

LAcon V Press Backgrounder



The World Science Fiction Convention (Worldcon) is an annual international gathering of science fiction fans, writers, artists, musicians and creators. First held in New York City in 1939, Worldcon visits a different city around the globe each year.

Each convention is organized on a not-for-profit basis by a group of dedicated volunteers. Recognized as one of the world's longest-running science fiction conventions, Worldcon has grown from a celebration of science fiction and fantasy writing to encompass genre television, films, animation, roleplay and tabletop gaming, video games and other popular media.

- LAcon V is the seventh Worldcon held in the Los Angeles Area.
- The previous Worldcons in the Los Angeles area were: Pacificon 1 (1946), Solacon (1958), LAcon 1 (1972), LAcon 2 (1984), LAcon 3 (1996), and LAcon 4 (2006).

One of the most well-known portions of the World Science Fiction Convention is the Hugo Awards, which were introduced at the 1953 Worldcon in Philadelphia, and have been presented annually since 1955. They are the oldest and most prestigious awards in science fiction and fantasy literature.

- The awards cover prose literature, art, media, games, and editing, as well as works by the fans themselves.
- The Hugo Award trophy is a silver rocket created by Jack McKnight and Ben Jason, with a base that is designed each year by a different artist.
- The ceremony will be held on Sunday, August 30 at 8 p.m. Pacific Daylight Time, and will be streamed on YouTube.

Another of the major events at the World Science Fiction Convention is the annual masquerade in which fan-made costumes and costumers are recognized for their works.

- Costuming and Cosplay has been a part of Worldcon con since the beginning.
- Many traditions of fan-based costuming and cosplaying originated at Worldcon, and have roots in Los Angeles. Los Angeles-based fans Myrtle R. Douglas and Forrest J.

Ackerman attended the first Worldcon in 1939 in costumes based on those worn in the 1936 movie *Things to Come*.

- This year's Masquerade will be held on Saturday, August 30 at 8 p.m. Pacific Daylight Time.

Some facts about Worldcon

- Over the course of its 85-year history, the World Science Fiction Convention has been held all over the globe, including conventions in Australia, Japan, Finland, Ireland, New Zealand, and China.
- Of all Worldcons held outside of China, LAcon 2 (1984) still holds the record for having the highest attendance.
- Past Worldcons have been attended by such luminaries as Paul Krugman, Hugh Hefner, Christopher Reeve, Jim Henson, and Newt Gingrich.

Every Worldcon recognizes those who have made significant contributions to the field of Science Fiction and Fantasy by naming them as Guests of Honor. Past guests of honor include Robert A. Heinlein, Ursula K. le Guin, Samuel R. Delany, Isaac Asimov, Nalo Hopkinson, George R.R. Martin, and Connie Willis.

This year's Guests of Honor are:

- Barbara Hambly – Author of 70 novels including *The Iron Princess*, the *Darwath* series, and the *Sun Wolf and Starhawk* series
- Ronald D. Moore – writer on *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, *Star Trek: Deepspace 9* (also a producer), created and produced the 2004 *Battlestar Galactica*, and co-creator and producer of *Four All Mankind*
- Colleen Doran – *New York Times* Bestselling cartoonist of *A Distant Soil* (creator owned) and has illustrated the works of Alan Moore, Warren Ellis, Joe R. Lansdale, Anne Rice, J. Michael Straczynski, Peter David and Tori Amos
- Dr. Anita Sengupta – Aerospace engineer who has worked on the exploration of Mars, the asteroids, and deep space
- Tim Kirk – Designer and illustrator who has illustrated stories for Robert E. Howard, L. Frank Baum, Harlan Ellison, Ray Bradbury and Fritz Leiber and has for worked the Walt Disney Company

- Stan Sakai – Graphic novelist who created *Usagi Yojimbo* which has been translated into 18 languages
- Geri Sullivan – Has been active in Science Fiction Fandom since 1979, she has worked on several conventions, and edited fanzines including *Idea* and *Science-Fiction Five-Yearly* (2007 Hugo Winner)

The convention's other special guests are:

- Ursula Vernon, AKA T. Kingfisher – Our toastmaster who will be hosting the Hugo Award Ceremony and four-time Hugo Winning author.
- Tracy Drain – NASA Flight Systems Engineer
- Terese Mason Pierre – Writer and poet whose work has appeared in *Uncanny*, *Fantasy Magazine*, *Star*Line*, and *Best Canadian Fantasy and Science Fiction*
- Tracey Bapiste – *New York Times*-bestselling author of 26 books for Children