

# THE VCON VANGUARD

(A Personal Fanzine devoted to promoting VCON 41 in 2016)

Issue #1 – November, 2015

published by [R. Graeme Cameron](#), VCON 41 Chair



**We are pleased to announce  
That mild-mannered, shy and retiring Eric Chu,  
Renowned Concept Artist,  
Has agreed to be Film Design Guest of Honour at VCON 41!**

In the above photo we see Eric engaged in intellectual debate with Andy Probert over who should accept VCON's invitation. Note Eric's cunning fannish ploy designed to convince Andy to give in to the force and impact of Eric's logic.

Note: The real story behind the cover. Andy Probert designed the Cylons for the original Battlestar Galactica. Eric Chu designed the Cylons for the remake. They are arguing as to whose Cylons are the most murderous. Eric appears to be winning the debate.

## **VCON 41**

**September 30<sup>th</sup> to October 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2016**

### **AUTHOR GUEST OF HONOUR**

**Robert J. Sawyer**

(Golden Fleece, Quintaglio Trilogy, Neanderthal Parralax Trilogy, Illegal Alien, FlashForward, Webmind Trilogy, Red Planet Blues, Quantum Night, & many others)

### **ARTIST GUEST OF HONOUR**

**TBA**

### **SUPERMARIONATION GUEST OF HONOUR**

**Jamie Anderson**

(Son of Gerry Anderson: Supercar, Fireball XL5, Stingray, Thunderbirds, Captain Scarlet and the Mysterons, Journey to the Farside of the Sun, UFO, & Space 1999. Jamie maintains Anderson Inc. to preserve his father's legacy and is actively preparing a new Supermarionation series titled Firestorm)

### **FILM DESIGN GUEST OF HONOUR**

**Eric Chu**

(Battlestar Galactica, Cholly & Flytrap, Droids, Beetlejuice, Captain Power, The Gate II, A Chinese Ghost Story, Peter Pan II: Return to Neverland, Stasys, Space Command, Moonbase Alpha: Legacy, Bitten, Extant, Falling Skies, Firestorm, Milford's Used Car Corral, & others)

### **EDITOR GUEST OF HONOUR**

**Karl Johanson**

(Editor of Neo-opsis Magazine, formerly co-editor of Aurora Award winning Under the Ozone Hole Fanzine)

### **GODZILLA FAN GUEST OF HONOUR**

**Stan G. Hyde**

(G-Fest Lecturer, Renowned Godzilla Expert, Founder Monster Attack Team Canada, and Star of Milford's Used Car Corral)

## MASTER OF CEREMONIES

### **Spider Robinson**

(Night of Power, Callahan's Crosstime Saloon, Time Travelers Strictly Cash, Callahan's Secret, Callahan's Lady, Callahan's Key, Lady Slings the Booze, Time Pressure, the Lifehouse trilogy, User Friendly, By Any Other Name, Telepath, Deathkiller, Very Bad Deaths, Very Bad Choices, and with Jeanne Robinson, the Stardance trilogy)

## HOTEL

**TBA**

## MEMBERSHIPS

**Get Earlybird Special Rate Now Before Prices Go Up In January!!**

Go to [www.vcon.ca](http://www.vcon.ca) and click on Membership/Eventbrite link.

Or go direct to: [Buy VCON 41 memberships here](#)

## CURRENT RATES

### **Full weekend Memberships**

**Adult = \$40** – (January goes up to \$50)

**Senior = \$30** – (January goes up to \$40)

**Adult Student = \$30** – (January goes up to \$40)

**Teen (14-18) = \$20** – (January goes up to \$30)

**Youth (9 – 13) = \$20** – (January goes up to \$30)

**Child (infant to 8) = Free**

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## **GENERAL VCON 41 INFORMATION**

### **WHAT?**

VCON is Canada's oldest ongoing fan-run science fiction and fantasy convention. The first VCON was held in 1971 at the Hotel Georgia with Ursula K. Le Guin as Guest of Honour. The next VCON will be our forty-first annual convention (we skipped a year now and then).

The theme of VCON in 2016 is "Muppets, Puppets, and Marionettes." This encompasses everything from the aforementioned Muppets to stop motion models to Supermarionation. Our programming will touch on these specific topics as well as a variety of other SF&F stuff of interest to SF&F fans. We like to offer something for everybody. VCON is a fannish general-interest convention. A mid-sized convention at that, not too crowded. We average 700 to 800 attendees.

The secondary theme is "The Small Press Cabal" which will celebrate independent Small Press Canadian Book and Magazine publishers who have created the environment for a veritable renaissance of Canadian SpecFic. Participating professionals will include publishers, editors, authors, artists and poets.

### **WHY?**

To have fun of course. Why else would one get involved in SF&F fandom? We want both our Guests of Honour and our attendees to enjoy themselves as much as possible.

### **WHEN?**

The dates are firm. From Friday September 30<sup>th</sup> to Sunday October 2<sup>nd</sup> in 2016.

### **WHERE?**

Some hotel somewhere in the Vancouver Lower Mainland Region in British Columbia, Canada. We are currently negotiating with two hotels and are exploring possibilities in others. We hope to get a contract signed and sealed ASAP so that we can encourage people to book their rooms and buy their memberships well ahead of the actual convention. This will make both us and the hotel very happy. Renders the actual convention itself easier to operate if we know we've met our room block and our cash flow is sufficient.

One hotel my Vice-Chair Rose Wilson checked out was the Bayshore Inn overlooking Coal Harbour and the North Shore Mountains. Lots of good convention function space.

Unfortunately the minimum room cost was \$350 per night she tells me. Not unexpected. Howard Hughes rented the entire upper floor decades ago for a month or two and he always demanded the best, which costs. We are in the market for a more fan-friendly hotel pocket-money wise. Not to worry. Both the hotel and the facilities will be decent. I could say this is because of my deep and heartfelt concern for your welfare and comfort, but mainly, to be honest, it's because I am 64 years old and deeply concerned for MY welfare and comfort. Which works greatly to YOUR advantage, of course.

### **HOW DO I JOIN UP?**

Go to [www.vcon.ca](http://www.vcon.ca) and click on the link to eventbrite. Or go direct to: [Buy VCON 41 memberships here](#)

I am pressing for VCON 41 to be up and running as soon as possible. I want publicity out right away (hence this zine) and memberships available now! (Come to think of it, they ARE available now!)

Pre-reg memberships are the lifeblood of a convention. Hotels often require the all of the money for function space be paid before the convention even begins. There may be GoH airfares to pay. Sundry supplies needing to be purchased. In fact the majority convention costs are paid in advance. So please buy your membership now. You'll be saving yourself money, and giving us money to create a terrific convention.

Fortunately around 100 people signed up for VCON 41 at VCON 40, which makes for a good start. Confidence is high.

## **PALACE COUP?**

VCON 40 Chair Danielle Stephens announced at VCON 40 she would be stepping down as Chair of VCON 41. A number of brave people offered to step forward as interim VCON 41 Chairs but with the absolute fixed and certain condition they not actually run VCON 41. No fools they.

I wandered the halls in a daze (my usual convention mode) mulling things over. What the heck, I'm only publishing about 6 or 8 zines and sit on the Boards of a mere 4 fannish organizations and am attempting to write yet another unpublishable SF novel. It's not as if I'm busy or anything.

I spotted Danielle standing in the hallway facing away from me. I went up and tapped her on the shoulder.

"Danielle, I've decided to Chair VCON 41. Is that okay?"

She whipped around and embraced me so hard, bending me backwards, that she imperilled my spine. I think she was pleased.

Word soon spread. Seems I was being even more of a naïve idiot than usual. One member of the WCSFA Board, Chris Sturges, literally ran up and down the halls in search of other Board members with a quickly written petition accepting my offer. (Technically the VCON 41 bid had already been voted on and approved. Exchanging Chairs a mere formality of detail.) As soon as a majority of Board Members signed on, the relief wafting from VCON attendees was palpable. They wouldn't have to volunteer to be Chair! Suddenly I was popular! Who knew that offering to be scape goat was all that it takes to be acclaimed. Go figure.

Volunteering to be Chair for a VCON is a little bit crazy, I admit, but it will certainly make life interesting.

Oh, I did Chair VCON 25 in 2,000. Even got an Aurora Award for that. But my "success" was mainly due to all the good people who joined the concom, not to mention excellent guests like Robert J. Sawyer as Author GoH. I'm praying a similar phenomenon will take place in 2016.

Hmmm, actually Robert J. Sawyer IS Author Guest of Honour for THIS convention too. Looks like my prayers are being answered. (He replied to my invite email in under two minutes, saying "Yes! Count me in!" Pretty amazing.)

I am (not yet) stressed out by the formidable task of Chairing VCON 41. Fortunately I am very lucky in that I have several natural skills I can rely on. For one thing my increasingly sieve-like short-term memory means I won't be unduly burdened by worries over difficulties. For another, my increasing bouts of senile agitation should make riding herd on the ConCom a breeze. And my reliance on my personal variation of Murphy's law, "everything than can go wrong will go wrong but in the end it will all work out" means success is guaranteed.

Add that I am naive, trusting, delusional and ignorant, and it's obvious I have all the personality traits it takes to cope with large numbers of people coming to me with complex and confusing problems. If you've got what it takes to be a Dark Ages King or a Barbarian Horde Leader, running a VCON convention is a piece of cake I always say.

**INTENSE (1,400,000 lumen) SPOTLIGHT FOCUSED ON  
ERIC CHU – VCON 41 FILM DESIGN GUEST OF HONOUR**



Born in Hong Kong at a very early age, Eric Chu quickly exhibited an interest in design and film. Even as a young child, directing seemed to be in his blood, but an uncooperative cast of plastic farm animals would prove to be an endless source of frustration for the young inexperienced artist and he vowed never to work with PVC again.

In the ensuing years, his preoccupation with film and storytelling would manifest itself throughout his high school years in the form of super-8 films. There, he experimented with the medium by which he would explore issues and ideas relevant to him during this stage of his life. His most politically-charged film of this period involved a G.I Joe and some leftover Halloween fireworks.

From 1982-84 Eric turned his back on the industry, preferring instead to stifle his creative tendencies by enrolling in art school. During those two years at The Emily Carr College of Art, he was exposed to the world of performance art, obtuse poetry and conceptual pieces. After this profoundly formative period he decided to move on, as he was unable to keep a straight face.

Since then, Eric has been in the film and animation business for over 30 years, starting at Nelvana back in 1985. Working as a layout and storyboard artist, he became quickly known for reworking storylines to fit his

own bizarre sense of humor. While in Toronto, he found himself on such projects as DROIDS, BEETLEJUICE, CAPTAIN POWER, and countless others.

However, working on syndicated animated shows afforded little creatively and, in pursuit of a more stimulating environment, he moved to Asia where he became involved in the local film and commercial industry there by forming FISHEYE FILMS with a local director and producing commercials.

Upon his return to Canada in 1998, Eric began working on various productions around Vancouver. In 2002 he found himself doing concept designs for the new BATTLESTAR GALACTICA where he was responsible for visualizing the look of the new Galactica, the Cylons, Raiders, Basestars, and consequently upset millions of die-hard fans of the original series.



About BATTLESTAR GALACTICA Eric commented “A radical departure from Glen A. Larson's original TV series, this new take on a beloved show gave us the chance to add a new dimension to the design work while paying homage to a childhood favorite. Ronald Moore's vision breathed new life and depth to a 70's classic and we were thrilled to have had a part in shaping it.”

Eric works out of Paranoid Delusions Inc, a Vancouver based Design Company he founded in 1985. He describes it as “a creative studio where ideas are isolated, incubated and bred to wreak mutant havoc on the world. We oversee every developmental stage of our creations, from initial conception to design, modeling, re-animation and more.” Typical Paranoid Delusion Inc. products include design, illustration, animation, live-action films, and toy design.



**FIRESTORM Poster by Eric Chu**

The puppets will “live” in a fully realized environment involving miniature sets, forced perspective, highly detailed models and actual explosions and smoke effects. No CGI involved. This will capture the old school charm of the original Supermarionation shows perfectly.

The show itself revolves around a team of emergency specialists utilizing an assortment of multi-purpose vehicles including the “Thunderbolt,” a flying machine not at all delicate in appearance (see photograph at right), a twin-hulled submarine, and no doubt other nifty craft as well. It takes place in the 22<sup>nd</sup> century after mankind has solved most of its problems, only to be confronted by a menacing entity which threatens the very survival of the human race.

The puppet characters are rather large, such that props “handled” by the puppets are intricately detailed. As witness the photograph below of two of the hand weapon props which Eric designed.



Jamie Anderson is Supermarionation guest of Honour (or should that be Ultramarionation GoH?) for VCON 21. More on him and Eric in future issues of VCON Vanguard.

Currently, he has several projects in various stages of development, including working with Jamie Anderson on the upcoming puppet-based SF series, FIRESTORM, a return to the old Gerry Anderson shows he grew up loving as a kid... those with plastic toys and explosives.

Jamie Anderson’s FIRESTORM is very much in the tradition of his father’s THUNDERBIRDS. However, instead of “Supermarionation” involving the use of “string” marionette puppets, it depends on “Ultramarionation,” a technique of manipulating each puppet with fixed rods as shown in the photograph at bottom.



**L to R: Jamie Anderson, Ken Palkow (prop maker), & Eric Chu. (Photo by Tony Hardy)**

Eric Chu’s website: < [Eric's Facebook Page](#) >



## **PROGRAM BOOK ADVERTISING RATES**

**To Place Ad:** Contact me at < [VCON 41 Ad Sales](#) > and once the ad is sent to me I will generate an invoice from Eventbrite to be paid within 30 days.

**Advantage of placing ad early:** Your ad will be included at no extra charge in monthly issues of The VCON Vanguard.

**Trade Ads:** If you are running a fannish convention or genre event and wish to place an ad in our program book in exchange for a VCON 41 ad in your program book, contact me at the above address.

### **Black & White:** (Interior pages)

- \$200.00 – Full Page
- \$100 – Half Page
- \$50 – Quarter Page
- \$25 – Business Card

### **Colour:** (Inside Covers & 4 mid-section interior pages)

- \$400 – Full Page Inside Cover
- \$200 – Half Page Inside Cover
- \$300 – Full Page Interior [\*]
- \$150 – Half Page Interior [\*]
- \$100 – Quarter Page Interior [\*]
- \$50 – Business Card Interior [\*]

[\*] “Interior colour ads” are included in a single colour sheet at the middle of the program book, providing four full pages of colour printing.

The back cover is reserved for a VCON 42 ad.

## **ART SHOW GALLERY TABLE & PANEL RATES**

**Artists! To Purchase table or panel:** Go to Eventbrite site: < [Purchase Art Show Table or Panel](#) >

**Queries can be sent to:** < [Vcon 41 Art Show](#) >

**The following earlybird rates are on offer** (good till December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2015).

EARLYBIRD FULL (8 FT) TABLE = \$10.95

EARLYBIRD HALF (4 FT) Table = \$5.78

EARLYBIRD PANEL = \$13.02

EARLYBIRD STUDENT PANEL = \$8.36

NOTE: that proof of student status will be required during setup of student panels.

ALSO NOTE: that prices include eventbrite fees.



The above is an example of a trade ad, the first we have received. I will continue to run it in every issue of The VCON Vanguard, and it will appear in our program book. In exchange an ad for VCON 41 (yet to be created) will appear in the Vancouver fur program book. This is how conventions cross promote and help each other. Darn good practice methinks.

To repeat myself: If you are running a fannish convention or genre event and wish to place an ad in our program book in exchange for a VCON 41 ad in your program book, contact me at < [VCON 41 Ad Sales](#) >

### NEXT ISSUE

Next issue, the December Issue, I will focus on a different Guest of Honour and also provide new information on our developing plans for VCON 41. Going to be a heck of a celebration!