

Silicon Web Costumers' Guild

Silicon Web Staff

President:	Richard Man
Vice-President:	Kevin Roche
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President's Message **Richard Man***

Costume Con 28 was my fourth one. At our first Costume-Con (CC23), my family won the Spazzy award and Best in Class Presentation. At the second (CC24), they won Best in Show Recreation. Needless to say, I was a bit busy both times taking photos and helping them out. At our third Costume-Con (CC26 in San Jose), I was the official photographer and we were both ambitious. We tried to get as many hall costumes as possible and provide "extra stuff" at the last minute (hall costume photos and judges photo). It was one of the largest CC in history, easily three times as large as CC28. Combine all that and I was a big ball of stress.

In contrast, while I worked hard at CC28 as the official photographer (I did not leave the hotel once in 3+ days), I had an

entire room to myself, and I got to take hall costume photos at my leisure. With my fast printer, I could make prints very quickly.

The Milwaukee Hilton is a grand old hotel with ambiance that is missing in newer hotels. The spiral staircases are gorgeous and make a great background for photos.



Photo by Richard Man.

Seeing friends and renewing old acquaintances is always a treat. All in all, CC28 was a very enjoyable and recharging experience.

Let's not forget the *costumes*. As expected from a Costume-Con, there were gorgeous costumes. Despite conventional wisdom that the Historical Masquerade is not very exciting when it comes to presentations, this one really rocked!

Kevin Roche's presentation was short and funny; while Gail Wolfenden-Steib's innovative use of hotel materials, including bedspreads and a lampshade hat, and her skit had the room rolling in laughter. Kevin won Best Master Class Documentation. Gail won Best Presentation and Workmanship in the Master Class, as well as the "She did what with what?" chapter award; not bad for a stress free costume! To round out the SiW winners, Margaret Decker won Novice Class Best Workmanship. Congratulations to all!

A small surprise is that we awarded a [Dreamcatcher](#) to a Historical entry: "Kabuki Revolution Extreme," a Kabuki Dance interpretation in [Dance-Dance Revolution](#) format. They combined the old and the new so well. While unexpected, it nevertheless *makes so much sense*. If the Kabuki dancers had access to LED and fiber optic lights, no doubt they would have used them. They also won Best In Show Presentation.

Congratulations also to SiW members Jeanine Swick and Aurora Celeste who were re-elected to their respective ICG positions, and to Philip Gust, who was elected ICG VP.

I felt so good after CC28 that I decided to serve another term as SiW President. As VC goes to press, the election just took place, and all officers were re-elected. SiW has so many talented and friendly members, and I am honored to be in your company.



From the Editor *Philip Gust**

Steampunk has emerged, over the last decade, as a popular social, aesthetic, and literary movement. In the last several years, it has also picked up steam as a theme for sci-fi and fantasy conventions, and fan costuming. From one convention in 2006 and a couple in 2007 and 2008, there were over a dozen in 2009, and twenty or thirty planned for 2010 in the U.S. alone.

The popular media has also gone mad for Steampunk. It's taken over the movies, it's taken over theater, it's taken over TV! And now, it's taken over this magazine...

Welcome to the "Steampunk & Gaslamp Costuming" issue of VC, focusing on the influence of Steampunk & Gaslamp on many forms of costuming.

What are Steampunk & Gaslamp, and how are they different? Steampunk is the Victorian world of Science and Technology Exhibitions. From H.G. Well's *Time Machine* to Gene Wilder's *Young Frankenstein*, Steampunk is about the wonders of technology and the machine.

Gaslamp, on the other hand, is a fantasy genre, inspired by people, places, and situations of the Victorian age. Neither Jules Vern's *Journey to the Center of the Earth* nor Phil and Kaja Foglio's *Girl Genius* series need technical explanations.

I am happy to welcome several new authors in this issue of VC. Bryan Little weighs in with a thought-provoking Virtual Soapbox article on why simply adding gears to a top hat doesn't make it Steampunk.

A pair of articles shows that the genre goes far beyond its Victorian roots. Award-winning customizer Sillof re-imagines costumes for *Star Wars* in a steam-driven galaxy. Professional costumer and educator Tara Maginnis shows stunning Steampunk inspired costumes and props for an exciting new production of Shakespeare's *Othello*.

Updating a popular Victorian fad, Blake Barrett shows how to build and use his simple 3D digital camera in another of a series on costume photography.

I'm also pleased to welcome back some veteran VC authors. In our cover feature, Jennifer "Radar" Wylie returns with Phil and Kaja Foglio to discuss costumes in their Hugo winning *Girl Genius* series.

Prop makers Tracy Newby and Stacy Meyn review metallic casting resins, and show how to create Steampunk inspired metallic costume parts and props.

Mette Hedin tours the TechShop, a costumer and prop maker's paradise, with more equipment than Jay Leno's garage.

In a complete turn-about, Kathe Gust shows how she created great-looking Dirigible airship crew outfits by *not* making them from scratch. I also describe how I created the pilot's parachute and rebreather pack from parts found in our garage.

Carole Parker reports from Costume-Con 28 in a series of "virtual postcards."

Here is a quick preview of what is ahead in upcoming issues of VC. In August, we look at clothing between WW1 and WW2, from high fashion to everyday dress.

The November issue ends the year with the diverse styles of the Victorian and Edwardian periods, lasting nearly 100 years.

I'm pleased to announce that the February 2011 issue is all about Fantasy costuming in every imaginable form, from Mardi Gras, to Fairies, to Pirates.

Now is a great time to start writing for VC, and share what you know and love in.

This issue marks a milestone in SiW's educational mission. Several educational organizations have inquired about using VC in their programs. However, our policies have not kept pace with licensing standards, and it was difficult for them to ensure that their use conformed to our policies.

After consulting with the SiW board, all issues of VC are now available under a standard [Creative Commons](#) license for not-for-profit use. VC has also been assigned its own [ISSN](#) code, allowing the magazine to be cataloged and retrieved using standard library systems and bibliographic tools.

This change ensures SiW's long-term role in educating future costumers. It will also help attract experienced costumers from the educational community who are eager to share what they know with SiW members.