macross*. (I know also understood why Robotech made no sense – it had been hacked together from several Macross stories to tell a completely different adventure.) We now have the better part of a wall covered with various and sundry anime titles, far more than I care to detail, but here are a couple suggestions: if you like quirky and offbeat, check out *Haunted Junction*,



if you like surreal and funny, try *Excel Saga* (and be sure to run it with the pop-ups enabled).

In August 2002, Andy and I were workmanship judges at ConJose, the 60th World-

con masquerade. Among the awards we presented was one to Karisu for "Excellence in Attention to Detail" for the propwork on her family's costumes (recreations from a video game). That introduction led to a strong friend-



ship between our two families, and a now (occasionally mind-bogglingly) huge circle of cosplaying friends.

In October of that year, Andy persuaded me to attend Yaoi-Con, at which I first experienced the awesome power of 300 fangrrls squeezing simultaneously when the boy/boy couple they've been waiting for first appears on screen. I'm not sure my high-frequency hearing has ever recovered. If you have never been exposed to it, yaoi -- which

stands for **Yama** nashi, **ochi** nashi, **imi** nashi "No climax, no point, no meaning" -- is a phenomenon not unlike slash fan fiction, which started with fans (mostly young women) creating their own comics (*dōjinshi*) romantically pairing male characters, sometimes from completely independent manga or anime sources. There are also now professionally made manga and anime which fit into this genre. While there is plenty of hot bedroom tension, in general yaoi tends to a romantic

fantasy of "boy's love" rather than the gritty reality (more or less) and messy plumbing of porn created for gay men.

YaoiCon skews to a mostly female demographic (with its attendant high-amplitude high-frequency squeezing). It also includes a recruited troupe of *bishōnen* (beautiful boys) to add to the fun. (And, for the record, all the "bishies" at YaoiCon are actually too old to actually qualify as *bishōnen*, but they play the part gamely). This means

that in addition to lots of anime cosplay, there's appreciation for beefcake costuming there; my JungleBoy costume was quite well received; however we did make a point of making sure he always had a handler to keep the more exuberant fans at arms distance. We still visit YaoiCon most years; recently we've noticed an influx of young straight men who've figured out the demographics might stack the odds in their favor for meeting girls.

In 2003, I built an Ultraman-inspired costume for a stage fantasy production in which a space hero and a turtle-backed villain Chudwadon (recycling the Gamera hell from the party) battled through a miniature cityscape (also recycled from the party). It was an epic battle, although it really *was* a shame what happened to Tokyo Tower. Sorry, no photos, unless I can find where I hid that album.

In 2006 and again in 2007 we ran the cosplay competition (masquerade) for Anime Los Angeles. By this time I was seeing lots more anime, video-game and J-pop inspired costumes show up at general science fiction conventions, and had been involved in nu-



merous cosplay vs costumer discussions, both at conventions and online. In 2006, in fact, the Best in Show award at WorldCon was given to a HCC Cosplay, a group recreating costumes from the *Trinity Blood* anime.

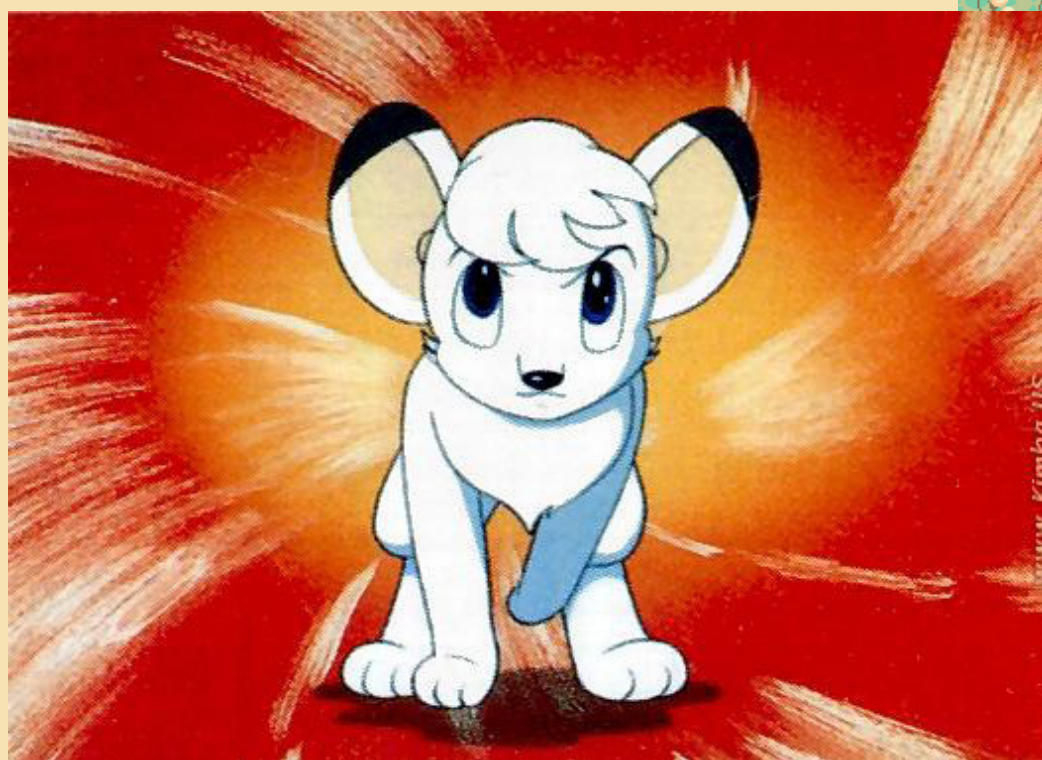
In the final year before Costume-Con 26, Andy started

studying historical Japanese garments, culminating in our creation of very accurate plaid (yes, plaid!) Edo-period kataginu kamashimo, which we wore to the PEERS *Mikado Ball*. The end result was making another fabulous new friend, Lisa, who adopts a Japanese persona at SCA events. We proceeded to cre-



ate mediaeval versions of the kataginu so we could go picnic with her at them occasionally.

I watch a lot less anime these days, but I see plenty of amazing Japanese pop culture-inspired costumes and cosplay on display at conventions. Perhaps it is time to go re-view *Tenchi Muyo!* and build that Jurai court costume....



YOU DAMN KIDS

Being a bitter and half-drunken tirade against bitter fandom
by Jason Schachat



“The Graying of Fandom.” This is a term we’ve tossed around for a while, now. It seems like every day sees it used more and more. You go to a major science fiction convention, and the majority of attendees are middle aged or better. Younger fans are usually the demented offspring of said attendees (a traditional truism) and to a greater degree than ever before.

Any time you have an age gap of twenty years at a con, you know you’re not reaching out to every generation.

But I think this gets to my problem with the arguments that fandom is getting older and no new fans have risen from the ashes of prior generations. I realize that I, myself, can be considered a younger fan, but this seems like the worst possible hyperbole to describe the present situation. The problem isn’t that fandom’s getting old. The problem is that old fandom has rejected young fandom.

A bold statement, true, but let’s stand firmly behind it before riddling it with bullets. Young fans are out there. There are far more of them than ‘the rest of us’. The problem isn’t that they don’t have any interest in science fiction and fantasy. The problem is fandom’s shown little interest



**J-Pop is not Filk.
This is a bad thing?**

in them.

I'll grant some of this stems from feelings running between "The college kids keep sneaking drinks to their friends" and "You kids get off my lawn!" Humans, by our very survival instincts, like to separate things into categories, and younger people tend to be more energetic yet less organized/organizable than their elders. They have less invested in the world they inhabit, and thus can't

be trusted to treat it with the respect it deserves.

On the other hand, we ain't getting any younger. So, it really doesn't matter if we don't entirely respect the opinions of future generations as long as there are, in fact, future generations willing to carry on any part of our beloved traditions. Modern rockabilly shows may not match the ones in the '50's, but at least they're keeping the music alive.

The debates we have in science fiction fandom are legion, but a big one seeming to separate 'young' from 'old' is the place where anime belongs. Classic fandom has had many reactions to the phenomenon of anime. Some say it's nothing more than a passing fancy. Others argue the term 'anime' is too general (allowing non-Sci Fi/non-Fantasy into the scene). But more people made a case it's a common

interest of SF fans and thus deserved a place in their convention (that place often being a dark midnight screening room tucked away in a far corner of the hotel.)

Thus, anime fans were treated like juvenile delinquents and second class citizens, not to be trusted with the lineage of fandom because they 'just don't get it'.

But a truly terrible thing happened, at one point. Some of those repressed anime fans grew up. And some of them decided to start anime conventions of their own. And some of those anime conventions make WorldCon look like the saddest little Tupperware party in the history of leftovers.

Sure, size isn't everything *snicker*, but even the most agoraphobic, mouth-breathing neckbeard would agree they want to be at the biggest and best convention out there. And they back this up by flocking to the growing anime conventions, leaving behind the science fiction conventions where 'old people' relegate 20-year old anime to the basement level.

Now, before we go too far painting the anime fans as repressed young revolutionaries boldly leading us into the future of fandom, let's



**Any costume theme that embarrasses
neither boyfriend nor girlfriend has
something going for it.**

not forget much of their scene is built on the idea of getting away from their parents, being cool, and celebrating their youth. We

can pretty much guarantee, when the next big thing comes along, anime conventions will themselves become grey, somber affairs adults

A grown-up cosplaying a little boy whose soul is bound to a giant suit of armor. And really well, at that.



drag rebellious children to.

So we have to look at ourselves and ask if this is the way things are doomed to be. One generation will rise up as the other fades away, old traditions dying as new ones blossom.

Nope, I don't buy it.

We've seen 'corporate cons' attract new generations of fandom decade after decade. It's clearly not about old and young refusing to find a happy medium. You just need to give them a reason to be there. It could be the announcement of the latest superhero film or a demo of a new video game, sure. Then again, it could just be a picturesque area for Cosplayers to pose. Dozens of screening rooms for anime and classic Sci Fi alike. Manga sellers in the Dealers Room.

And I know people will say we've done this all before. Attempts have been made, olive branches offered. The kids, they just don't like us.

But that's ultimately where negotiations break down. "Kids." What's the best way to piss off a teenager and convince them they have no say in what's going on? Set up events for 'kids'. Make it look like a place where they're being babysat. Re-

mind them, whenever possible, they're not on the same level as the rest of us.

Even worse, consider that many of those teenagers are now adults.

We then have the other argument: Anime is not "Sci Fi." Well, neither is Lord of the Rings, but we made room for Fantasy. And, sure, Harry Potter is kid stuff, but it's our kind of kid stuff, so that can come along, too. Oh, and The Prisoner is pretty weird and British and cult, so why not?

The counter to this is that anime is a medium, not a genre. Not all anime is fantastical, futuristic, or mind-expanding. Very true. However, the anime popular in the West is exceptionally fantastical, futuristic, and mind-expanding. So much so, various series which failed to capture an audience in Japan have been renewed based solely on their popularity in America.

Should fandom celebrate all anime in existence? Of course not. That's like saying we need to welcome all television and movie genres into our tent. But to say we can't celebrate this massive outpouring of Sci Fi and Fantasy just because it's animated is ridiculous.

The dark side of anime fandom: useless novelties and nauseatingly adorable plush toys.



Consider American television and how much Sci Fi is made for it every year. Pathetically small amount,

no? It's gotten so bad, SyFy mostly runs reality TV to cut costs and boost ratings. Now, consider what's com-

ing out of Japan. Sure, you have lots of kid's TV in anime form, but the amount of full blown Sci Fi and Fantasy is staggering. If you just add up the number of Sci Fi/Fantasy anime getting their first runs on Cartoon Network, SyFy, and IFC, you quickly find American production being left far behind.

So, once we establish that anime's as prolific and competent as what's made for American TV (not the most shocking accomplishment, granted), the final point we must consider is, well, does everyone like it?

Oh, not on your life.

Tons of fans despise it. The humor, the cultural references, the limited production value, the art design choices, the stilted dialogue, the portrayal of female characters, the glorification of violence. There is so very, very much to hate about anime. You either like it, or you don't.

Then again, do all of us like the writings of Robert Heinlein? How many among us have read more than one book by Ursula K. Le Guin? Is classic Star Trek free of the problems with anime I just listed? Is it free of ANY of them?

See, it's easy for us to be

fans. Being a fan is loving something to the point you're proud to shout it out to the world. But being fandom? That's something bigger. That's more than any one person's likes or dislikes. Fandom is about all of us celebrating the fantastical, futuristic, and mind-expanding. Fandom is a big tent

that stays standing because more of us are willing to say 'yes' than 'no'.

Fandom is books, movies, television, comics, anime, video games, virtual worlds, and whatever else is lurking around the corner of the next decade. If we decide to close the doors to anime, we're

making ourselves smaller for no good reason. Do you have to love it? Do you have to like it? No, not really. But accept that it's there and stands for the same principles as what you do love. That is the future of Science Fiction and Fantasy. It should be the future of fandom as well.



Yes, these Street Fighter cosplayers wearing Christmas ornaments is completely intentional.



You were raised on Superman.
Your kids were raised on Avatar.
Deal with it.

Ohana TyeDye
Photography

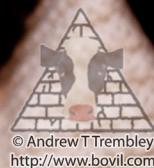
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johnno@tyedye.org



10

Questions for a Costumer

by Mette Hedin



#5 - Mea

Who doesn't love a girl in armor? MariEllen Cottman, also known as Mea, is one of those female costumers who proves the ladies can kick ass in hardware. In less than 10 years, she has made a rapid development from her first ever costume to a varied and impressive costume armory, mainly specializing in anime and video game characters. Her contagious enthusiasm and love of the art of costuming is readily apparent in her bright and vivid creations, but don't let the deceivingly cheerful colors of her armors fool you: her Cosplay personas are all badass!

1. Q: What was your first costume?

A: The first costume I made was a Super Saiyan from Dragon Ball Z. It seemed easy enough to make for Halloween. I bought parts from a thrift store and made a chest piece out of plaster cast wrap. It was what I could fairly easily make while I was in college. Halloween of 2001. I had worn other costumes before, but that was the first costume I made and went out of my way to not get at a store

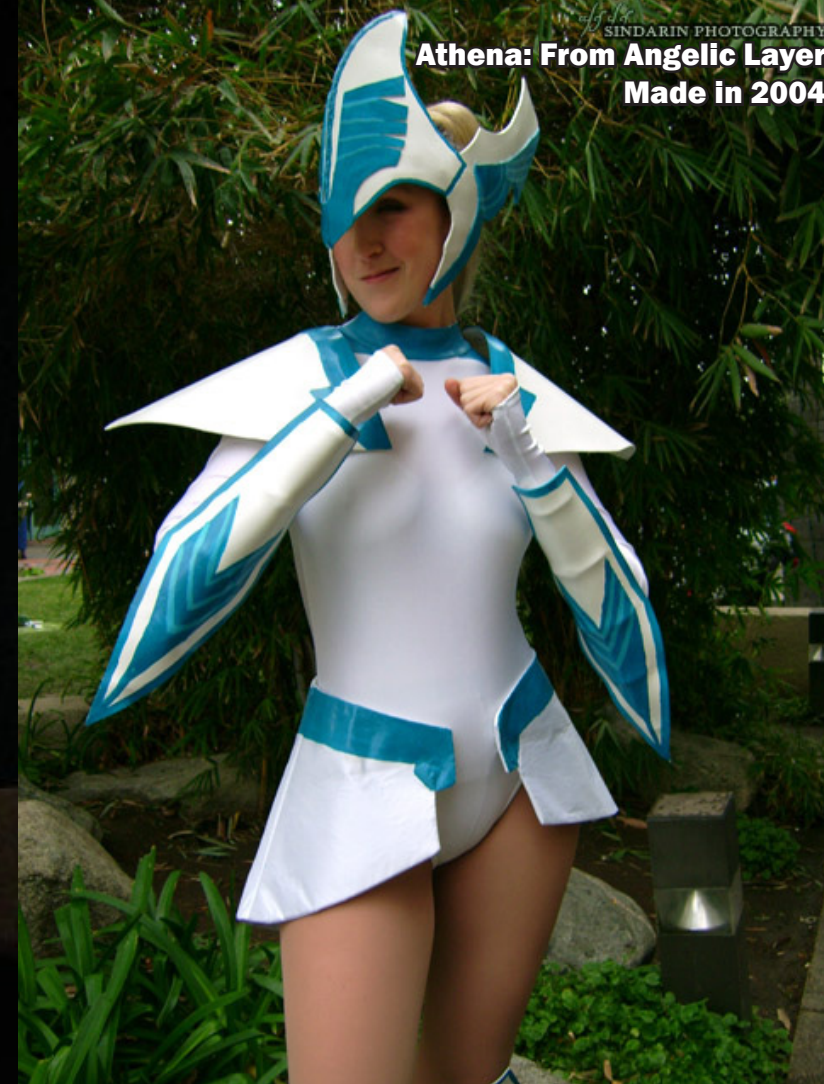
2. Q: Costumer or Cosplayer?

A: Cosplayer, definitely, because that is really what got me into costuming. I associate with both terms, but because I started doing costuming and I knew it as Cosplay, that is the term I most associate with what I do. I don't make the big distinction other people do. It's just the term I have always used for it. I started costuming at anime conventions, and that is what they were calling it.

3. Q: Do you work on things for a deadline or year round?

A: Generally speaking, I usually pick a convention to wear a costume at and pick a costume. Usually, it is really far out because I work slowly. I don't concentrate on it as intensively as other people I know, so I tend to pick things that keep me working on a costume for about 6 months. Kain from Final Fantasy took me 8 months. That is the longest I have worked on one costume. It was for Costume-Con and was specifically picked for that convention. I will typically spend half an hour before I go to bed, so a





costume is a long term project for me.

4. Q: Recreation or Original?

A: Most often recreation because that is how I got started with costumes, making anime costumes or video game costumes. I have kind of started toying with doing my own original stuff, but it has mostly just resulted in sketches, so far. Most of it would be painful to actually accomplish. Maybe, when I get better at sewing, I'll go back and make some of them.

5. Q: What is your favorite material right now?

A: I am really digging Wonderflex. It's like craft foam but even better. I started most of my costume building doing armor because I didn't own a sewing machine, so I started playing with craft foam with wire supports. Wonderflex is even better because it will hold its shape without the wire support. It is so good that my new secret costume is almost entirely made of Wonderflex.

6. Q: Loner or Collaborator?

A: Most of my stuff has been loner. I want to do more collaborations because I think there's a lot of awesome costumers out there who have skills I don't have. I recently did collaboration on a set of final fantasy costumes. A friend of mine did all the fabric work, and I did all the armor, so it was a nice trade to do, and it was a lot of fun. I find that my taste in costumes doesn't tend to align with most of my friends in the costuming world, so I end up working on my own on most things. I am planning to do some collaborations coming up, but I haven't done any big ones, so I don't know how it would work. It takes me so long to do anything whereas many of my friends work a lot closer to the deadline, so I just haven't had as much opportunity to collaborate as I would like to.

7. Q: Has a costume ever brought you to tears?

A: Yes, definitely. A couple of them. The Citizen of Oz costume I made had me bawling my eyes out and screaming as I threw the costume across the room. I hadn't worked with the fabric before, and I wasn't a seamstress. The pieces were fraying apart after hours and hours of attaching ruffles. The seams were just pulling apart where I had done all this ruffle work, so I couldn't go back and re-sew the seams. My friend Chris rescued me by finding a solution where I could steam all the seams together so they couldn't shift. That costume was a big stretch for me because I don't sew normally, but I managed to finish it.



8. Q: What costume are you the proudest of?

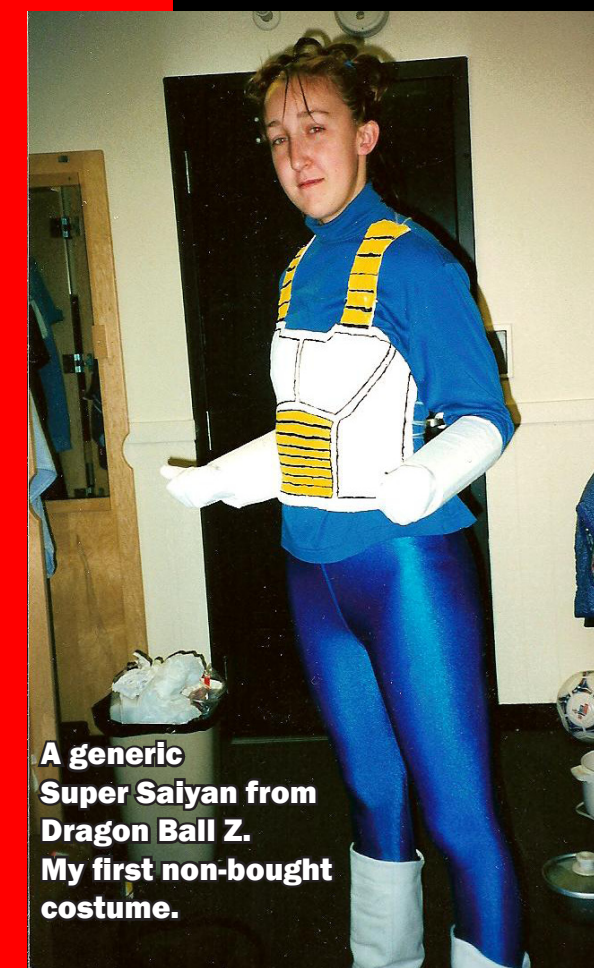
A: I would have to say Kane, because I felt like I really learned a whole lot doing that one, and I was very proud of it. It was a lot of work over 8 months, and I learned how to do fiberglass, oil based clay carving, silicone, etc. I bought a bunch of power tools and taught myself how to use them. I taught myself a lot of techniques. I would love to still be able to wear it but I can't. I wish I had gotten more opportunities to wear it, but at the same time it is pretty impractical because it is full fantasy armor.

9. Q: Historical or Science Fiction/Fantasy?

A: Definitely Science Fiction/Fantasy. I totally respect historical costumers, but I have yet to find a time period that thrills and inspires me, and I find a lot more of that in fantasy and science fiction. I love the challenge of the outlandish costumes. Maybe I need to look at non-18th century European costumes and maybe I'll get more inspiration to do historical costuming.

10. Q: Anime shows or video games?

A: I personally tend to lean towards video games, but that is because I play more games than the amount of anime I currently watch. I pick whatever I like to wear from whatever source I like. That can be science fiction, fantasy, anime, video games, stage shows. I tend to play a lot of fantasy RPGs, and I like the fantastic armor, so that is what I make!



Letter from the Other Editor

Send all complaints to:
Kevin@yipezine.com

We've wanted to do an anime-themed issue of *Yipe!* for months, and I'm very pleased we can offer this perhaps somewhat hefty tome to you in September. After whining at nagging suggesting numerous times to some highly qualified acquaintances that they might contribute an article about their experiences with anime/Japanimation/videogaming costume/cosplay/emodrama, I'm thrilled it all came to fruition with such an assortment of viewpoints. Realizing that I had some experience to bring to bear didn't hurt, either, even if it was as Ye Olde Farte who watched early Japanese animation in black and white.

As the contributions started to arrive, I began to suspect this issue might be as big as our Steampunk issue, and joked to our editorial staff that perhaps it would be a MegaMechaManga issue. I then realized that sounded like a character in its own right, and Maureen Starkey graciously

offered up her sketch of that valiant defender of otaku everywhere. (I made my own feeble attempt at a sketch, but hers blows mine out of the water, so you won't be subjected to it).

September is my birthday month (I turn the big five-o on the 15th, the day before we leave for FenCon in Dallas), so I'm especially glad we could produce a more substantial issue of *Yipe!* this month. I'm sure that Jason, once he recovers from the enormous task of pulling all this together into a coherent and cohesive layout, would agree. Who knows? Now that the floodgates have opened, we might manage a recurrent if regularly scheduled anime issue. The cosplayers are certainly active enough.

Regular contributor Mette Hedin also went to the Bay Area Gay Rodeo last month,



and we met some very interesting people we hope to bring to the pages of *Yipe!* in the near future. We also have some articles in the pipe on several historical costume events.

Aussiecon IV will be over by the time this is published, which means Renovation (<http://www.renovationsf.org>) is now the seated WorldCon. Andy and I are directing the Renovation masquerade, so you can expect regular updates from me about that. I'll try not to be boring. I may be in the air en route to Dallas even as you read this, so you can also look for my con report from FenCon as Fan GOH in the near future.

Next month *Yipe!* turns one... The editorial

staff, of course, is deep into its evil plans to celebrate. If you want to help, SEND US STUFF! Photos, articles (short or long, about conventions or balls or dinners or picnics or newt-wrestling or how-to's or fashion research or ...), art, poetry, it's all good. The more we have, the more we can share with our readers, and the less likely Jason is to chain me to a workstation until I cough up 5700 words on specialized Etruscan weaving techniques and how best to simulate them on a needle felter in time to wear a *tebenna* to the Black&White Ball. Drop a note to editors@yipezine.com if you have something to share. We use a web-based drop box (at box.net) for large articles and photos, so don't worry about having to get them past a spam filter, just drop us a note about what you'd like to share. We'll take it from there.

Now get out there, put on something fabulous, and then tell us about it!

Kevin
(it's still all my fault)

Kudos and brickbats to Kevin@yipezine.com

Admittedly, replacing the battery costs so much, you might as well just build a new one.





Dear Jason and Kevin:

Welcome to summer's home stretch, the last third of the year, and for me, the job market is starting to improve as student start to go back to school. All of this has nothing to do with the fact that I have two issues of Yipe! to respond to. I've got Vol. 2, Nos. 7 and 8.

Vol. 2 No. 7...I thought dregs were the last foods and drinks (and fans) left over at the end of a dead dog party. The staff picture of Jason looks like he's been in a fight, and lost.

Jason: That issue beat me within an inch of my life.

When we were winding down our costuming career back in

the late 80s, we worked the stage, backstage and dressing room, and there was still too much drama and personal empire building. Still, being a stage ninja was fun, and people appreciated the fact that they would need help off the stage, especially if their vision was burred with a costume piece or headpiece. Most of our small hotels used for conventions have shallow risers about a foot or so tall, so the stage ninjas usually wind up looking after the electronics of recording the performance, lighting and making sure that people are ready to go out in the assigned order.

Kevin: One of the things I'm really looking forward

to as director of the 2011 WorldCon masquerade is the use of the Tuscany ballroom. The ceilings are 25' *under the chandeliers*, and I have a 13' ceiling in the green room! It also means we have a 40'x60' 4 foot tall riser on which to build our set (the usable area for contestants will probably be about ¼ of the total square footage). We also seem to have a hotel whose AV department is actually *excited* about the Masquerade and Hugos being held at their property.

(This past weekend, Yvonne and I took part in yet another steampunk fashion show at the Fan eXpo, which is becoming Toronto's version of the San Diego Comicon, with what is estimated to



be over 70,000 people in attendance. Our team saved the masquerade because we had the equipment to

record the masquerade while the convention centre team screwed up royally. And, I had to be stage ninja for a couple

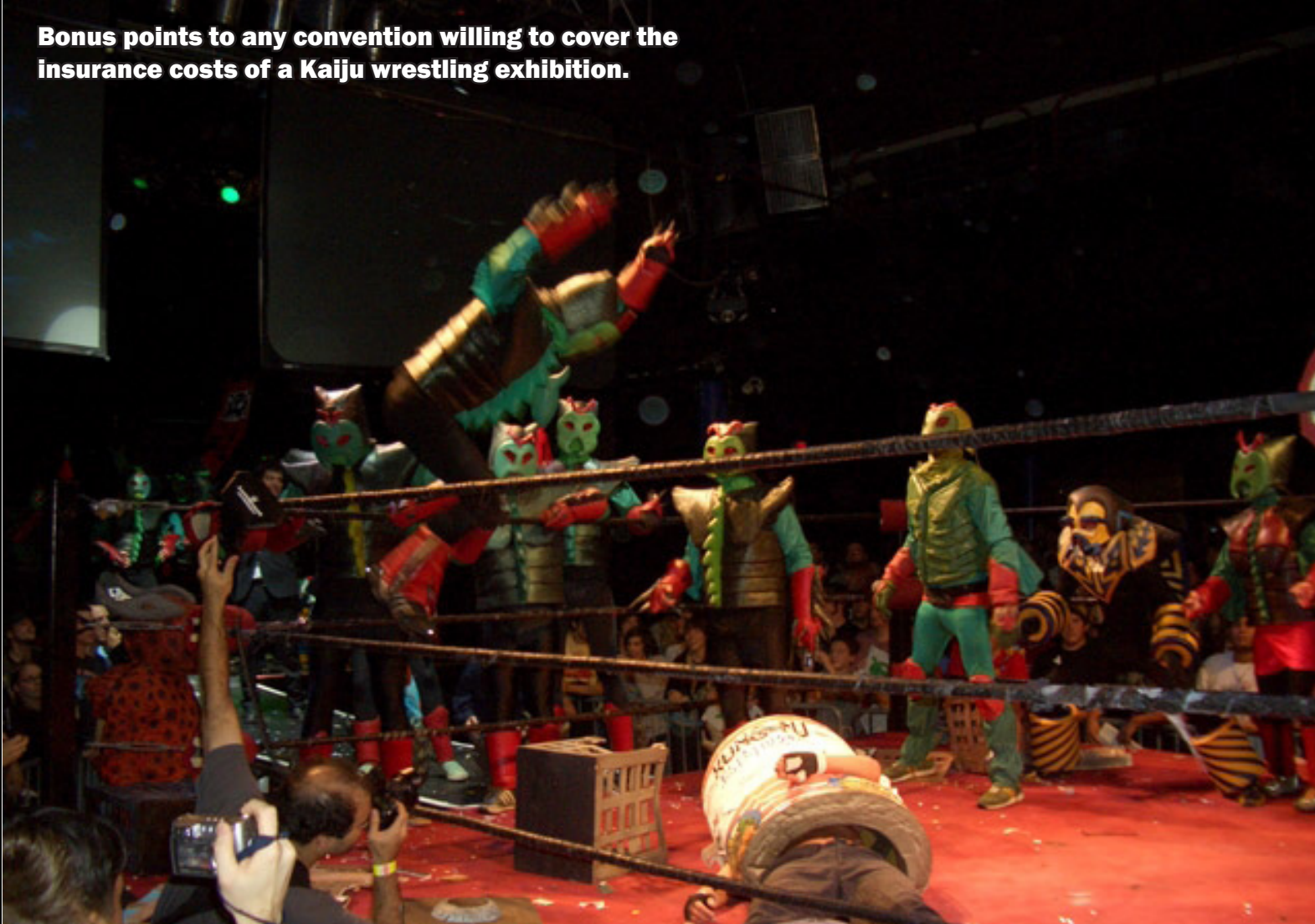
of people who were wearing large costumes or extremely high heels.)

Kevin: I ran and emceed the Conjecture masquerade one year where the av system was a boom box next to the podium (I had to push the button) and we had someone in the audience with a big flashlight. We made it work. One thing I appreciate about most fan-run convention audiences is they *want* the costumers to succeed rather than wait for them to fail, and are game to play along with crude facilities as long as everything is done in good humor (and not the result of fupuckery).

España's report shows me what others are saying about Westercon...small all around. It may be that it's not the convention that's getting smaller, but that interest in a particular part of the convention is losing interest. Some cons here have done away with the video room, especially when whoever stages the room monitors it, and finds that few people are ever in the room; half the time, it's empty.

Jason: Westercon has always had the misfortune of being on 4th of July weekend, but the rise of Anime Expo makes it hard to get even Californians to attend.

Bonus points to any convention willing to cover the insurance costs of a Kaiju wrestling exhibition.



Now don't blame me for the lack of locs on this issue! There's got to be others who can write them, too. Besides, I didn't get any of the booze. Nice selection, too. I don't get to go to the good conventions!

Vol. 2 No. 8...Garcia Alert! Is this guy burning out these days, or is he just busy with work at the computer museum? Doncha hate it when work gets in the way of fanac? Shouldn't be allowed... Cohesiveness is good, but coherence works, too. You sure none of the Mythbusters worked on this issue? Nothing blew up or anything?

Jason: Oh, something blew up...

I hope Dawn McKechnie sees this article on Kaiju Big Battel...I can see her trying to recreate this at Anime North. She's got the Gojira costume for it; I think she'd have a blast. And, lots of kids would have a great time watching a model city being stamped flat. Might yet happen!

Kevin: One of the brilliant things that has happened on occasion at Further Confusion is an impromptu *kaiju* battle staged in a lobby alcove, complete with breakaway

cityscape. I love coverage of events like that, where whacko costumes intersect the general population in a happy way. I'd love to get an article from someone who has actually watched one of the Idiotarod races and attendant insanity (including costumes), or where folks costume their pets and have them pull sleds. It would fit into a future issue we're contemplating.

We've never had Mac equipment of any kind, just the PC with IE and MS Office, and Yvonne just bought a laptop to help with his law clerk studies. I'd like a

laptop of my own, but I can't justify the expense right now.

Thanks for setting up the e-mail subscription feed... now Jason won't have anything to complain about when I don't respond to the zine because I don't know one's dropped. I will know from now on.

Jason: At this point I'd like to mention laying out this letter has taken more than

2 hours because something about it keeps crashing Adobe InDesign.

Jason again: Correction - Make that 2 days. Thanks for tweaking the file back into working order, Kevin!

My loc...there were a few Mat Hatters at Polaris, and this past weekend at the Fan eXpo, there was a great Red Queen from the most recent Alice movie. Yvonne got her

hands on a Mad Hatter hat, and has been wearing it at local cons...most people didn't know the hat was available for sale.

All done...we're melting here with temperatures in the lower 90s Fahrenheit. So, I imagine what kind of heat you folks are dealing with. We are both working on new steampunk costumes for future events... there's new photos on my Facebook page, if you'd like a look. Take care, see you folks later.

Yours, Lloyd Penney.

Disclaimer: Not all Kaiju wrestlers are flesh-eating zombies.





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