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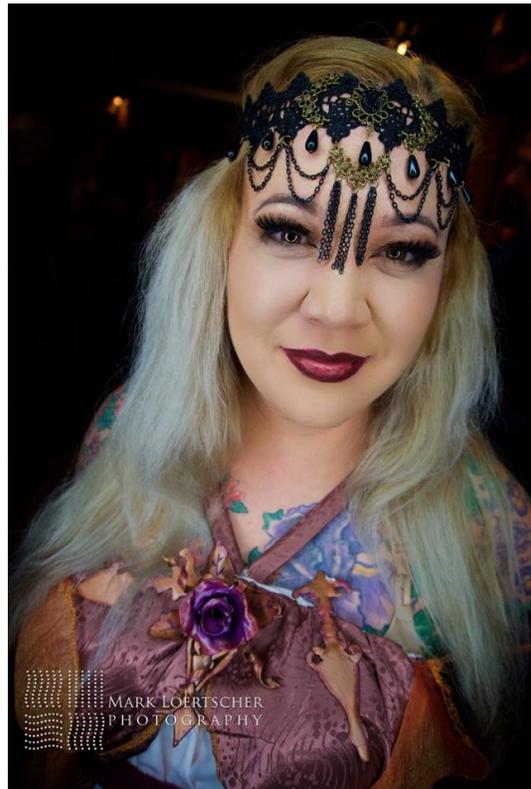
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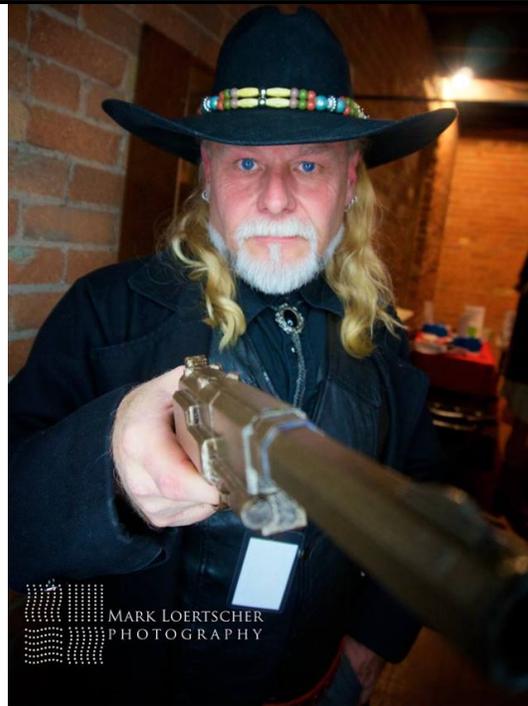
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Prepare for War  
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Smugglers, Rogues, Pirates, Assassins, Alliance, Outlaws, Deathtroopers, Dark Wizards, Devils, Dancers, and Drinkers: *THANK YOU.*

Our Smuggler's Ball was an incredible night at [Provocateur Studios](#), filled with astounding performances by our gorgeous friends [Burlesque Circus](#), [Rebelle Birds Burlesque](#), and [Persephone Ariel Arts](#). The bar (and raffle) was stocked with our new favorite booze from [Ogden's Own Distillery](#) and the illustrious [Dapper](#) filled the space with absolutely perfect music while [Casino Parties of Utah](#) kept the dice rolling. Downstairs, [A Charmed Life SLC](#), [Winged Sweet Valkrie](#), and [Auzzie's Craft Emporium](#) showed off their unique and stylish wares.

Do yourself a favor and check out the massive [photo album](#) on our Facebook page, featuring shots from our photographers and friends [Jessie'S Photography](#), [Cosplay Comet](#), and of course, [Mark Loertscher](#) (who's work is featured above), as well as other volunteers and guests of the event.

We also have to thank our Chaos Sponsor [Thunderdice Empire](#) for their love, support, and impeccable taste in uniforms. A special shout-out to the illustrious General Meepopolis III; we were particularly honored by your attendance.

And, of course, we have to thank our volunteers. From coat check to the raffle room, the dance floor to the stage, our team of amazing volunteers went the extra mile and we

Please, please, please check out the links above and support the incredible people that supported us. We can't wait til the next event!



## Cosplay Competition Tips

*from Cosplay Competition Judge, Eric Browning*

Cosplay is a wonderful hobby and a demanding career if you go pro. All of us are in this cosplay boat together, from beginners to pros and judges. Most of us know the pain of a hot melt glue burn or touching your heat gun tip before it cools off. We're all painters, seamstresses/tailors, and more often than not in the wee hours of the morning before the con trying not to stick ourselves with pins or needles and bleed all over the costume.

Cosplay competitions aim to celebrate your hard work and give you recognition. We want you to make it to the stage from pre-judging but in the last few years it has really exploded, especially in Utah. The first thing you have to know about entering a contest is that it's not personal if you don't make it to a stage portion or if you don't earn a prize. We will probably only see you for a few minutes so if you really are a jerk or an angel in real life we really don't know or care because we're not, "out to get you". With several

“win” and I didn’t say lose. People who place at a competition earned a prize with their hard work.

As a judge we’re evaluating that hard work to decide if it is a successful cosplay that is ready for the stage. Even the best laid plans go sideways once the laws of physics kick in. Many costumes use near impossible to construct items. For example, hovering fel spheres that stay in place several inches over your shoulders and drip green ooze are going to be difficult even for master’s level cosplayers. How cleverly you fake it is how well you score. Did you use a stick, coat hanger, clear plastic rod, or did you use active magnetic levitation to hold it in place while dangling lightweight plastic bits that move around in a slight breeze simulating the dripping ooze? Nothing except con rules is off limits, check them, follow them, and wow us.

If you’re of the sewing persuasion we will look at your seams, gathers, ruffles, and everything else we can spot. We will look at the type of stitch and how uniform/straight it is. Like if you used a stretch stitch on that spandex bodysuit or is it literally coming apart at the seams and did you backstitch at the ends. Did you hand embroider those designs or use appliques? Does the thread match the fabric color changes and do these details match your source images. With your permission we will flip your seams and look to see if the edges of your fabric have been surged or if they are raw. FYI, we dislike loose and uncut dangling threads, please cut them off. If you’re wearing a corset, did you make it or buy it? Does it use plastic or metal boning? We want to know how/why you chose a particular fabric. Was it for comfort, accuracy, or to fake not having blue skin? Also, if you’ve made a jacket/cloak and it isn’t lined in the intermediate to master level cosplays you will lose points. If you don’t have a sewing machine, learn to hand stitch because lastly, please... never... glue fabric together. Ever. Just don’t.

Armor is another one of the cosplay specialties that can be difficult to master. If you use Pepakura files, hopefully they are scaled properly to your size. I can also safely say that 99% of my past critiques over armor have been that I can see the glaring unintended seams in your armor. This most often affects those who use EVA foam mats or tiles to build with. It is possible to hide seams and you can make delicate details in foam. It takes a little effort with sanding paper, Dremels, or Xacto knives and usually a few coatings of Plasti-Dip or some other sealing material instead of directly painting the foam after gluing it together. This alone will enhance your score in the beginner and intermediate level categories. For Worbla users we will be critical of the surface finish. I spent the better part of two weeks spraying filler primer, sanding, and repeating that process until the Worbla texture was gone and I had an antique metal looking finish. Users of Sintra (xPVC) don’t have as much work with surface finishing but equally as much work hiding seams as foam builders. Also, appropriate material choices for keeping your armor and props light and manageable will win you points like when your axe is 8 feet tall and the head is wider than you are but only weighs three pounds and looks authentic.

the new hotness and many judges don't quite know how to deal with it yet. Most of the issues I hear about is that it's difficult to prove that you designed the model. Some judges even think 3D printing is "cheating" when in fact it's just another tool in our arsenal. I mean you didn't really weave that fabric did you? A machine did. As with any piece you print, you need to finish this item to an immaculate level because the detail is going to be equally high. If there are epoxy drips, runs, or worse yet I can see the 0.2 or 0.1 mm layers created by your 3D printer because you only spray painted it, it's not going to look good for your score. Yes, some of you may have a spendy FormZ SLA or Carbon3D DLP printer and can produce a very smooth part but you can wet sand your way to a mirror finish with FDM 3D printed parts, it just takes time and effort so start early. You can also acetone vapor smooth ABS printed parts in addition to sanding but it can go wrong very quickly if you're not careful. I tend to use filler primer on my pieces and sand them to the level I need. Foam sanding sponges are great and a must for wet sanding and you can even directly machine sand parts if your walls are thick enough.

One of the most overlooked elements of your cosplay competition entry is proof that you made it. This is why having a portfolio showing all of the progressive steps from the patterns to the finished cosplay along with receipts from stores and samples of materials will set you apart from another equally well made cosplay with no portfolio. Two, we use this as a tool to catch potential truth stretchers. If you have an immaculate prop or piece of your cosplay that is obviously WAY above your entered or demonstrated skill level we're going to ask some pointed questions if you haven't told us that it was a commissioned or purchased item. Above celebrating your hard work we want to make sure it's as fair as we can make it for everybody else in your category. The reverse is also equally true in that if your hard work is fantastic and would absolutely smash the rest of the competition and possibly earn you a prize in the category ABOVE you, you might get bumped up. You should also know everything about the costume and be prepared to answer detailed questions.

*Stay tuned for next month's newsletter for the rest of Eric's tips as we all get ready for FanX17!*



Anarchists: Our monkeys have put together this [survey](#) to give you guys a chance to let us

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Makeup Demonstrations? Basic and Advanced Fabrication Classes? Basic and Advanced Sewing Classes? We've compiled a massive list of options and we'd love to have your feedback. Click the link above!

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## Origin of Cosplay

*with #teamjax*

It was 1984 that the term 'cosplay' was invented, combining the words 'costume' and 'play'. This was coined by the Japanese reporter, Nobuyuki Takahashi, after he attended Worldcon in Los Angeles. When translating the word 'masquerade' to the Japanese audience, he thought that the word sounded 'too old-fashioned' and used 'cosplay' to describe the concept. And thus.... a culture was born....

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### Special Thanks

We just want to take a few lines to express our personal gratitude and give a special thanks to Fitz of [Caliston Armory](#). Fitz has not only donated a whole bunch of materials and tools to

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printer... even though he has been personally extremely busy.

We love you, Fitz!

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