

# Silicon Web Costumers' Guild

## Silicon Web Staff

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## President's Message *Richard Man\**

### Reaching Out

I was invited to be a “Professional Photographer” at this year’s [Costume College](#). This is an annual event put on by the folks at the CGW ([Costume Guild West](#)), emphasizing education (vs. for example masquerade competitions). The CGW staff put on a very enjoyable event, even though this is the first time they were in this hotel. It once again reminds me how important it is to have well-motivated people on staff.

I sat in on their annual election and congratulated the winners afterward. This year, there were competitions for various positions. One of the goals of the new officers and board seems to be reaching out more to other organizations. While their focus will be mostly on their local level (e.g.

SoCal), I hope that they will work with other organizations such as SiW, and maybe even the ICG. This is something I push for - more cooperation among the different groups.



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Elisabeth and Jen, board members of the CGW 2010.

CGW used to be a chapter of the ICG but left a few years ago for various reasons, the primary of which was the question of non-profit status. (I am happy to say that due to the hard work of people like Nora Mai and Bruce McDermott, this core issue has been addressed in the ICG). Working with a dedicated group like the CGW, even if they remain out of the ICG, would be beneficial.

Obviously, not everyone is an official speaker for our organization or the ICG, but we all need to be mindful of what we say and how we say it, because it still reflects on our organizations. There are stories, for example, about how some people have given the ICG a bad reputation because of their

behavior. Although it is a sensitive area where we need to be careful, I hope we will all continue to reach out as ambassadors, and improve relationships with other groups.

So how do you reach out to the other costuming communities? Do you wear your “Silicon Web hat” when you go to your local events (e.g. PenWAG), or to regional conventions, etc.?

Yours in Costuming (phrase shamelessly stolen from Lisa Ashton).



## From the Editor *Philip Gust\**

Welcome to the third issue of VC for 2010, exploring the clothing of the 1920's and 1930's. This was a tremendously exciting period for fashion. Established designers like Paul Poiret were still working, but a new generation of designers began setting the fashion trend, introducing new materials and new techniques.

Women enjoyed more freedom in clothing during this period, as they gained the vote and entered the workplace in earnest. Men's fashion went through unexpected changes, lead by trend-setters like Edward, later the Duke of Windsor. This was a period where men and women began to have more

leisure time, and casual clothing and sportswear became popular.

The media played a major role in popularizing the look. Movie studios began employing some of the top designers, exposing the average citizen to the latest fashions as never before. Improved transportation and postal delivery lead to a flood of new fashion magazines and a vibrant mail-order clothing industry.

This period is also an exciting opportunity for historical costumers to study and recreate the signature styles of legendary designers like Madeleine Vionnet and Erté, whose influence is felt even today. New research and publications are available on their techniques and designs that enable historical costumers to tackle even their most difficult and spectacular creations. I hope that this issue will wet your appetite and stimulate your imagination.

Five of the authors in this issue have contributed to previous issues of VC. Kathe Gust's article on Madeleine Vionnet focuses on this designer's influences, growth, and contributions to fashion. Stacy Meyn takes us on a fast-paced tour of theatrical designer Erté, whose fanciful creations graced not only the stage but also the silver screen and popular magazines.

Carole Parker interviews four SiW recipients of the International Costumers' Guild's highest honor, to get their perspective on costuming, service to the costuming community, and what the award means to them. Kayta Barrows shares her

thoughts on workmanship and historical interpretation from the judge's perspective. I review a new web site from the Smithsonian Institution Libraries that includes a wealth of historical fashions and accessories.

We also welcome five new authors who share their expertise on different aspects of costuming in this period. Jill MacLachlan, a vintage clothier and 1930s fashion enthusiast, introduces us to the craze known as "Egyptomania." Sandra Ericson, who directs the *Center for Pattern Design*, discusses Madeline Vionnet's revolutionary draping techniques and draping in half-scale. Vintage costumer Carol Wood takes us on a fascinating journey to discover how the bra went from a simple home-made garment to an industry, and shaped both the culture and the work of major designers at that time. Carol also reviews a pair of books that reproduce a long out of print publication on draping from the Woman's Institute of Domestic Arts and Sciences.

Two hands-on articles literally cover the period from head to toe. Professional hat maker Rosemary Greene provides step-by-step instructions on making a period 1920's gentleman's Fedora and a ladies' cloche hat without a hat block or expensive tools. Footwear embellishing expert and author Margot Silk Forest shows how to recreate Spectator shoes, a favorite sports and casual wear style of the 1920's and 1930's.

Here is a quick preview of what is ahead in upcoming issues of VC. The November issue ends the year with the

diverse styles of the Victorian and Edwardian periods, lasting nearly 100 years. The February 2011 issue is all about Fantasy costuming in every imaginable form, from Mardi Gras, to Fairies, to Pirates.

I'm pleased to announce that the May 2011 issue will be on Militaria, covering all aspects of military and military-influenced historical and sci-fi/fantasy costuming. See the "[Upcoming Issues](#)" page of the SiW web site for details. Now is a great time to start writing for VC, and share what you know and love with your fellow costumers.

This issue marks an anniversary! I was the guest editor for Volume 7 Issue 3 of VC, which came out one year ago this month. Dana MacDermott passed the editor role to me with the following issue. I've enjoyed editing these five issues. It has been an amazing learning experience, and I'm grateful to the many authors who have contributed articles. I'll acknowledge each of them in the final issue of the year.

