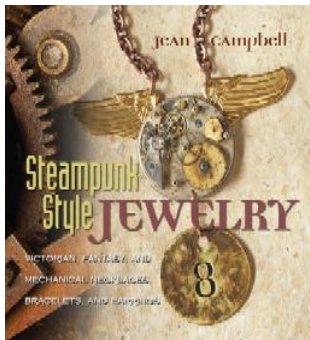


Short Subjects

How-To Book on Making Steampunk Jewelry

Twenty-five projects show how to create Victorian, Fantasy, and mechanical necklaces, bracelets, & earrings.

Steampunk jewelry-makers are often master metalsmiths who combine found



objects with fine metals to create elaborate pieces. In *Steampunk-Style Jewelry* by Jean Campbell, the projects focus on simple, "no fire" techniques like stringing,

wirework, gluing, hammering, stamping, stitching, and beadwork, so that even beginners can create pieces in the style.

Projects by invited jewelry designers provide complete materials and tools list, step-by-step instructions, and clear illustrations. The book is equally striking as a comprehensive guide to the world of Steampunk, from the general "community" to specific gear and clothing.

Steampunk-Style Jewelry by Jean Campbell is published by Creative Publishing International, and is available through Amazon.com.

A Moldable Plastic for Props and Accessories

New thermoplastic is ideal making Steampunk costume pieces.

At the TechShop in Menlo Park, California, Shapelock.com CEO Jim Loftus recently showed some of the uses for his new ShapeLock thermoplastic. ShapeLock is super-strong with the toughness of Nylon or Polypropylene, but does not need high pressure or temperature to form into shapes.

The material can be drilled, sawed, machined and painted. It's suitable for complex high-relief molds, sculptures, and steampunk accessories such as guns, gears, mechanical appendages, etc. It can be shaped by hand, and reheated and reused many times.

ShapeLock comes in rice grained size pellets. To mold it, you pour a quantity in a bowl of water that is heated to 140-150 degrees Fahrenheit. The pellets turn clear as it melts, and you scoop out a quantity to either shape with your hands, or press things like gears into it for use as a mold. It turns milky white again as it cools in a minute or two. To try again, put it back in the hot water and wait for it to become transparent.



ShapeLock is available in 10 ounce (250 gram) and 20 ounce (500 gram) resealable containers for \$14.95 and \$24.95 plus shipping and handling. They also offer a 35 gram sample package for only \$4.95 shipping and handling. The product is available from the ShapeLock web site, or at the TechShop.

Whatzis?

A puzzling photo of a costuming related object. Can you guess what it is?

From time to time, VC will present an unusual photo of a costuming, sewing, or prop-making related object. Can you guess what it is? Find the answer in the next issue.



Do you have an unusual photo? Send it, together with a description of what it is, to vc@siwcostumers.org

Steampunk: The Magazine

A scrappy UK collective publishes a magazine on all things Steampunk, including DIY costumes and accessories.

If you are new to Steampunk or just can't get enough of it, there is a magazine just for you. It's called [Steampunk Magazine](#), and is published by a scrappy UK collective called "Vagrants Among the Ruins". The Vagrants collective formed in 2009 from supporters and regular contributors.



Steampunk contains articles on all aspects of Steampunk culture, including literature, music, art, culture, and costuming. The just released Issue #6 is large at 104 pages. It includes plenty of text, illustrated with quirky black and white line drawings. Past issues include articles on DIY casting and welding, how to sew a hat, creating spats and a paper-mâché aviator's cap, and an introduction to Steampunk fashion

The magazine is published as both a print edition and an on-line edition under a Creative Commons license. According to the publisher, "We produce a printed magazine, believing as we do in the beauty of the physical world [this is Steampunk, not cyberpunk!], but owing to our belief in gift-economics we offer it for download from the computerverse as well, free of charge."

The print edition can be ordered from "[Vagrants Among the Ruins](#)", or through their US distributor, "[Strangers in a Tangled Wilderness](#)". The on-line edition is available from the *Steampunk Magazine* download page. Most downloadable issues are from 25-40Mb, so be sure you have a fast connection or are prepared to wait.

The magazine website also includes news items, a list of events they sponsor, a forum called "The Gaslamp Bazaar", and links to other Steampunk resources.

Weta Goes Steampunk

The people who brought you Lord of the Rings now bring you death and destruction of a different kind.

Weta Workshop, the people, who did the physical effects (costumes, armaments, etc) for the *Lord of the Rings* movies, has created a line of limited edition Steampunk ray guns. According to their [web site](#),

Dr. Grordborts Infallible Aether Oscillators, are a line of immensely dangerous yet simple to operate wave oscillation weapons. Meticulously built to the exacting standards, these weapons, bespangled with various (most likely quite dangerous) moving parts, are the perfect addition to a gentleman's study or a deterring centerpiece for a lady's powder room or chiffonier.

These are highly limited edition pieces, made out of metal with articulated parts.

Every full-size Raygun comes with its own Moon-velvet lined case, Certificate of Authenticity, and an assortment of crafting tools and implements. These weapons are hefty – the larger guns are over 7 pounds.

They are also no light investment. Even a smaller full-size model like the "Victorious Mongoose 1902a Concealable Ray Pistol", limited to an edition of 400, is priced at "just" \$495.00. Dangerous, indeed!



A line of miniatures is also available for considerably less money. The miniature Mongoose runs around \$40.

A Steam-Powered Chair

Here's what you get when you take a practical problem and apply some good old-fashioned Victorian Steampunk ingenuity.

Daniel Valdez saw a practical problem: how to get around in a wheelchair in a Steampunk world. His solution is ingenious and artistic: a steam-powered chair!



Photo courtesy of Daniel Valdez.

The chair was inspired by Dr. Xavier's wheelchair from the X-Men. Daniel's contribution was to apply a Steampunk aesthetic to a fantasy comic device.

He created his steam-powered chair from a Victorian rocker from 1875, a Permobil C300 powered wheelchair, some pistons from a steelworks, an Arduino-based

audio kit, an event-triggered sound processor, and a drinks dispenser for the vodka and cranberry juice. Oh, and a portable smoke machine.



Photo courtesy of Daniel Valdez.

He found the rocking chair at a local antique store. When he found the chair it was wobbly and falling apart, so he re-framed and reupholstered it, something had never done before but learned quickly

He got the power wheelchair chassis for free because it was too damaged to be covered by insurance. He tore it apart into its smallest components and repainted

everything, even the rubber tires were attempted (and failed).

The pistons were a rare catch on eBay. They supposedly pumped the bellows at a 1940s iron smelter in Indiana. Hours of work went into transforming them from a grease-encrusted black mess to the pretty polished brass look they have now.

The console was several weeks of work. Daniel modeled it after *The Time Machine*, a movie he loved as a child. It has re-cast Japanese filigree he nabbed on eBay. The brass handles were fire place poker handles from a thrift store.

The “backpack” liquid storage was another challenge. He wanted everything on the chair to have a purpose, and the thought of being alcohol storage came up easy. The ice chiller tank in the lower back is made mostly from PVP plumbing fittings and copper tubing/fittings.

The sound system components, speakers, and sound board triggered effects were his favorite to work with. Lighting was comprised of various LED bits and bobs.

Daniel had some sketches but no “schematics”. He said that, art doesn't have that much planning involved, and for him, it really was Art. It grew, and got a life of its own.

To learn more about this amazing project, watch the video on [YouTube](#), visit Daniel's [Flickr stream](#), and read a recent [interview](#) where he discusses the project in more detail.

Parting Shot

A long-lost photo of a “historical” costume surfaces after 20 years.

In her “Virtual Soapbox” article, “Historical Costuming: Doing It Wrong On Purpose” ([The Virtual Costumer, Vol. 8, Issue 1, page 33](#)), Kayta Barrows discussed a “cammo colonial” costume she made that Martha Washington might have worn while visiting the troops at Valley Forge. She made the costume over twenty years ago, and it was very popular at the time.

When she looked for a photo of the dress to include with the article, however, she was unable to locate one. That led to a months-long exchange between author and artist in an effort to recreate the dress. The publication deadline arrived, and the artist’s final version appeared with her article.

Two weeks later, Kayta sent the following note:

“I was sorting in my storage locker today and found the album with the only two images I have of my cammo colonial. They were taken in the kitchen of the place I lived in like 20 years ago, by fluorescent light. You can just see the diamonds, feathers, snake, and lettering quilted into the skirt. You can also see the shoes and almost see their buckles.”

So here it is, a long-lost photo of Kayta Barrows’ celebrated “cammo colonial” costume, together with the illustration from her article, exclusively in the pages of *VC*.

