

The
KENNEDY COMPENDIUM
being a COMPILATION of GUIDELINES pertinent to
the proper FUNCTIONING of WORLDCON MASQUERADES
drawn from the EXPERIENCES & OPINIONS
of those EMINENT EXPERTS

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and intended to
Ameliorate the operation of WORLDCON MASQUERADES
Increase the COMFORT & CONVENIENCE of COSTUMERS
Improve the QUALITY of JUDGING
and SPEED the entire OPERATION
to the greater SATISFACTION of ALL concerned PARTIES

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INTRODUCTION

This opusculé is the result of a project which I undertook in the Fall of 1980. In discussions at NOREASCON with other costumers, it was apparent that a number of them were dissatisfied with the way Masquerades were run. This was nothing new - each Masquerade Committee had, in Marty Gear's words, to re-invent the wheel. In addition, the function has been steadily growing in size and complexity every year.

It occurred to me, among others, that more input by costumers would be a GOOD THING. Further, that assembling a consensus of opinion on various aspects of costuming and of Masquerade operation could be a help to future Masquerade Committees. With this in mind, I composed a few tentative rules and sent them out to those costumers whose addresses were in my book, asking for comments, criticisms, and suggestions. Some of the rules were deliberately provocative; and they did indeed provoke the production of enough material for another letter, and then another another. From the answers received, and from some personal discussions, I arrived at this present set of Guidelines. Not everything here is agreed to by every person who contributed, but I have tried to make sure that each suggestion is supported by enough experienced costumers to represent a respectable body of opinion.

Naturally, these Guidelines are written from the point of view of the costumer and competitor. Still, anything which smooths the functioning of the event will benefit all concerned. The COMPENDIUM is divided into several sections, with cross-references where a suggestion concerns itself with more than one section. Each contains introductory material, explaining needs in this area and reasons for the particular approach used. Sections on AMENITIES, AWARD DIVISIONS and ELIGIBILITY and on LIMITATIONS have the rules expressed as fiats because it would be too confusing to include all the ifs, ands & buts. Obviously, rules have to be adapted to circumstances. If you must deviate from the ideal, just try to feel guilty about it.

Two people have contributed sections on their special areas. Pat Kennedy's section explains the problems of photography by the audience, and how to solve them. George Paczolt proposes the establishment of a WORLDCON Masquerade Advisory Group, to be known as the MARCH HARE GROUP, presumably because you have to be crazy to volunteer to be on it. I hope there are enough insane people out so that we can see whether the idea will work.

AWARD ELIGIBILITY

Even though no formal rules on costume eligibility were, as far as I know, enforced prior to DENVENTION, there has been an informal consensus concerning which costumes should or should not be in the running for prizes. The rules below sum up these feelings.

1. Only costumes which have not competed in a previous WORLDCON shall be eligible for awards.
2. Professionally made (purchased) costumes shall not be award eligible
3. In the case of a wining costume having been designed by one person and made by another, the award shall be shared.
4. Nothing in the above rules prohibits using or reworking parts of previously exhibited costumes in a new and substantially different concept.
5. Any costume, including those excluded from award eligibility by the above rules, may be shown Out-of-Competition.

I would like to see an Out-of-Competition period in the Masquerade (perhaps while the Judges are deliberating) where people can show off previous wining entries, or other interesting costumes which the maker does not choose to place in contention for a prize.

LIMITATIONS ON COSTUMES

A few limits are called for regarding what may be shown or done on stage.

1. Agreeing that No Costume is no costume, complete nudity is prohibited.

2. Objectionably tasteless or obscene language is prohibited and will result in the perpetrator's being removed from the competition and, bodily, from the auditorium.

I favor this extreme measure not through an excess of sensibility, but because such conduct can destroy the atmosphere of the Masquerade and hence the effect of other costumes.

3. No dangerous or potentially dangerous props shall be allowed: e.g. open fire or working lasers.

4. Nothing shall be permitted which presents a real possibility of damage to costumes of other contestants: e.g. unsheathed weapons, except on stage, or substances such as the infamous peanut butter.

5. No presentation shall exceed 60 seconds.

COSTUME AWARD DIVISIONS

DEFINITIONS

Until DENVENTION, all costumes competed against all other costumes, and prize categories were manufactured to be sure that every award-worthy costume (in the sometimes fallible opinion of the judges) would win something. This system worked pretty well for years, and attempts to do it another way failed, generally because they had not been well thought out. In 1981, BJo Trimble tried a new system: that of dividing costumers into groups related to experience and ability. Three DIVISIONS of entries were defined: Novice, Journeyman, and Master. A First, Second, and Third Prize were awarded in each DIVISION. By all accounts, the system worked very well.

There are several advantages to the division of contestants by experience: for the beginner, a better chance at an award; for the expert, the challenge of competing against peers; and for everyone, the knowledge that their really good (say) fantasy costume will not lose a prize only because there is a slightly better fantasy costume present. I, and others, feel that this system of DIVISIONS should be adopted as a permanent part of WORLDCON Masquerade Competition, and I propose the following rules.

1. There shall be at least 3 DIVISIONS in which costumers may compete: Novice, Journeyman, and Master.
2. Novice is defined as a costumer who has never before entered a WORLDCON Masquerade.
3. Master is defined as a costumer who has won First place awards at three or more WORLDCONS working under the old system, or a First, Second or Third place award at three WORLDCONS operating under the DIVISIONS system.
4. Journeyman is defined as a costumer who has entered in previous WORLDCON competition but has not won enough awards to qualify for Master.

Additional divisions which could be used are: Young Fan (under 13 years of age) and Media (costumes copied from films, plays, TV shows or comics)

5. Up to three prizes may be awarded in each DIVISION.

Some feel there should be no limit on the number of prizes awarded, so that all deserving costumes can be honored. This can be left to the discretion of the individual WORLDCON.

6. Any competitor may, at his or her request, be entered in a DIVISION higher than the one for which actually qualified.

SUGGESTIONS FOR MASTER DIVISION QUALIFICATIONS

Attainment of Master status might best be done by establishing a point system, so that a person accumulating a certain number of points will automatically advance to Master. Let me give an example of how this might work.

Suppose points were to be awarded as follows:

<u>DIVISION</u>	<u>1st Place</u>	<u>2nd Place</u>	<u>3rd Place</u>
<u>Novice</u>	2	1	1
<u>Journeyman</u>	4	3	3

and further supposing that eight points were required to become a Master, then these eight points could be accumulated by winning one First in Novice plus two Seconds or Thirds in Journeyman, or by winning two Firsts in Journeyman, or by various other combinations.

A person who volunteers to compete in the Master DIVISION and wins an award is automatically considered to be a Master. If a Novice can do this, he or she is no novice!

WORKMANSHIP AWARDS

Although workmanship is one of the factors considered in judging costumes, only one WORLDCON has had a specific award in this area. Some experienced costumers, myself among them, support recognition of craftsmanship as a way to encourage excellence. For those CONS which decide to include a WORKMANSHIP award, and where the Committee is able to find someone to undertake the onerous job, here are some suggestions on how to make it work.

It is just not possible to examine every entry in the Masquerade with the sort of care needed. Therefore, anyone who wants to be considered for a WORKMANSHIP AWARD will have to volunteer to be judged. This will mean their filling out separate entry forms. Not only costumes, but accessories, side arms, jewelry, etc. should be considered for the award, under the same limitations which apply to other costume awards: original, non-professional (not boughten) work, not previously entered in a WORLDCON.

The judge will have to work backstage to get a close up view for the judging, and will need a reasonably private, well-lighted area, and enough helpers to locate those contestants who require a second look.

No limit should be placed on the number of awards, nor should the DIVISIONS be considered separately. Well-made is well-made, whether by Novice, Master, or Young Fan.

If a WORKMANSHIP AWARD becomes standard at WORLDCONS, we might consider a sort of Grand Master Award for anyone who has won three separate prizes for Workmanship. Perhaps, dwarves being fine artificers, a Gimli Award??

JUDGING

This is a touchy area to regulate. It is also the area which has drawn the largest number of spontaneous and heart-felt comments to the effect that something must be done to improve the level of judging. Here are ways to start.

Use greater care in the selection of judges, so that they are persons of experience and taste, capable of making disinterested decisions. (This last, in plainer terms, means that even if Judge A hates Contestant B's guts, A can submerge this feeling and consider B's costume solely on merit).

No person should be considered for the position of Masquerade Judge who has not demonstrated knowledge of or ability in the field, either by having made several top-notch (not necessarily prize-winning) costumes or by having shown, in writing or art, the ability to depict costume well. Not all GoH's have this ability, yet the GoH is traditionally included on the Judges Panel. The best way to take care of this potentially sticky situation is to have the GoH give a Personal Choice Award - or three awards, one in each DIVISION.

Be sure that the Judges are well informed on just what it is they are trying to do. A written guide needs to be created which will tell the judges, in detail, the procedure to be followed in running the Masquerade, the Prize DIVISIONS, the number of prizes to be awarded, and the areas to be considered in appraising each entry. This guide should be in the hands of the judges a month before the CON.

I would like to see someone (not me!) draw up a Standard Guide for Judges, which covers, along with the areas mentioned above, principles of judging, etiquette, and anything else applicable. Each WORLDCON can add to this their own special requirements, and should make the Guide available not only to the Judges but to the costumers and other interested parties.

AMENITIES

Costumes may be dramatic or horrific, beautiful or funny, subtle or gross. They may weigh 4 ounces or 40 pounds, be scanty or completely form-covering. One thing, however, which a lot of them are not is comfortable. At a WORLDCON Masquerade a costume may have to be worn for 10 or more hours: 3 hours to get into it and put on makeup (some costumes take even more time to don), a couple of hours for registration and place assignment, 3 or 4 hours of the event itself, and another hour at least to pose for the photographers, get back to the hotel room and get the damned thing off.

It thus behooves those in charge to supply certain AMENITIES to make this period of discomfort more bearable. I have listed some of these under three categories which reflect their importance to the costumer. I recognize that it may be difficult to arrange for all these things, but now that you know what is important, you can start.

CATEGORY A: ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY

1. (This rule is repeated under LOGISTICS) Costumers shall have access to the location where the Masquerade is to be held for one or more periods, totalling at least 4 hours. This access shall be available on the day preceding the Masquerade, or, in any case, no later than the morning of the event.

The afternoon of the Masquerade is too late: costumers need that time to rest and to dress for the show. The purpose of the access is to allow costumers to familiarize themselves with the facilities and to block their presentations. A carefully rehearsed presentation can fall to pieces on a strange stage. An advance look at steps and other obstacles is a big help to someone like myself, who is practically blind without glasses. Remember, anything which smooths the proceedings, speeds them.

2. Masquerade personnel shall be carefully selected and briefed on their functions, so that they will be both courteous and helpful to the costumers.

There have been complaints in this area at certain WORLD-CONS. Personnel have been more rushed and harrassed than deliberately rude; but the costumers are not only these, but also likely uncomfortable, probably tired, and possibly suffering from stage fright. They have reached the culmination of up to a year's work and need help and consideration while they wait to submit that work to the judgement of

their peers. Try to assign the positions dealing directly with the costumers to people who have themselves entered Masquerades - they will understand.

3. If the auditorium is not directly connected to one or more of the Convention hotels, adequate dressing room and makeup space shall be provided, so that contestants will not have to travel outside in fragile, elaborate, or startling costumes.

4. There shall be a costume repair station which shall contain, at a minimum, needles, thread in several colors, straight pins, safety pins, staple guns, glue, masking and Scotch tapes, and several skillful and experienced aides.

or

A location shall be provided where costumers may store their own repair kits in case of emergency. The aides are still required.

5. Sufficient space and chairs shall be provided to allow all costumers to be seated backstage.

6. Helpers shall be stationed at stairs and along elevated runways to assist (or catch) costumers who have problems moving, climbing, or seeing.

7. Cold liquids (water, fruit juice, Gatorade) and flexible straws shall be provided for thirsty costumers.

CATEGORY B: HIGHLY DESIRABLE

8. An auditorium seating area shall be reserved for contestants who want to watch the show after their own presentation is finished, or who do not wish to wait backstage. This area shall be in the back of or to the side of the auditorium, so that elaborate headdresses do not block audience view.

Unfortunately, provision of this seating area will not fully answer a frequently - and vehemently - voiced complaint: that costumers are unable to see the presentations of their fellow costumers. Realistically, the only way to satisfy this need is to bring in technology, in the form of closed-circuit TV (see #14, below).

9. Non-messy snacks (e.g. candy, or cheese pieces on toothpicks) shall be provided for costumers with low blood sugar problems.

10. Aides shall be available to provide physical assistance to anyone who has trouble using the toilets because of costume restrictions on movement.

CATEGORY C: IF YOU CAN DO IT, WE WILL LOVE YOU

11. Leaning boards shall be provided for contestants whose costumes prevent their sitting and/or bending their necks.

12. (Thanks to Karen Anderson) A collection of paper fans shall be provided for the use of overheated costumers.

13. Some light shawls shall be provided for costumers who get chilled. Lengths of cheap flannel will do.

14. A closed circuit color television system, including a color TV camera with a zoom lens, a tripod with a fluid pan head, a suitable switching and distribution facility, and at least two - preferably three - 25" color TV receivers, together with a camera operator, shall be provided to transmit the happenings on the stage to the costumers waiting backstage. A suitable alternative to the individual TV receivers or receiver-monitors would be a single large-screen projection TV setup. At the same time, using these TV facilities, a video tape recording shall be made of the entire Masquerade proceedings. This tape shall, where facilities permit, be shown over the hotel's own TV distribution system at least once before the end of the convention. Furthermore, the Convention Committee will arrange to make copies of this tape, in both Beta and VHS formats, available to interested purchasers within 90 days following the end of the Convention. (A suitable price might be \$25 or \$30 per copy.)

LOGISTICS

ENTRY FORMS: LAYOUT AND PURPOSE

Multi-part forms are a necessity. One section gives the M.C. the information he needs to introduce each costume; another is used by the judges for preliminary scoring, and a third goes to the Workmanship Judge, if any, as this judging has to be done backstage.

All sections need the following information:

The name(s) and address(es) of the contestant(s).

The name of the costumer, especially if different from the wearer.

The name of the costume (with phonetic spelling, if needed).

The source of the costume.

In which DIVISION the costume is entered.

The M.C.'s section must also contain any additional material for announcing the costume. The Judges' section needs 3 (or 5, depending on the number of judges) lines of numbers from 1 to 10, to be circled by the judges in preliminary judging.

Whichever section is on top should also have a list of general costume categories, one or more of which is to be checked by the costumer (see Arranging Order of Entries, p14)

As it takes time to fill out the forms, and more time to arrange them after they are passed in, it would be well to require all entry forms to be submitted at least 10 hours before the start of the Masquerade, except where the costumer can prove that this was physically impossible. If the forms can be filled out and sorted early, costumers need not show up at the auditorium two hours in advance, to join a milling crowd trying to register. Those who have no choice but to register at the Masquerade itself will be placed in order of registration after the other entries, losing the advantage of placement for best effect.

BLOCKING OF PRESENTATIONS

As stated under AMENITIES (page 10, Rule #1), contestants must have a chance to inspect the site of the Masquerade long enough in advance to make any changes demanded by the physical setup. The following people should be present at that time: light and sound crews, to discuss special requirements, determine their feasibility, and take notes;

several persons to collect registration forms and answer questions about them; and the M.C., to read over the texts and check pronunciations.

This is not a good time to record cassettes. Another site and time should be designated and prepared for the recordings people have not been able to make at home.

ARRANGING ORDER OF ENTRIES

At nearly every Masquerade, awkward juxtapositions have occurred: two outstanding costumes have been assigned slots right next to each other, diminishing the effect of both. Three Mr.Spocks have paraded across the stage in sequence. A low-key costume has had to follow a humorous one before the laughter has died down, and so lost its impact. At two WORLDCONs in succession, Adrienne, in costumes of subtle effect, had to follow a naked man.

I know how to fix this: I did it at NOREASCON - or almost. One of the naked men was my fault.

On the top section of the registration form, have a list of general categories and subcategories. For instance, SF, Fantasy, Space Opera, Horror, BEM, Myth, and maybe a few more; with subcategories such as Beautiful, Humorous, Authentic, Dramatic, etc. The costumer will place a checkmark against whichever of the categories and subcategories come closest to the costume. Since the registration forms must be handed in no later than the morning of the Masquerade, there will be time to arrange the forms into categories, and then to sort them so that costumes which may be similar in intent are separated by at least 3 or 4 other entries. This immensely improves the pacing of the Masquerade and should prevent the sort of conflicts which have occurred in the past. As only a few members of the Masquerade Staff will see these forms before the event, nothing is given away to the audience.

After the entry forms are sorted, they are numbered sequentially in order of appearance, and alphabetized for pickup by the costumer before the Masquerade. Overall, the DIVISIONs should probably go on in the order, Novice, Journeyman, Master. There will undoubtedly be very fine costumes in the first two categories, but on the basis of probability, this arrangement should build the effect.

PHOTOGRAPHS-FOR-RECORD

Adrienne has made an excellent suggestion (being adopted by CONstellation) which will benefit both judges and costumers. She proposes that one or two people, armed with Polaroids, take color pictures of every entry. These photos will be attached to the entry forms and go along to the Judges' deliberations. It can be very hard to remember which

of over 100 costumes was which; after several hours of watching them go by, they tend to blur in memory. With a photograph, there will be no such problem, and judging will be both faster and more fair,

Adrienne has even told us how to pay for this: charge an entry fee of \$1.00. In return for this, the costumer gets to pick up and keep the photograph after the Masquerade is over. Many costumers have trouble getting pictures of themselves, and will consider one dollar reasonable for a guaranteed photo.

SOUND AND DIALOG

The following rule will be in effect at CONstellation, and I hope will become standard at all Masquerades:

No microphones will be provided to contestants. Any dialog and musical or sound accompaniment will be pre-recorded on cassettes, and provision will be made for its broadcast.

Any fool can lip-synch, but not every fool can remember his dialog when up in front of several thousand people. Equally important, objectionable dialog and overlong presentations can be ended at the flick of a switch. In fact, there will be no excuse for running over the allotted 60 seconds, since the dialog or music can be rehearsed and re-recorded until it fits the time slot.

The tape specs should be published well in advance, and the Convention will need to provide recording facilities for those few people who do not have access to a machine. The Masquerade Committee will need at least two cassette players, so as not to lose time changing cassettes; and the beginning of the tape sections to be played will have to be marked carefully. I recommend a lot of practice by the sound crew.

It would probably be best for each contestant to set up and to keep his own cassette until his group is called up. The CON will need to provide stickers to number the cassettes for the benefit of the sound crew.

SCENARIO

This section is an attempt to integrate the LOGISTICS suggestions into an overall procedure.

Use multi-part forms - perhaps carbonless duplicating, to save repeating information - which must be in by 10AM on the day of the Masquerade. The forms are sorted and arranged in order of appearance (see page 14), then numbered consecutively in that order. During this time, the M.C. has a chance to read over what he is to say and to note questions on pronunciation. The forms could be collected during the period used by the costumers to look over the facilities.

After the forms are numbered, they are alphabetized by costumer name, and brought to the Masquerade site for pickup before the show goes on. The costumer learns from the number on the form what is his order of appearance. He gets his Polaroid taken and clipped to the Judges form.* If the costume is entered for Workmanship Judging, the costumer locates that judge and submits to appraisal. Otherwise, he just waits with the form until he is to go on stage.

Someone on the Masquerade Staff calls up each group of 10 entries in time to get them together for their appearance. He collects the forms, separates them, and dispatches each batch of 10 to its correct destination: the M.C. or the Judges' table. At the same time, a member of the Sound Crew collects the tape cassettes.

As each entry is announced by the M.C., the Judges use their form to record preliminary appraisals by circling the appropriate number. The form is then passed to an aide, who totals the score on each form and sorts the forms by DIVISION. Another aide orders each pile of forms from high to low score. At the end of the presentations, the judges take with them to their deliberations the forms and photographs for the highest-scoring 5 or 6 costumes in each DIVISION.

* * * * *

* It has been proposed that the Polaroids be taken during the presentations themselves. There is a problem with this: good color Polaroids cannot be guaranteed without the use of flash. Flash photography distracts and annoys the contestants, and interferes with available light photography, for which reasons it is prohibited during the Masquerader.

What has this elaborate procedure accomplished?

Because of the information on the forms and their early submission, it has been possible to arrange the costumes for good pacing of the show and without causing conflict of costume effects.

The M.C. has had plenty of time to check pronunciations.

The costumers have had a shorter wait backstage than is possible when the forms have to be filled out at the event.

The use of tape cassettes has eliminated blown or inaudible lines, as well as over-long presentations.

The Judges have not had to waste time sorting and discarding forms for entries which are clearly out of contention.

The Judges have had a clear reminder, in the form of a color photograph, of exactly which costume they are discussing and how good it was. This will both shorten debate and make second run-throughs superfluous.

Now, let us look at cost vs benefit in terms of time.

Estimated additional time required by the Masquerade Staff over older procedures: say, 5 hours per staff member x 10 staff (2 on lighting, 2 on sound, M.C., and 5 additional personnel to process forms and answer questions) = 50 hours.

Estimated time saved: figuring conservatively that the Masquerade will take one hour less overall time x 3 judges + 20 staff + 100 costumers + 2000 spectators = 2123 hours at an absolute minimum.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY THE AUDIENCE

by Pat Kennedy

These days, it's probably unnecessary to emphasize that flash photography of the stage area during costume presentations must be forbidden. Even the most avid of photographers will readily acknowledge the potential dangers of a single flash discharge (let alone dozens) temporarily blinding a contestant who is attempting to maneuver an awkward or cumbersome costume on an unfamiliar, elevated (and possibly narrow and/or unsteady) stage, runway, ramp or staircase. Quite aside from these dangers, however, most masqueraders are relatively unaccustomed to being on the receiving end of a paparazzi-like flash barrage, and the startle effect can all too easily disrupt even the most carefully prepared presentation. Most fans will understand these problems, and will willingly extend the required courtesy, when appropriate and timely explanations are proffered. It is part of the responsibilities of the M.C. to make these explanations before the first costume is presented and as frequently thereafter as (s)he may find necessary. However, the convention masquerade (sub)committee should also accept the responsibility for publishing in advance the rules they establish for photography by the audience (for example, in convention progress reports, program books, and pocket programs).

Courtesy, of course, is a two-way street. Most fans own cameras, possess photographic skills ranging from novice to working professional, and will at the very least wish to carry away from the masquerade a personalized record of the costumes. Some will undoubtedly have more ambitious goals in mind. Part of the success of any given masquerade will depend on how well the needs of these photographers are met. Furthermore, the greatest amount of co-operation will be elicited when the fans are assured that there will be both the opportunity and the facilities necessary to take the photographs they wish. These two aspects need to be addressed separately.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PHOTOGRAPHY:

If the procedural guidelines outlined elsewhere in this Compendium are followed, it seems likely that the time necessary to present all costumes, complete the judging, and announce the judges' decisions (second run-throughs should prove unnecessary!) can be significantly reduced in comparison with previous experience. This suggests that the traditional time for photography, immediately following the masquerade, should become more attractive for photographers and contestants alike, since it will begin relatively earlier when all concerned still retain the necessary energy. Contestants should be notified well in advance that they can expect to be "on call" for photography after the masquerade

itself is over, and their co-operation requested. In addition, of course, available-light photographers who do not require artificial light sources (flash or otherwise) can be allowed (or even encouraged) to photograph during costume presentations, since such photography is usually non-distracting. The M.C.'s responsibilities should include advising the audience of these opportunities.

FACILITIES FOR PHOTOGRAPHY

Flash Photography:

The majority of photographers in the audience will be equipped to take pictures using solid-combustion flash (individual bulbs, cube, flip-flash, or flashbar) or gas-discharge (electronic) flash units. For these people, an area for flash photography should be provided either at the side or rear of the auditorium or in an adjacent large room (500 sq. ft. minimum area), if available. This area should be at least 12 feet (preferably 20 feet) wide by 12 feet deep and should, if possible, include an unbroken, full-width background in a light grey or off-white color at least 8 feet high. If there is no existing wall surface that will provide this background, and if the masquerade budget permits, seamless photographic backdrop material can be obtained and installed temporarily with gaffer's tape and/or tacks (where allowed). The area should be clearly and conspicuously labeled "FLASH PHOTOGRAPHY AREA" using letters at least 6" high.

The area should be illuminated to the minimum level necessary to facilitate camera focusing and picture composition - about 50 footcandles will suffice. No other amenities are needed for this area, but the (sub)committee may wish to consider use of rope-and-stanchion barriers to separate the photographers from the contestants (to preclude inadvertent damage to costumes) and from adjacent bystanders (to minimize camera jostling during photography).

If the (sub)committee elects to utilize the costume photograph-for-record procedure described in the LOGISTICS section, above (and they should!), an area suitable for flash photography may need to be set up backstage, as well. Where the physical configuration of the building permits, it would be a good idea to consider combining this area with that to be utilized for audience flash photography. (A single area could be used without staff/audience conflict, since the times of intended use are widely separated by the duration of the masquerade itself.)

Although it may seem slightly frivolous to bring it up, there are some die-hard antiquarians in the ranks of fandom who may wish to use unshielded solid-combustion flash (such as magnesium powder, ribbon, or foil) or other similar obsolete techniques. Needless to say, they should be discouraged from doing so - emphatically!

Available-Light Photography:

A sizeable minority of the photographers in the audience will be equipped with the types of camera equipment and film which make possible taking pictures indoors without flash. (Many prefer to avoid the harsh lighting effect usually produced when only a single flash unit is employed.) Some will be equipped with fast film and high speed telephoto lenses so that they can take reasonably good photographs of the stage/runway area during costume presentations. For the most part, they can be relied on to get on with their business in a reasonably unobtrusive manner. However, almost all available-light photographers will undoubtedly wish to take individual, posed pictures of the costumes following the masquerade. For this purpose also, a special area should be provided. It should be about the same size as the flash photography area and should be similarly located; like the flash area, it should be equipped with an unbroken light grey or off-white background. To minimize conflict with the flash photography people, it should be placed along an opposite or adjacent wall or, if located along the same wall, should be spaced at least 30 feet from the flash area.

Lighting the available-light photography area can be a trifle complicated. Almost all fans will be using color film for costume photography, and all color films are designed ("balanced") for use with light of a specific "Color Temperature", expressed in degrees Kelvin (0 degrees K is absolute zero). With few exceptions (and the photographers using the exceptions can safely be assumed to know what they're doing and will need no assistance), the available-light photographers will be using either "daylight" film (balanced for about 6,500K illumination) or "tungsten" film (balanced for 3,200K illumination). The split will be about 50/50. Unless physical space and budget permit the setup of two separate available-light areas, the (sub)committee will have to decide which "color temperature" of lighting to provide. It may be helpful to know that 3,200K photo lamps are much less expensive to provide than 6,500K lamps having the same intensity of light output. In any event, the (sub)committee should have at its disposal the services of a knowledgeable photographer, and here is one area where his or her advice should be sought.

Whichever type of illumination is utilized, the available-light photography area's neutral background should be lighted as evenly as possible and to a level of at least 100 footcandles (200 would be better). A minimum of four (4) light sources - one placed high and one placed low on each side - will be necessary. Light sources can be supported on individual light stands or clamped to floor-to-ceiling tension poles. Stands, poles, and wiring will all have to be protected against jostling, tripping over, etc., and several

"gophers" will probably have to be delegated for this duty. Wires can be run under carpeting where this is permitted, or their horizontal runs can be protected with temporary rubber or metal floor ducts. (A good alternative is several layers of gaffer's tape run lengthwise along the cables.) An even better technique might be to route cables up-over-and-down, if suitable hangers can be provided.

The area(s) should again be clearly and conspicuously labeled "AVAILABLE-LIGHT PHOTOGRAPHY AREA: 3,200K" and/or "AVAILABLE-LIGHT PHOTOGRAPHY AREA: 6,500K" using letters at least 6" high. And, again, some of the potential problems of crowding may be controllable through the use of rope-and-stanchion barriers.

As a courtesy to photographers using available-light techniques, the (sub)committee should consider assigning to its photographic consultant the task of measuring the light levels at the area(s), using an incident-type light meter, when the final setup has been achieved. (S)he should also do the same at several of the most likely locations on the stage/runway. These measurements should be given to the M.C. - expressed both in footcandles and in required lens opening/shutter speed combination for an ASA 100 type film - so that he can relay that information to the audience.

ADDITIONAL THOUGHTS ON PHOTOGRAPHY:

Press and TV Cameras:

The masquerade of any convention that is sufficiently large is almost certain to draw still photographers from the press and motion picture and/or TV camera crews from the local broadcast stations (maybe even the networks!). The masquerade (sub)committee's photographic consultant should be assigned to work with the convention's "media" liaison people to ensure that these (admittedly legitimate) activities do not materially interfere with the (much more important) interests of costumers, judges, audience, and staff. To the maximum extent possible, the press should be assigned fixed locations within the auditorium where this interference will be minimized, and they should be required to remain in those locations until the judges' decisions are announced.

Tripods

Available-light photographers may be tempted to use tripods when trying to take pictures of costumes as they are presented. However, the use of tripods in an auditorium environment is almost always disruptive and invariably interferes with the enjoyment of neighboring members of the audience. (A tripod complete with camera and photographer takes up at least 16 sq. ft. of floor space and usually extends upward into the sight-lines of those behind.) Their use should therefore be discouraged, or even denied. With a

little practice, most photographers can achieve almost the same degree of support using alternative devices - such as monopods and chest, shoulder, or neck braces. A rule to this effect should be established by the (sub)committee and promulgated well in advance of the masquerade.

The use of tripods by motion picture and/or TV camera crews is nearly an inescapable fact of life and will just have to be accommodated somehow. Again, the photographic consultant may be able to provide advice.

A MODEST PROPOSAL: THE MARCH HARE GROUP

by George R. Paczolt

Any costumer who makes it a habit of attending the Worldcon masquerade on a regular basis realizes that the quality of the masquerades has a tendency to vary (sometimes to extremes) from year to year. The constant roller-coaster quality can be traced to two variable factors:

A. The facilities provided by the Worldcon Committee.

B. The Masquerade committee itself.

The physical facilities are almost impossible to control. Invariably, the Worldcon committee will take the largest available hall and assign it to the Masquerade for Saturday night and the Hugos on Sunday night. Such facilities can range from excellent with poor acoustics (DENVENTION) to mediocre with good acoustics (NOREASCON). For the moment (knock on wood) we have yet to have the bad extreme, and unfortunately, we have yet to get a DENVENTION area with perfect acoustics. We work with what we have, and hope for the best.

The Masquerade Committee is another matter. Usually, one interested individual volunteers to take on the task, and then grabs whoever is interested/available to help put the Masquerade on. While the Masquerade chairman is (almost?) always someone who is interested in costuming, his/her ability to put grand and beautiful dreams into reality on stage is, at times, suspect. Sometimes, like at DENVENTION, we get very lucky in having someone who can both plan and run the Masquerade efficiently and successfully. On other occasions, we find carpenters nailing together the stage fifteen minutes before the first costume is due on. The quality of Masquerade committees has varied too much for the contestants to be able to count on it.

Enter the March Hare Group.

Behind this oddly fancy title is a very simple concept: a Permanent Worldcon Masquerade Committee, which will go from Worldcon to Worldcon, offering to supply the personpower and knowhow to put on the Masquerade if the Worldcon committee will supply the facilities and funding. My envisioned start for such a group is to have the Masquerade committee from some year's Worldcon decide, "Hey, let's do it again next year!", and get the OK from that Worldcon committee, etc. This would be a fairly nebulously structured group, losing some members each year while gaining new ones, but always existing as a group effort. This would have the following advantages:

1. The Masquerade would be run by people who had done

the last one. This would insure continuity, making the Masquerade run smoother, to the benefit of performers and audience alike.

2. Each Masquerade would have the potential of being better than the last, since the Group would be working among friends (or at least acquaintances) rather than strangers.

3. Individuals could limit themselves to tasks within the Masquerade that they are strong at. For example, someone who is able to plan a good Masquerade, but is weak at running gophers would handle the planning; while his/her converse would take over Saturday night and get the show on the road.

4. Backstage hardware, such as leaning boards, would become more practical, since there will be a permanent Group to care for them.

5. Acoustic problems could become manageable by acquiring a fannish sound consultant as part of the Group. That person could look over the hall and decide what is needed to be done.

6. Union problems (the newest pit in the morass of putting on a Masquerade) could conceivably be headed off by someone in the Group who knows how to deal with the local.

Who would join the March Hare Group? Ex- and retired costumers, costumers who are taking a year off from the stage but still want to be involved. Costumers who have no intention of entering the Worldcon Masquerade. Individuals who don't make costumes but are still interested in fannish costuming, and ghod only knows who else. It will be a nebulous group, suffering constant attrition from year to year, but being reinforced by new people. I don't visualize a set heirarchy, but rather people fitting into jobs that they know the best.

All that is needed to make this work is some form of reward. For the costumers, the reward is the audience's reaction to the sum total of the past year's work. For the Group, it would have to be something else, since they will be the ones laboring backstage, unseen and unacknowledged. Such reinforcement would have to come from the costumers themselves, for these are the guys who make all that sewing, etc. worthwhile.

Oh yes, why "The March Hare Group" instead of "The Permanent Worldcon Masquerade Committee"? It rolls off the tongue easier, it's easier to remember in promotion, and besides, it's a good general portrait of anyone who wants to spend the rest of their fannish lives planning and running Worldcon Masquerades. I guess I had better start the ball rolling by admitting to the latter.

TIPS ON RECORDING YOUR TAPES

by Marty Gear

These days almost everyone owns a cassette recorder or at least has access to one. While there are a number of things that can be said against the cassette format, it has the virtue of being widely available, and very convenient to use. Obviously, the better the piece of equipment, the better the results, but a few guidelines will aid in getting results that you can be happy with, even with the most basic piece of equipment.

Microphones

Most portable recorders have built-in microphones that should be avoided at all costs. If your recorder has provision for an external microphone, invest in a modestly priced "cardioid pattern" microphone with a plug to match your recorder or cassette deck. Most cassette units are designed to accept unbalanced 600 ohm (10 Z) microphones, but if you have any doubt, take your unit into a good stereo supply house and ask them. Twenty to twenty-five dollars should get you an acceptable cardioid pattern dynamic mic, and you can approach "broadcast quality" for under \$ 90.00. The cardioid pattern means that the microphone is directional i.e. it will pick up you speaking into it, but not the kids playing out in the street. Chances are that no matter how much you invest, it will give you an improvement over the mic that came with your unit.

Sound Levels

Almost any cassette recorder deck that you can buy and all except for the cheapest of the cassette recorder/players have some type of sound level device. The most popular is the VU (volume unit) meter usually marked off in decibels (-10, -4, -3, -2, -1, 0, +1, etc.) and with a black scale running up to "0" and a red scale for the numbers above "0". Some of the newer decks have LED or other light indicators that do the same thing. The important thing for you to remember is that you do not want the loudest passages of your music or voice to exceed that "0" reading. Beyond that you are asking for distortion, particularly when it is amplified and played over the sound system at a con. Play your music over and over and watch the sound meter as it is recording, and set the volume control so that the loudest passage just peaks at "0" and then leave it there!

Mixing Voice and Music

If you have mixer facilities, you probably already know much more than this brief guideline is going to tell you, but if not, read on. If the only thing that you have available is a small portable recorder/player, about the only thing that you can do at this point is to put the background music on your hi-fi, sit with your back to a speaker, put the recorder microphone in front of you at mouth level and about 12" away from you and keep recording your spiel over and over with the music at different levels of loudness until you are happy with the result. If you have to err in any direction, do so with the voice louder than the music. The wittiest line in the world is no good if the audience can't hear it.

If you have a component stereo system with a separate cassette deck, that you can plug in and out of the system, you can get much more professional results as follows:

Set your stereo for mono. Unplug the stereo from the left channel input jack of the cassette deck. Plug your cardioid microphone into the left channel microphone-in jack. Turn the volume control of the cassette input left channel down to the minimum. Set your cassette deck for record, play the passage of music, and set the right channel cassette deck volume control so that the right channel meter just peaks at "0" on the loudest passages. Now turn it down so that the loudest passage just peaks at -1 or better -2 on the meter. Leave the right channel volume control alone. Now read your spiel into the microphone turning the left channel volume control up until your loudest voice passage just peaks at "0" in the left channel VU meter. Go back, erase the tape and try the voice and music together. Listen to the result, and if necessary, turn the music down (not the voice up) until you are happy with the results. Once you have the settings just the way that you want them, erase the whole tape, or better yet start with a clean tape and record the whole thing voice and music together. Mark the outside of the tape box with your name and phone number, and something to identify it, and bring it to the con.

Additional tips to con sound people and costumers

1- Always set your playback decks for mono even if you have to use a "y" connector, this way you can be sure that the "mix" will come out the way the costumer wanted it.

2- Record your bit with standard tape on standard settings, do not use Dolby or metal oxide tapes unless you can be damn sure that con will have appropriate playback facilities available. Even then, it is better to use standard settings so that the con sound person doesn't have to keep changing things around.

3- Listen to your tape, in fact, invite a few friends in to listen to it and make comments. Is it really as funny as you thought it was at 2:00 am when you thought up the idea? Does the music fit the script and character? Does that four letter word really add anything besides shock value? In short, do your editing at home, don't make the con do it for you.

4- Check the time very carefully. If it runs over the sixty seconds allotted, do it over so that it lasts not more than sixty seconds. At ConStellation, we will be watching the clock and will cut off any tapes that go over the permitted time. Masquerades are not "talent shows" the costume not the presentation is what is being judged, and if in doubt, let the costume speak for itself.

If you have been hopelessly confused by the above, take it to your friendly neighborhood "hi-fi nut" and ask his/her help. If not, good luck, and I'll be looking for you at the next con.