

# SAN DIEGO COMIC-CON INTERNATIONAL 2015

*Celebrating The Popular Arts July 9-12, Preview Night: July 8 - San Diego Convention Center*



## Masquerade - Contestant Information & Rules

**What it is:** Our 41<sup>st</sup> annual **Costume Competition**, showcasing costumes inspired by movies, comic books, TV, fantasy, Japanese animation, video games, history, and the imagination of our attendees. Note this is **not** a dance or party, but a show on a stage. It is free for Comic-Con attendees to participate in or be in the audience. Most contestants provide recorded music and choreograph dramatic or humorous action for their presentations. Some entries will be individuals, others will be groups with a shared theme. Impressive Comic-Con custom award medallions, as well as cash and other prizes will be given in various categories. The large stage will feature theater-style lighting and sound, and excellent viewing for all in the audience will be provided by giant high-definition video screens suspended overhead.

**When & Where:** 8:30 p.m. Saturday, July 11 in Ballroom 20 of the Convention Center. The event will run three hours, and doors will open at 8:00 p.m. for audience seating. As the line will start forming long before then, early arrival is suggested. Tickets for seating will be given out **free** to people in the line beginning at 12:00 noon. A ticket guarantees a seat, so you need not stay in line after you receive yours, and after tickets have been distributed to those in line, any that may remain from the 3,900 available will be given out at the Masquerade Desk. Should you be unable to obtain tickets to the main ballroom there will also be seating for 2,500 in the Sails Pavilion and in other ballrooms where the show will be projected on giant screens. Reserved seating is available for Comic-Con special guests.

No flash photography of the show is allowed, and any photos or video taken must be for personal, non-profit use *only!* Photographers or press who wish access to the flash-friendly **Photo Op Area**, where contestants will pose after exiting the ballroom stage, should write to the Coordinator at [masquerade@comic-con.net](mailto:masquerade@comic-con.net) to request a reserved spot, as only a limited number are allowed due to space limitations. The Photo Area will include a backdrop and photo lighting.

**How To Enter:** Send in an **Entry Form** no later than **June 20**, via mail or e-mail. **Very often we fill up as early as May, so submitting a form early is recommended.** A photo of the costume you will be wearing is also required to be fully confirmed for the show, and until photos are received your entry is only tentatively accepted. Photos may be sent via e-mail or regular mail. A "work in progress" photo is acceptable if only a small amount of work remains to be done. Send it with your Entry Form, or as a follow-up afterwards. If your entry is a group please provide photos of all costumes. This is to assure costumes meet all the Rules criteria for crafting and quality, and to assist us in helping your presentation by letting us know what to plan for. Photos will be kept confidential so that you will still be a "surprise" for the audience and judges. Many costumers reserve a space months early, then send photos in May or June to be confirmed. You will receive a mail confirming receipt of your form within two weeks or less.

**What if you were unable to buy a badge?** Our contestants go to much work to craft their amazing creations, but some are unable to buy attendee badges due to the sell-out. For **ONLY** those contestants who have been accepted into the Masquerade at least once since 2011, if you've a costume suitable for the show, and submit an entry form and photos, and we deem you meet the acceptance criteria as listed in the rules, **we can arrange for contestants to be able to buy an 2015 attendee badge even though all badges are sold out.** Write to the Coordinator at [Masquerade@comic-con.net](mailto:Masquerade@comic-con.net) for more information. Note there are a limited number of such badges available, and a limited number of contestant slots.

There will be a **Waiting List** to fill spots arising from cancellations (travel plans change, etc.) and entry forms submitted after we've filled up will be put on a Waiting List. Those on the list will be notified if a spot opens up. You may also sign up on the Waiting List at the Masquerade Desk at the convention on Thursday and Friday 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Unfortunately, due to the limit on number of entries we can accommodate so that the backstage is not overcrowded and the show doesn't run overly long, we must turn some costumes away. Therefore, to fairly give spots to contestants most deserving of them, we will evaluate photos during the week of June 22 (or earlier, if photos showing the completed costume are received) using a 3-person jury, to ascertain if an entry has sufficient original craftsmanship and quality.

If you reserve a spot and later find you must cancel, please tell us so the space can be given to another. **Do not wear your costume at the convention before it is seen in the Masquerade**, or it will be ineligible for the competition. People line up several hours in advance to see something special, so keep your Masquerade costume out of sight until Saturday night.

If you are using **MUSIC, pre-recorded narration, or other recorded sound** with your presentation, you may provide it to us on compact disk (CD), or a USB drive using MP3 format. If you are recording your own CD, use a CD-R and test it on various CD players to assure wide compatibility. Bring two copies, one to give to us, and one to keep for rehearsing and as a back-up. Label them with your name and costume name. Submit your music when you sign-in or at the Orientation (no later than 11 AM!). If you would like to make our job easier, e-mail your sound recording to us as an MP3 file before the convention to the address on the entry form, or you can send your CD or USB using postal mail. There will be **NO MICROPHONES** for contestants, so any speech must be on your recording, or written as text for the Master of Ceremonies to read. If you have no music, we can try to provide some for you if you'd like. You may use copyrighted music, since our conventions pay ASCAP and BMI performance fees to cover music use at the event.

**Comic-Con Award Medallions:** A panel of guest judges, assembled from professionals in costume-related fields, will select winners of the beautiful Comic-Con Masquerade award medallions in the categories of ***Best In Show, Judges' Choice, Best Re-Creation, Best Original Design, Best Workmanship, Most Humorous, Most Beautiful*** and ***Best Young Fan***. The award medallions, custom designed for our Masquerade by fantasy artist Sue Dawe will be given out at a maximum of 5 per category, although large winning groups may purchase additional medallions at our cost.. There will be a special **workmanship judge** for those entrants who would like a close-up appraisal of their costumes.

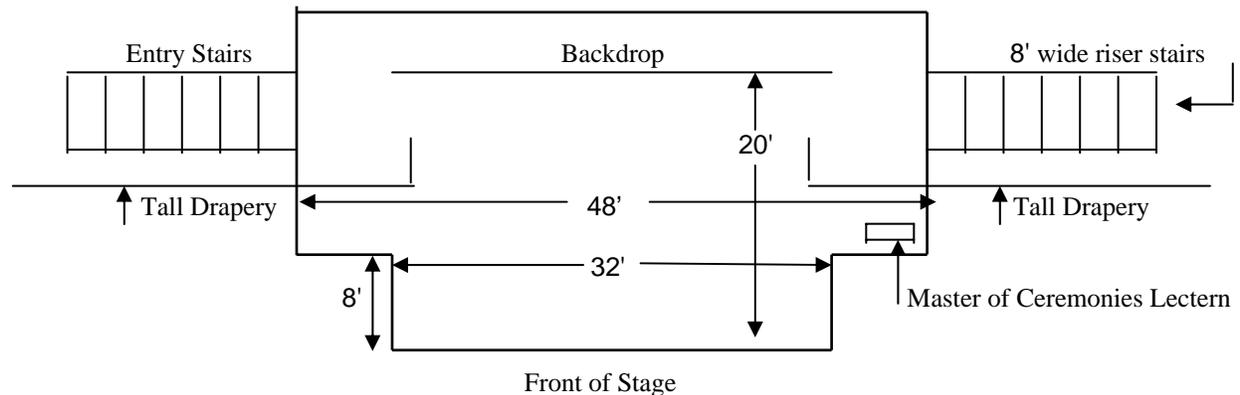
**ALSO FOR WINNERS:** Any costumed entry winning one of the above Comic-Con award categories will receive a FREE 4-day membership to our 2016 Comic-Con! You'll have no need to deal with the uncertainties of on-line membership registration, if you win in the above categories you'll have your badge for 2015, Comic-Con's extra thank-you for all your dedication, hard work and talent. These free badges will be non-transferable; if a group wins, up to four memberships will be given.

***In addition to the Comic-Con Masquerade awards, representatives of the following companies & organizations will be generously donating separate cash and collectibles prizes to winners they select:***

- **Frank And Son Collectible Show**, of the City of Industry, CA, "Your one-stop show for all your collectible needs" will present to the entry they deem the audience favorite a prize of **\$1,000** cash, plus a very impressive trophy.
- **DC Comics** representatives will present a special DC DIRECT collectible valued at **\$300** to the finest entry portraying a DC Comics character or characters from their publications or films.
- **Lucasfilm Ltd.** will reward the best *Star Wars* costumers with fabulous items from their Licensing Archives. The finest *Star Wars* entries will be selected by a Lucasfilm representative to receive very special limited-edition collectibles.
- **Sideshow Collectibles:** Do you think your costume entry into this year's contest will elicit lots of ooo's and ahhhh's from the crowd? If that's the case, you'll be in the running to win a \$350 gift card from Sideshow Collectibles for use on their web site! So bring that WOW factor to Comic-Con's Masquerade contest and you might walk (or strut) away with Sideshow's prize.
- **The Will Eisner Spirit of Storytelling Award** is a NEW prize, offered in 2015 for the first time anywhere. It commemorates Will Eisner's contributions to the comics medium and his imaginative storytelling skills as exemplified by his iconic comic character, *The Spirit* and his many graphic novels. The award will be bestowed by Will Eisner Studios to the Masquerade entry they deem best showcases the all-important "art of storytelling" in their stage presentation and includes a **\$500** Amazon.com gift card plus limited edition Will Eisner prints for the winning entrants. 2015 also marks the 75th anniversary of Will Eisner's *The Spirit*. *The Spirit* Newspaper Section reached 5 million readers, was known for its imaginative stories and creative artwork and is still in print today.

***More companies and organizations will join this list in the weeks to come. Check the [www.comic-con.org](http://www.comic-con.org) website Masquerade page periodically for updates on prizes and other Masquerade news.***

### Stage Diagram – Top View



The presentation area of stage will be 32' wide by 20' deep, elevated 48" from the ballroom floor. Going up to stage level will require traveling up seven wide 7" high stairs. The ballroom doorways are 9' high by 6' wide. Nearby rooms will contain dressing rooms, and there will be bathrooms for make-up needs. Standard entry will be stage-right, with the exit stage-left, behind the M.C. lectern. Groups may enter and exit from both sides. Special accommodations for the disabled are possible if we are related the particular needs in advance. For more information contact the Masquerade Coordinator.

### Contestants Should Read All of The Following Information:

When you arrive at the convention, sign-in at the **Masquerade Desk** upstairs near Ballroom 20 to confirm your arrival and to fill out some show forms. **If you don't sign-in by noon on Saturday, we will have to assume you have canceled and will release your spot to someone from the Waiting List.** Completed show forms must be submitted no later than 5:00 PM Friday, or, if you are a Saturday attendee only, you may submit it by 11:00 AM Saturday, either at the Desk or the Orientation. All contestants and helpers need **Backstage Passes** for the show, obtainable at the Desk and at the Orientation. **Masquerade Desk hours are 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday.**

If your costume is a **re-creation**, we suggest providing the judges with one or more reference images of what it is based on, since not all of them may be familiar with your costume. You may submit reference materials at the convention, and they will be returned afterwards. Most contestants simply provide a photo or two, but some supply elaborate booklets detailing the features, close-up photos of the construction and even fabric samples that show their entire creative process.

High-Definition cameras will be providing close-up views for the projection screens, so if theatrical make-up is appropriate to your costume, you may wish to use it. Following your stage appearance, you will be escorted to the **Photo Area** to pose in front of a few dozen photographers, and you will need to remain in the Masquerade backstage areas until all the award presentations conclude. You may win an award and be called back on stage to receive it!

Please let us know ahead of time about any especially large costumes, prop items, or set pieces you'll have. Freight elevators, storage space and special rear-building access for unloading and loading is available, but must be arranged for beforehand. Experienced costumers know the rule: "Surprise the audience, but never surprise the backstage crew." Be as elaborate as you like, we love elaborate costumes and presentations, but please inform us in advance.

We strongly suggest attending the **Masquerade Orientation** from **10:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.** on Saturday, in Room 31, where we will discuss your technical needs and answer questions. You need not bring your costume, although you can bring it and store it there if you like. This room will contain a practice stage available to contestants for the rest of the day. The ballroom stage will be in use for other events during Saturday, but the practice stage will have similar dimensions. There will be a **Masquerade Review** Sunday so contestants may watch a large-screen video of their presentations.

When arriving for the show Saturday evening, all contestants must check-in with the staff at Room 32. Check-in is important so that we know you have arrived! You may check-in as early as 5:00 p.m., but **NO LATER than 7:00 p.m.** and you must be **stage-ready by 7:15 p.m.** to allow for judging photos to be taken. We're sorry, but if you are late, you will probably be pulled from the show. Private dressing rooms will be assigned when you arrive.

## 2015 Comic-Con International Masquerade Rules:

- 1) **Costumes must be of original construction, or show significant modification of pre-existing materials.** No costumes are allowed that are purchased or otherwise obtained from a commercial source. This is a show of creativity and craftsmanship, not shopping ability. It is expected that some costumes may include as **minor** elements some purchased items. If your entry utilizes many of these, check with the Masquerade Coordinator for approval. As a general rule, at least 75% of what you bring onto the stage must not have been purchased. If it could pass for street clothes, it's not a costume.
- 2) Competing costumes **MUST NOT** be worn at the convention prior to the show! If everyone's seen your costume, there's no point in displaying it on stage, so keep your entry out of sight until Saturday night. You may of course wear your costume around the convention after it has been in the show. Costumes entered in our previous shows may not return. Costumes entered in the Masquerade at our sister convention, WonderCon, may also compete at Comic-Con.
- 3) Maximum time on stage: 1-2 people: 1 minute 15 seconds. 3-6 people: 2 minutes. 7 or more: 2 minutes 30 seconds. If you would like more time, check with the Coordinator beforehand. Show off your costume well and have fun, but remaining on stage too long can lessen the impact of your presentation, but don't be too quick, either!
- 4) No liquids, messy substances, or anything that may pose a danger is allowed on stage. Unsheathing of bladed weapons is not allowed without clearance from the Coordinator. No throwing of things into the audience. Nothing is allowed that would get a movie an "R" rating. Violating these rules will disqualify you, and possibly result in escort off the premises. Due to safety concerns, **minors** may not perform combat simulations.
- 5) Category definitions: **Re-Creation:** A costume copied from a pre-existing design, such as from a movie, comic book, famous artwork, history, etc. **Original:** A design original to the maker/wearer. It may be inspired by some work of fantasy, science fiction, mythology, etc., but is not a copy. **Young Fan:** Ages 9 to 14.
- 6) A costume that has previously won **Best In Show** or **Best In Master Class** at a Costume-Con, NASFiC, or Worldcon convention is not eligible for an award from the judges, but is still eligible to win company prizes.
- 7) Contestants agree to show up in the Masquerade rooms no later than the specified time the evening of the show (7:00 P.M.), and to allow video recording and photography of their costumes for non-profit purposes.
- 8) The Coordinator may reject an entry on the basis of inappropriate or unsafe behavior or content, because of too many purchased items, because the construction materials or techniques used do not meet the criteria of quality for the show, or because the event has reached its limit for entries.
- 9) For safety reasons, children under age 9 are not allowed. A **Young Fan** must have a parent or guardian present with them backstage and minors' parents will be asked to sign a permission form. Please do not bring small children into the backstage areas. With a hundred costumers plus helpers and staff all rushing around, some in sight-limiting masks, some carrying large props, tools, or scissors, it is not an appropriately safe environment for small children.
- 10) You are not required to wear your costume yourself; someone else can present it in the show. But if your costume is worn on stage by someone other than you, that person should not be a paid individual, nor may your soundtrack or narration or costume include content that advertises an actual product, service, organization, or website.

**A Final Note:** It's called a Masquerade and not just a costume contest or fashion show because it's not just about costumes, but about characters too, and drama, humor, song and dance and stories. It's about creativity and celebrating the ancient and modern art of costuming. The purpose of the show is for fun, so please don't be so concerned about winning that you forget to enjoy that you're bringing smiles to 6,500 people. All of the Masquerade staff are volunteers, and we donate our time to the event because we love costuming as much as you do. So thanks for being a part of the show!

– Martin Jaquish, Coordinator. Lori Sartain, John Ruff, Assistant Coordinators

*This pamphlet ©2015 by San Diego Comic-Con International, a non-profit educational corporation dedicated to creating awareness of and appreciation for comics and related popular art forms, primarily through conventions and other events that celebrate the historic and ongoing contribution of comics to art and culture.*

# San Diego Comic-Con International Masquerade Entry Form 2015



*All personal information you supply will be held confidential and not shared with anyone.*  
(If you have trouble using this form, re-open it in Adobe Acrobat, fill it out, and save it before you send it. Do NOT open it in Preview on your computer, instead open it in Acrobat and that should work. To download Acrobat, visit: [get.adobe.com/reader/](http://get.adobe.com/reader/))

Contestant name (or representative of group) \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip code \_\_\_\_\_

Country \_\_\_\_\_ Phone number \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_ Today's date \_\_\_\_\_

Costume title \_\_\_\_\_

Original Design \_\_\_\_ or Re-Creation \_\_\_\_ If re-creation, please list source \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Number appearing in group \_\_\_\_\_ Please mark age(s) if any are Young Fan(s) (age 9-14) \_\_\_\_\_

If a group, list names of other members in the group \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What day are you are expecting to arrive at the convention? \_\_\_\_\_

***To request a contestant spot in the show, complete this form and e-mail it (and any photos) to:***

**masquerade@comic-con.net**

Or, you can mail this page to:

**Masquerade Coordinator / Comic-Con International  
P.O. Box 128458  
San Diego, CA 92112-8458  
USA**

Closing date for advance entry is June 20, but we often fill up much earlier!