

# COMIC-CON INTERNATIONAL 2008

San Diego Convention Center, July 24-27  
America's Largest Comic Book & Pop Culture Convention

## MASQUERADE

### **Contestant Information & Rules**

**What it is:** The 34<sup>th</sup> annual **Costume Competition**, showcasing costumes inspired by movies, comic books, fantasy, Japanese Animation, and the imagination of our attendees. Note this is **not** a dance or party, but a show set on a stage. It is **free** for Comic-Con attendees to participate in or be in the audience. In 2007 the audience filled the 4,200-seat ballroom to capacity, with a thousand more watching on large screens elsewhere. Most contestants provide recorded music and choreograph dramatic or humorous action for their presentations. Some entries will be individuals, others groups with a shared theme. Trophies and cash and merchandise awards will be presented 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 four giant video screens suspended overhead.

**When & Where:** **8:30 p.m. Saturday, July 26** in Ballroom 20 of the Convention Center. The event will run three hours, and doors will open at 7:45 p.m. for audience seating. As the line will start forming long before then, early arrival is suggested. Tickets will be required for seating, and these will be given out **FREE** to those lining up beginning at 4:30 PM and until all 4,200 tickets are gone. This assures no one waits in line only to be turned away. Those unable to obtain ballroom seating may watch the show on giant screens in the Sails Pavilion and in Ballroom 6. Program participants, press, and exhibitors may get their tickets before Saturday at the Masquerade Desk. Reserved seating is available for convention special guests and for the disabled.

No flash photography of the show is allowed. Personal cameras are permitted, but all photos and video taken must be for personal, non-profit use *only!* Photographers who wish access to the flash-friendly **Photo Area**, where the contestants will pose after exiting the ballroom stage, must sign-up at the Masquerade Desk, or write to the Coordinator ahead of time to request a reserved spot. There will be a **Masquerade Review** on Sunday afternoon so contestants may watch a large-screen video of their presentations.

**How To Enter:** Send in an **Entry Form** to be received **NO LATER** than July 9, via mail, FAX or e-mail to reserve a space in the show. There is a limit on the number of entries, so registering early is important. **Last year we were filled up 8 weeks before the show.** You should receive confirmation of your entry within two weeks. There will be a **Stand-By** list to fill spots arising from cancellations, and Entry Forms arriving after we have filled up will be put on Stand-By. You may also sign up on the Stand-By list at the Masquerade Desk at the convention Thursday and Friday, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m... If you reserve a spot and later find you will be dropping out of the show, please let us know 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 hours in advance to see something special, and there is no reason to present on stage what has already been seen walking around the convention.

**Contestants must submit a photo of the costume they will be wearing**, and until received your entry is only tentatively accepted. It may be any size of photo, or a digital photo sent by e-mail. A "work in progress" photo is acceptable if it gives a good idea of what the finished costume will look like. Send it with your Entry Form, or as a follow-up, or bring it with you to the convention. This is to assure that all costumes meet the criteria listed in the Rules, and to assist us in helping your presentation be the most effective by letting us know what to plan for. Also, let us know about any especially large costume or prop items you will have. Photos will be kept confidential so that you will still be a "surprise" for the audience and judges.

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**Comic-Con International: San Diego 2008**  
**Masquerade Advance Entry Form**

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

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

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

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

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

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

Number appearing in group \_\_\_\_\_ Please mark age(s) if Young Fan(s) (age 8-14) \_\_\_\_\_

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

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**To request a contestant spot in the show, send the form above to:**

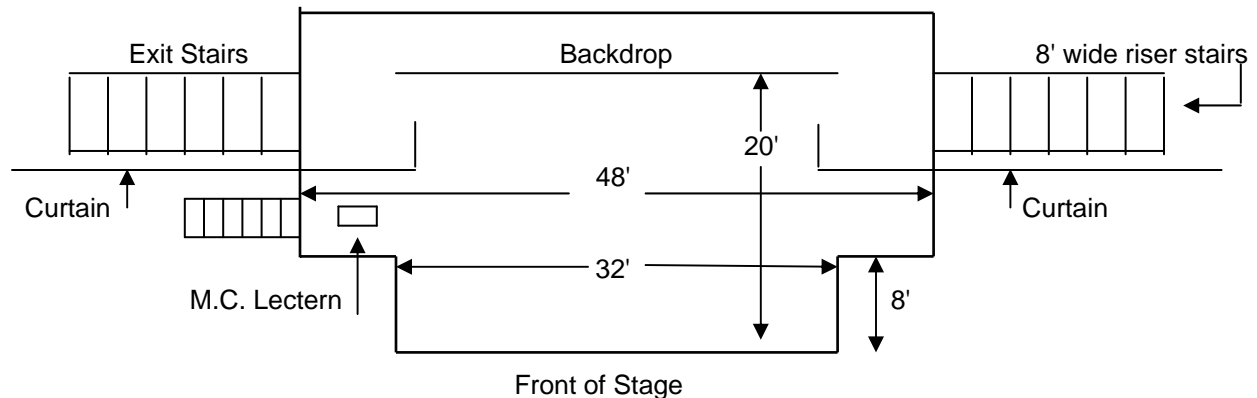
**Masquerade Coordinator/Comic-Con International**  
**P.O. Box 128458**  
**San Diego, CA 92112-8458**  
**USA**

Or you may **FAX** this form to **(619) 414-1022**, or email this to: **ccimasquerade@sbcglobal.net**

This form may be duplicated. All personal information you supply will be held confidential.

**Closing date for advance entry is July 9**

→ Remember to include a photo of your costume, or bring a photo with you. ←



**Stage Information:** The 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 has doorways of 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-left, with the exit stage-right, behind the M.C. lectern. Groups may enter and exit from both sides if desired. Special accommodations for the disabled are possible, if we are notified of the particular needs in advance. For more information, contact the Masquerade Coordinator via one of the addresses provided.

## **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 Stand-by List!** Completed show forms must be submitted by 12:00 noon 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.

**Important note:** **Comic-Con limits the number of memberships sold!** Last year the memberships sold out in advance every day but Thursday. We hate to turn people away, but despite the large size of the Convention Center, Comic-Con fills the building to its maximum capacity. In addition to a limited number of 4-day badges, a limited number of 1-day badges for Saturday will be sold, and they will sell out long before the convention starts. Therefore, it is important that you buy your membership as soon as possible. Contestants need a badge valid for Saturday to be in the Masquerade Saturday night!

Also, be sure to allow plenty of extra time to find parking. With the convention being so large, nearby parking will be difficult to find. Comic-Con provides shuttle buses that stop at many hotels and the Convention Center, and they are **free** to ride for those with Comic-Con badges.

**Trophies & Awards:** A panel of guest judges, assembled from professionals in costume-related fields, will bestow trophies for **Best In Show, Judges' Choice, Best Re-Creation, Best Original Design, Best Novice, Best Workmanship, Most Humorous, Best Presentation, Most Beautiful** and **Best Young Fan**. There will be a special workmanship judge for those who would like a close-up appraisal of their costumes. In addition to the impressive trophies, over a dozen companies and organizations will bestow cash and merchandise prizes to costumes that they select as outstanding. A complete list of company-presented prizes will be listed on the Comic-Con website in early February, and will be updated as new companies come forward to join the list. In addition, a complete list will appear in Comic-Con *Update # 2*, which will be mailed to members as well as available in comic book shops and many other venues several weeks before the convention.

If your costume is a **re-creation**, we suggest providing the trophy judges with one or more reference images of what it is based on (a photo, comic book, trading card, etc.), since not all of them may be familiar with your costume. You may submit materials for the judges at the convention. They will be returned to you afterwards.

Video cameras will be providing close-up views of contestants 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 for a few minutes 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 a prize and be called back on stage to receive it!

We strongly suggest attending the **Masquerade Orientation** from **10:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.** on Saturday, where we will discuss your technical needs and answer questions. You need not bring your costume. This room will contain a practice stage available to contestants for the rest of the day. The ballroom show stage will be in use for other events during Saturday, but the practice stage will have similar dimensions.

When arriving for the show that evening, all contestants must check-in with the staff at Room 31. 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 7:15 p.m.** and you must be **stage-ready by 7:30 p.m.** to allow for judging photos to be taken. We are sorry, but if you are late, you will probably be pulled from the show. Dressing rooms will be assigned when you arrive.

If you are using **MUSIC** with your presentation, it can be on audio compact disk or audiocassette. If you are "burning" your own CD, test it on various CD players to assure it has wide compatibility! CD-R's are fine as long as they are audio format. Avoid computer-only formats (such as MP3's). 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, and label cassettes which side to play. Submit your music when you sign-in or at the Orientation (no later!). 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.

## **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. 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. This is a show of creativity and craftsmanship, not shopping ability. Costumes entered in our previous shows may not return.
- 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 costume out of sight until Saturday night. You may of course wear your costume freely around the convention after it has been in the show.
- 3) Maximum time allowed on stage: 1-3 people: 1 minute 30 seconds. 4-6 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 and have fun, but remaining on stage too long can spoil some of the impact of your presentation.
- 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. Nothing is allowed that would be prohibited in a "PG"-rated movie. 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, 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 8 to 14.
- 6) For safety reasons, children under age 8 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, as they are a very busy place with 150 costumes and an equal number of helpers and staff rushing around, some in sight-limiting masks, some of them carrying large costume parts, hot-glue guns, scissors, etc and it is not an appropriately safe environment for small children.
- 7) 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 a trophy, but is still eligible to win company prizes.
- 8) Contestants agree to show up in the Masquerade rooms no later than the specified time the evening of the show (7:15 P.M.), and to allow video recording and photography of their costumes for non-profit purposes.
- 9) The Coordinator may reject an entry on the basis of inappropriate or unsafe behavior or content, because of too many purchased items, or because the event has reached its limit for entries.
- 10) If your costume is worn on stage by someone other than you, that person should not be a paid individual, nor should your soundtrack or narration have content intended to market an actual product or service.

**Remember:** The purpose of the Masquerade is to create fun, so please don't be so concerned about winning a trophy or prize that you forget to enjoy the aspect that you are bringing smiles to over 6,000 people. All of the Masquerade staff are volunteers, and we donate our time to create and coordinate the show because we love costuming as much as you do. Many of us are former contestants ourselves. So bring your costume-vision to life and have a great time being part of a very unique event. And remember to look for the latest Comic-Con information on our website: [www.comic-con.org](http://www.comic-con.org)