

# The Virtual Costumer

A monthly publication of the Silicon Web Costumers' Guild

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[www.geocities.com/siwcostumers](http://www.geocities.com/siwcostumers)

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SiW President Msg.	1
The Flambé Lounge	2
SiW Member Spotlight	5
ICG President's Message	6
Web Site Spotlight	7
Guys ...after the T-Tunic?	7
Somewhat 60's	9
Costumers on the Couch	10



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A message from the President of the Silicon Web Costumers' Guild

Have you looked at our web site recently? I am specifically referring to the list of members. If you have, you will notice that only a very few of our members are listed; and of those, even fewer have pictures up with the short bios.

I went looking to see what the range of SiW members was both geographically, and in interests. I wanted to know who we all were. I could not find out.

Our goal is for the web site to help introduce us to our fellow members. Since only a few of us are within easy visiting distance, and we are all self selected for a virtual chapter, this is the way we can build a virtual costuming community.

I am asking, (OK, I'm not proud) **begging** each of you to email Sharon a brief bio and a picture to be included on the site. If you send it to her, she will put it up: [stremble@us.ibm.com](mailto:stremble@us.ibm.com) (Editor's note: this is my work address that has additional bandwidth for photos).

Sharon and I discussed this recently (via the Yahoo! Messenger) and she typed: *"Doesn't have to be lengthy because I need them to save up some mystery for their layout in the newsletter."*

This is because we are also doing a series of interviews with a volunteer (or drafted) SiW member for the Virtual Costumer, as you will see in the following pages of the Newsletter. This month, it is Manly Summerfield's turn. Someday, it will be yours.

A bio without a picture is better than nothing, and we will accept them. But I will happily take pictures I have (or that you send to me) and subject them to Photoshop to create a more (or less) appropriate shot to include on the site: [DmacD@Mnouveau.com](mailto:DmacD@Mnouveau.com)

And while you are at it, go to the site and start to meet your fellow members. <http://www.geocities.com/siwcostumers/>

We hope to hear from you soon. If you have any concerns, or questions, feel free to contact us by personal email or via the SiW list: [siliconweb@yahoo.com](mailto:siliconweb@yahoo.com)

- Dana MacDermott, President SiW



## The Flambé Lounge

by Dana MacDermott

As we entered the Flambé Lounge, the mark stamped on the back of our hands said *Inspire*. And that was exactly what the evening event was designed to do. The Flambé Lounge is a moving event, a gathering of Burning Man aficionados to help maintain the Artistic Community year round. Held at The Crucible, a non-profit educational sculpture center, foundry, and metal fabrication studio located in Oakland, CA, this Flambé Lounge was a lead up to the 2003 Burning Man, which will be held in the Black Rock Desert this coming August. <http://www.burningman.com>

That Saturday evening, June 28 was a combination Art show, performance event, rave, search for volunteers, and attempt to whet the anticipation of the soon-to-be participants in the Burning Man experience. To encourage the participatory nature, there was a \$5 discount on admission if you came in costume. There were a lot of costumes. As a living art form, costumes are a part of the Burning Man experience.

Everywhere you looked in the warehouse setting there was something fascinating to watch. Many people in wildly varied costumes, from rave style to a bird lady on stilts and some inexplicable images were in the groups wandering around, dancing, studying the Burning



Man maps, viewing various entertainments, looking at the artist's displays and watching the works in progress. There was a casting being made where artists in surreal heat protective clothing poured molten metal from a glowing crucible.

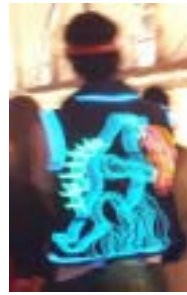


Aside from the ubiquitous belly dancers, there were fire twirlers, some skits, a tissue aerialist, a marching band and flag corps and other entertainment. There were artists welding sculptures, a fire vortex, a fountain where flames floated on

the water and into which you could dip your hands, several screens for films, a stack of televisions each displaying a different video of Burning Man from previous years. There were two hanging fabric spheres that



seemed to have projectors inside, their images continually changing. There were Art Cars out in front.



electroluminescent wire, and it seems that there are some companies manufacturing pins with glowing moving designs. Although the wire is difficult to photograph, I have included some pictures to indicate the effects that can be achieved.



The ambient light was kept low in most areas of the venue. This allowed an increased impact for the lighting and flame-centered exhibits. Suspended from the high ceiling was an elaborate pair of eyes constructed of electro-



luminous wire. This wire, which is flexible and cool to the touch, is in extensive use at Burning Man, on vehicles, on installations and in costumes.



The dim light at the Flambé Lounge also allowed the costumes designed to glow to show off their effects. There was quite a bit of use of the



Luminex (that costly glowing fabric reported on by Toni Lay in the ICG Newsletter Summer 2003 issue) was also in evidence. There was a Nehru style jacket, a scarf/shawl, and a panel on the front of a skirt that I believe was made from some variation. The panel appeared to be woven in patterns with horizontal bands that turned on and off. It was an impressive piece, if only marginally



able to be captured in photograph.



The general quality of the costuming was fairly high. Although there were some of the any-weird-combination-of-images-goes style,



most were designed and constructed, and worth a close examination. The emphasis was on creativity, and many of the images were hard to categorize. I spent my evening taking photographs, and enjoyed it considerably.

This is only a very small group compared to the population that will come together in the Black Rock Desert in August. At

Burning Man itself, we can anticipate a mixture of costumes for daytime, and a separate style for the night. The harsh environment will be of paramount concern in all the art installations and will be a particularly powerful determinant for costuming.

I can hardly wait to see what emerges.





## Member Spotlight

This month's volunteer is Manly Summerfield.  
(Interview completed June 5, 2003)

ST: Do you have a spouse or significant other?

MS: Yes, Kal, married almost 6 years.

ST: Any children?

MS: Parker Lee, age 5.



ST: Where are you currently living?

MS: Greenville, SC

ST: Do you consider that your hometown?

MS: Born and raised here!

ST: Do you have a favorite vacation destination?

MS: Places I have been or places I would like to go? Hmm...

I LOVE Disney. I have a T-shirt that says 'Property of the Disney Studios Costume Department.'

I'd like to go to Ireland, and see where my family came from.

ST: Do you have a favorite costume movie?

MS: Hands down *Anne of a Thousand Days*.

ST: Before others rent it, is it a good movie, or is it just good costumes?

MS: It's a fantastic retelling of the love affair of Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn with Richard Burton.

It's one of my top 5 favorite all-time movies of any genre. The fact that the costumes are stellar doesn't hurt at all!



ST: Do you have a favorite author or book?

MS: Favorite Author - Ellen Gilchrist. Favorite Book - *Wuthering Heights*.

ST: What are you currently reading?

MS: I'm going to start *Merrick* by Anne Rice today. I'm also reading a biography of Anne Boleyn. I actually have several books I'm reading now.

ST: What are your favorite costuming topics (photography, research, storage hints, sewing ...)?

MS: Probably fashion evolution ... and HATS!



ST: Are you currently working on any costumes?

MS: Yes, I'm currently putting together a farthingale to go with a middle-class Elizabethan, the under dress is teal ... have no idea what to over dress will be made of.

I am also working on a middle-class men's late Tudor for a friend. It's a nice dusty gold and green brocade doublet with slops.

ST: Are you currently learning any new costuming techniques?

MS? The Farthingale is new in all sorts of way. I have never worked with metal boning.

ST: What costuming techniques would you like to learn?

MS: Draping and drafting.

ST: Do you have a favorite historic period?

MS: That's hard to say ... right now it's early Tudor (think Henry VII, Catherine of York and Catherine of Aragon).

ST: A favorite color?

MS: Burgundy.

ST: A favorite food?

MS: mmmmmm ... all of it?!? Probably Italian.

ST: And your current education or career?

MS: I have a degree in Psychology with a minor in creative writing. I was an hour or two short of double minoring in political science.

I attended a specialized High School for the arts. I would like to make sewing a career.



Next Month's Volunteer: Carole Parker

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You don't have to see the whole staircase, just take the first step.

- Martin Luther King, Jr.



## ICG President's Message

June 4, 2003:

Hello

My name is Carl Mami and I am your President.

We have just finished our first month in my term and I am happy. This month three motions needed to run the ICG were passed. You may say "so that's your job," and you would be right. So what makes this month better than the last or the one before that? The fact that your board members were all there working hard for you. Not just part of the time but all the time. We had the largest vote ever on any motion. With a team like that, look for many new and exciting things to happen this year.

Our great Web Guy has out done himself getting all the information needed on line sometimes before I have asked for it. Betsy has worked hard getting the next newsletter out and ready for you to see. People have worked behind the scenes (like Nora, Dora, Dana and Randall) making the Guild run smoothly. It has not been easy, but they are working hard.

You have been working hard as well, and I wish to thank all who wrote with your thoughts and ideas. I hope I answered each question but if I somehow forgot you, please understand. Some times I don't have the answer, yet, but I will get them and give you the answer you need.

There is still a lot to do, but with the board members working as hard as this, you will see the change. Like any repair project, it will take time to fix each detail, but the work has begun.

See you all next month.

C. D. Mami  
President ICG



A column by Sharon Trembley

I will not take it for granted that everyone knows of [www.costumes.org](http://www.costumes.org) or the site otherwise known as The Costumer's Manifesto.



What is it?

Would it be too simple to say that if you can't find it at Old Navy or the Gap, then there's probably a link to it from The Costumer's Manifesto?

It's historical, ethnic, regional, and cultural education with a good mix of fun and sources for supplies all gathered into one web site by Tara Maginnis, Ph.D. of The University of Alaska Fairbanks. This teacher, lecturer and author is also a member of Costumers' Guild West (another chapter of the ICG), The Costume Society of America and The Costume Society (UK).

The site combines links to other sites along with original content for a widespread variety of costuming topics.

This is the perfect site for ideas, or for a costumer with just a vague idea of where they want to start but need to be pointed to more information.

## What do guys wear after the T-Tunic?

by Sharon Trembley

While doing some research on 19<sup>th</sup> century women's dress reform, I found an interesting reference in one of the books I was using. Historian Lois Banner (USC, Gender Studies) suggested that the exposure of male legs in 14<sup>th</sup> century Europe coincided with a new resolve to dominate women.

Needless to say, I went off in search of books on this intriguing new topic, and found pay dirt with scandalously clad folk during the time of the Black Prince – Edward (1330-1376), first son of Edward III, Duke of Cornwall and Prince of Wales.

At the time, sleeves were cut as part of the garment. Those familiar with the SCA, may think of the basic garb pattern called the basic T-tunic which can be simply made by clever folding thus leaving only the side seams needing to be sewn together, along with finishing techniques such as a rolled hem or facing on the neck, hem and the ends of the sleeves.



While in truth, the historical version of the T-tunic had gussets inserted for fullness, its sleeves were cut as part of the bodice. The T-tunic never went out of fashion and remained the garb of peasants until the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

However, other classes throughout Europe started wearing garments with set-in sleeves in rounded armholes. Most pictures of the period (1330s-1340s) show people changing to set sleeves in both over-tunics and tunics.

The set-in sleeves caused a bit of a domino effect leading to tighter clothing of both genders and the shortening of men's tunics.

Another change in the sleeve was the practice of sewing up the lower part of the arm every time the tunic was worn was abandoned, and in the 14<sup>th</sup> century, a row of buttons with corresponding

buttonholes was introduced by the fashionable folk.

I found the most interesting book by Stella May Newton, *Fashion in the Age of the Black Prince: A Study of the Years 1340-1365* (1980). It was full of very stuffy historical accounts, but the descriptions of the contemporaries to the new style was highly entertaining.

Chroniclers throughout Europe agree that the change in dress had been introduced to the innocent population by foreigners.

In Italy, men's tunics became so short that their buttocks and privates were visible, and the fashion of wearing a beard or an even longer beard clearly indicated that the Spaniards were behind this.



McCall's 2664

In England, tunics may not have been actually shorter, but they were so tight that they gave the impression of being shorter. Undoubtedly caused by the French.

In France, clothing was so tight, men needed help dressing and undressing, and it was reported that their rumps were exposed.

Another modification towards 1350 was the cutting of the edges of garments into fanciful shapes – dagging. It was especially used on short shoulder capes, the edges of hoods, and hanging parts of sleeves.



Jules Quicherat, *Histoire du Costume en France*, from The Costumer's Manifesto

Additional reports were also made complaining of the costliness of materials being used.

In England, ermine use increased drastically. During 1347-1349, the royal family used 3,000 ermine skins for trimming their clothing.

Rather than ermine, France used more embroidery on their garments.

The wearing of fancy hats was also on the rise in both England and France. Made of beaver, squirrel and felt they were also embroidered. Both fringe and peacock feathers were mentioned in accounts, but I'm not sure how widespread they were during the 1300s.

After the Black Prince captured the French king and some nobles at the Battle of Poitiers and ransomed them back to France, the Englishmen had even more money to spend on their clothes. Critics of the time pointed out that the clothing was becoming so tight that they could no longer kneel to God.



Pauquet Freres, *Modes Et Costumes Historiques*, from The Costumer's Manifesto

Besides the short tunics, hose were also tight and started to appear either striped or multi-colored.

Long knives were worn from the belt to hang between their legs.



Shoes with long beaks became popular and were described as fit for the feet of griffons.

Fashion got to the point where by the mid-1360s, Pope Urban V issued laws forbidding short suits and dissolute clothing.

Men also started padding their form beneath their clothing.

During the 1350s, young men lowered the front of their belts and added padding over their belly. Artwork of the time showed them in a serpentine stance with the small of their back hollowed out and their hip bones thrust forward. Later in the century, they moved the padding from their stomachs to their chest to pad the torso instead.

Men taking an interest in being fashionable and wearing adorned clothing dominates women? This seems contrary to the 19<sup>th</sup> century argument with the sudden blandness of male garments during the Industrial Revolution.



### Somewhat '60's

by Dana MacDermott

On Friday, July 11 there was a get together featuring Kayta Barrows' 1960's dollhouse. Of course, we had to suggest a 60's costuming theme, which was adopted by a number of the attendees. There were also a series of props reminiscent of the era. The lava lite was bubbling in the living room corner, and a display of zig-zag and other papers was on a table in the dining room.



Kayta's miniature work was marvelous. Her dollhouse captured many aspects of the hippy pad of the time. Some of us remembered it well. Every time we looked a bit closer, we would laugh and ooh and ah. Rima and I not only went through that era, but also did it together. We have been friends a long time.



The desserts included (mundane) brownies and date bars, which also served as a reference to the era.

Cheesecake, too harked back to its popularity at the times recalled. Period records were played. (That's right, those large flat black discs, that get put on a turntable.) We listened to the Beatles, Donovan and the Jefferson Airplane. Rima located and brought sandalwood incense.

Ari created a light show on the living room ceiling. The feel was right, although the technology used was definitely 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Other anachronisms abounded, as well. There was a cluster of computer geeks, and all the pictures were taken with a digital camera.



We were happy to be able to count a goodly contingent of SiWers at the gathering. Looking at the photo, on the stairs are Bill and Carol, in the front row from left to right are Rima, Sarah, Ari, Bruce and Dana. From these to the rest of us, "Had a wonderful time. Wish you could have been here!"





## Galaxy Quest

A review by Sharon and Madelaine Trembley



We're trying to give a little variety in this column so need to do a science fiction-y type film, thus the two of us picked one of our favorites for viewing repeatedly - *Galaxy Quest*.

First off for a little personal background, Madelaine has long associated this film with karate class. As part of the code learned at school, they get quizzed on certain key words. Her answer to "What is perseverance?" has always been "Never give up! Never surrender!" So much so that when she had to write an essay for her first-degree black belt testing, stills from *Galaxy Quest* were included, besides Xena's Lucy Lawless, Ray Parks (without and with Darth Maul make-up) and Jackie Chan. It's a point of pride with Madelaine that future first-degree classes have reported back that this essay has been displayed as an example of what their essays should look like.



The plot is fairly simple - What if aliens needing rescue caught sight of one of our old SciFi series in syndication? They'd show up at a Con to ask the out-of-work actors to save them obviously.

This movie delivers exactly what it promises in terms of plot. Madelaine and I both find it funny and entertaining.

Costume-wise and special effects wise this movie does not offer anything revolutionary, but the lines



from the movie should be easily recognizable at any science fictions con, and the costumes recognizable as well, if you are looking for a nice hall costume.

### Awards:

What awards? However, this movie is so admired that the Western Canadian Costumers' Guild (WCCG) of the ICG paid tribute to it at ConVersion 17 in August 2000.



Photo taken by Grant Zelych  
Cliff Samuels, Sean McLennan, Pam Bowyer, Jason White (kneeling), Eileen Capes, Katherine Bonham, Wayne Carmichael

Please check out WCCG's web site for more photos of their members - <http://members.shaw.ca/petra-nef/>

*Galaxy Quest* is owned Dreamworks. All images used are either Dreamworks' or WCCG's with no intent to profit from them except for information purposes.

Movie Overall: 8  
Sharon: 5  
Madelaine: 8  
On Costumes Sharon: 5  
Madelaine: 6

